

National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc.®

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The National Coalition of 100 Black Women Mourns Loss of Yolanda King

New York, NY—May 17, 2007—The National Coalition of 100 Black Women (NCBW) joins with other national organizations in mourning the death of Yolanda Denise King, the firstborn of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King. NCBW remembers that she was only two weeks old, in 1955, when Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat in Montgomery, Alabama, an act that led to the Montgomery bus boycott spearheaded by Yolanda's father.

NCBW remembers that she, barely three months old, was at home with her mother when the family home was bombed in 1956. We remember her involvement as a child and as a teenager in the Civil Rights Movement. We remember that she was just 12 when her father was assassinated in Memphis in 1968. We remember her participation in a 1995 press conference organized and spearheaded by NCBW that showcased support of Malcolm X and Betty Shabazz's daughter Qubilah Shabazz, whom the FBI charged with, but later dropped the charge of, the attempted murder of Louis Farrakhan.

An actress, producer and human-rights lecturer/advocate, Ms. King was a classy, dignified woman. She refused to let anyone think for her on any issue and used her talents to promote personal growth and social change through the arts and through the numerous organizations to which she belonged or for which she served as spokeswoman. Her portrayals on television and film included Rosa Parks in the television miniseries *King*; Dr. Betty Shabazz in the feature film *Death of a Prophet*; and the daughter of Medgar Evers in *Ghosts of Mississippi*. In 1990, she founded Higher Ground Productions, which is billed as a "gateway for inner peace, unity and global transformation."

Ms. King lived in Los Angeles, California, and died in her brother's home in Santa Monica. A graduate of both Smith College and New York University, she was a visiting professor in the Theater Department at Fordham University in New York City for three years.

"We mourn her death and early departure from our world," said Marva Smith Battle-Bey, NCBW president. "We will remember her life and her contributions. Our thoughts and friendship are with the family at this time of sorrow."

NCBW consists of 62 chapters in 26 cities and the District of Columbia. It is an organization of progressive women of African descent whose voice for gender equity and sociopolitical advancement drive meaningful change to benefit women of color.

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