

Political Analyst, Soul Food, Music And Auction To Be Featured At Scholarship Brunch Feb. 28 At UC San Diego

February 19, 2009

Jan Jennings

Farai Chideya, award-winning author, journalist, radio host and political analyst, will be the keynote speaker at the Feb. 28 *Scholarship Brunch* in celebration of Black History Month (BHM) at the University of California, San Diego.

The theme for the brunch, to begin at 10:30 a.m. in the UC San Diego Faculty Club, is *A New Dawn: Redefining the Future - UC San Diego Celebrates the Journey and Stories of African-Americans*. The event will include the presentation of three scholarships, music by four choirs, soul food, and a silent auction to benefit undergraduate scholarships.

"We will award the first Joseph and Mary Watson Scholarships, endowed by Dr. Watson, to three students enrolled in the African American Studies Minor Program," said Pamela Frugé, chair of the BHM celebration. "These students, to be announced at the ceremony, also participate in research related to cultural competency and African American History." Watson is former UCSD vice chancellor of Student Affairs.

Participating choirs include the Lincoln High Choir, the La Jolla Country Day Choir, the UCSD Gospel Choir, and the Redeemed Choir.

Chideya thrives in a multi-media approach to reach a variety of audiences. In her website words, she says that her mission is "to produce media that brings together the mind of a hard-news reporter with the heart of a storyteller."

Bill Maher, host of HBO's *Real Time*, describes Chideya as "a brilliant analyst of the American scene."

From 2008 to early 2009, Chideya hosted NPR's *News and Notes*, a daily national program about African-American and African diaspora issues, tackling topics including politics, visual art, hip hop, and social justice. She has done television political commentary for networks and shows including CNN, MSNBC, BET, and HBO, with a goal of telling the stories of how national politics affects real people.

Chideya has written three nonfiction books: *Trust: Reaching the 100 Million Missing Voters*; *The Color of Our Future*, and *Don't Believe the Hype: Fighting Cultural Misinformation About African Americans*.

Her novel, *Kiss the Sky*, (Atria Books, May 2009) is *Essence Magazine*'s book club selection for May 2009.

Chideya's awards include the National Education Reporting Award, the National Association of Black Journalists Excellence Award, and a special award from the National Gay and Lesbian Journalists Association for coverage of AIDS.

The Scholarship Brunch is being sponsored by the UJIMA Network, an alliance of black staff, faculty, students, alumni, and community members, the 2009 Black History Month Planning Committee and key campus sponsors.

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