

# LIBERTY



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## Announcing the 42nd Annual Frank Porter Graham Awards Ceremony, Honoring Mandy Carter, Jay Ferguson, and Loretta Mershon and Featuring Keynote Speech by Dr. Timothy Tyson. Reserve Seats NOW For This Uplifting, Inspirational Event!

For 42 years, the ACLU-NCLF has had the distinguished honor of recognizing local exemplary civil rights leaders at our annual Frank Porter Graham Awards Ceremony. This year, we are thrilled that our keynote speaker will be **Dr. Timothy Tyson**, author of the much-acclaimed *Blood Done Sign My Name* and other award-



Dr. Timothy Tyson

winning books. Dr. Tyson is a Senior Research Scholar at the Center for Documentary Studies and Visiting Professor of American Christianity and Southern Culture at Duke University. *Blood Done Sign My Name*, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and winner of the Christopher Award and the North Carolina Book Award, was the 2005 selection of the Carolina Summer Reading Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, assigned to all new

undergraduate students. *Blood Done Sign My Name* was made into a movie that was released nationwide in February 2010. Tyson's previous book *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (UNC Press, 1999) won the James Rawley Prize and was co-winner of the Frederick Jackson Turner Prize, both from the Organization of American Historians. He also co-edited, with David S. Cecelski, *Democracy Betrayed: The Wilmington Race Riot of 1898 and Its Legacy* (UNC Press, 1998), which won the 1999 Outstanding Book Award from the Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Human Rights in North America. Tyson is a North Carolina native and a graduate of Duke (M.A. '91, Ph.D. '94).

The Frank Porter Graham Award will be presented this year to **Mandy Carter**, one of the country's leading African-American lesbian social justice activists. For more than four decades, Carter has been organizing for social justice, racial equality, and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT) equality. She credits her commitment to activism to the influences of the Quaker-based American Friends Service Committee, the former Institute for the Study of Nonvio-



Mandy Carter

lence, and the pacifist War Resisters League, but her participation in the Martin Luther King, Jr.-

inspired Poor People's Campaign, organized by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1968, truly solidified her lifetime commitment to nonviolence.

In 1993, Carter was one of six co-founders of Southerners On New Ground (SONG), and she served as its Executive Director. Founded and based in Durham, SONG's purpose is to build progressive movements across the South by developing transformative models of organizing that connect race, class, culture, gender, and sexual identity. Specifically, SONG integrates work against homophobia into freedom struggles in the South.

In 2003, she also helped found the National Black Justice Coalition, a national civil rights organization of concerned

## FPG Awards Ceremony

African-American LGBT individuals and allies dedicated to fostering equality by ending racism and homophobia.

Carter was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize as part of the "1,000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005" in order to recognize, make visible, and celebrate the often invisible peace work of thousands of women around the world. She has served on a long list of Boards of prominent social justice and political organizations, is a featured speaker at national civil rights events, and has received a number of honors from groups such as the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Boston Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, and the LGBT Center of Raleigh.

The Paul Green Award will be presented to **Jay Ferguson** for his extraordinary contributions to the death penalty defense community. Those of us who advocate for abolishing the death penalty know Ferguson to be a gifted attorney with a passion for justice and a generous heart. He has an incisive mind and keen talent as a litigator coupled with a genuinely humble spirit. Attorneys representing capital defendants regularly seek his advice, and he is always willing to listen



Jay Ferguson



Loretta Mershon

and give wise counsel.

Ferguson has worked on a number of death penalty cases over the years, perhaps most notably winning relief for Guy LeGrande in 2008. LeGrande is a severely mentally ill man who insisted on representing himself at trial. An African-American man, LeGrande was sentenced to death by an all-white jury, having been tried by a prosecutor's office that awarded noose lapel pins to assistant district attorneys who secured death sentences. Ferguson took the case on appeal and argued successfully that LeGrande was not competent to be executed. This was the first time a North Carolina court found that a death-sentenced prisoner was not competent to be executed by the State.

Ferguson also played a prominent role in securing pas-

sage of the Racial Justice Act and in developing litigation strategy since this new law took effect. For his tireless efforts in these and so many more endeavors and for his unwavering passion for justice, we proudly present the Paul

Green Award to Jay Ferguson of the Durham law firm Thomas, Ferguson & Mullins.

Finally, the Board of Directors of the ACLU-NC will honor one of our most dedicated volunteers, **Loretta Mershon**, with the Norman Smith Award. Mershon was nominated unanimously by the ACLU of Wake County Board of Directors for her many years of service to the Wake County ACLU chapter. Mershon has been an active member of the ACLU since the 1970's.

She rejoined the Wake County ACLU Board in 2002 and served with distinction in several important leadership roles over the next eight years, including Board Secretary, Historian, Member and Chair of the W.W. Finlator Awards Nominating Committee, member of the Executive Committee, and Acting Board President. Her enthusiasm and lead-

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Please fill out this form and return it to us at ACLU-NC, P. O. Box 28004, Raleigh, NC 27611 or e-mail the information to [aclunc@nc.rr.com](mailto:aclunc@nc.rr.com).

YES! I want to help! Please sign me up for the Action Alert List.

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ership were instrumental in the ACLU of Wake County's long — and ultimately successful — quest to persuade the Raleigh City Council to adopt a resolution urging Congress to amend or repeal the USA PATRIOT Act.

Her extraordinary grace provided stability for the Wake ACLU chapter during trying

times, and although Mershon, ever humble, would dispute this contention, there truly is no more deserving candidate for the Norman Smith Award.

Please make your reservations now to join us as we celebrate the work of these inspiring honorees.

- Saturday, February 12th
- 5:30 p.m. jazz reception, light hors d'oeuvres, open bar
- 7:00 awards presentations, keynote speech by Dr. Tim Tyson
- At the Friday Center, Chapel Hill
- **Please RSVP by February 7th**

**Chapter Announcement:**

ACLU of Wake County  
2011 Annual Meeting  
and Board Election  
(and celebration of its  
42nd birthday!)

7:00 p.m., Wednesday,  
March 9, 2011, at the  
N.C. Advocates for  
Justice building,  
1312 Annapolis Drive,  
Raleigh, NC 27605

Please join us, and  
invite a friend to become  
a new member as well!

**42nd Annual Frank Porter  
Graham Awards Ceremony**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
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We wish to be table sponsors. Please reserve a table for ten people for \$1,000. I will submit a guest list of those to be seated at the table. (A sponsor placard will be placed on the table.)

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seats for \$100 per person. Payment enclosed.

I/We cannot attend. Please accept my tax-deductible donation to support the event and/or to sponsor seats for students and people with limited incomes who wish to attend. I am enclosing payment in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

I am interested in purchasing an ad in the program. Payment is enclosed, and I will submit the ad by e-mail no later than January 26, 2011.

Please make your check payable to ACLU-NCLF or fill out credit card information above, and mail payment along with this RSVP card to:  
 ACLU-NCLF, P.O. Box 28004, Raleigh, NC 27611-8004.  
 Reservations \$100 per person. Call 919-834-3466 for more info or to charge by phone.

The ACLU-NCLF is offering the opportunity to purchase an ad in the program for the Frank Porter Graham Awards Ceremony. Advertise your business, send a message of congratulations to this year's honorees, or celebrate the Bill of Rights!

**Full page (5" x 8") — \$100**

**1/2 page (5" x 4") — \$50**

**1/4 page (2.5" x 4", or business card) — \$35**

Ads should be e-mailed to [aclunced@nc.rr.com](mailto:aclunced@nc.rr.com).  
 PDF, JPEG or Word formats preferred.  
 Ads should be submitted no later than January 26, 2011.  
 Please call Jennifer Rudinger, Executive Director, at  
 919-834-3466 for more information.

(All ads may be subject to editing.)

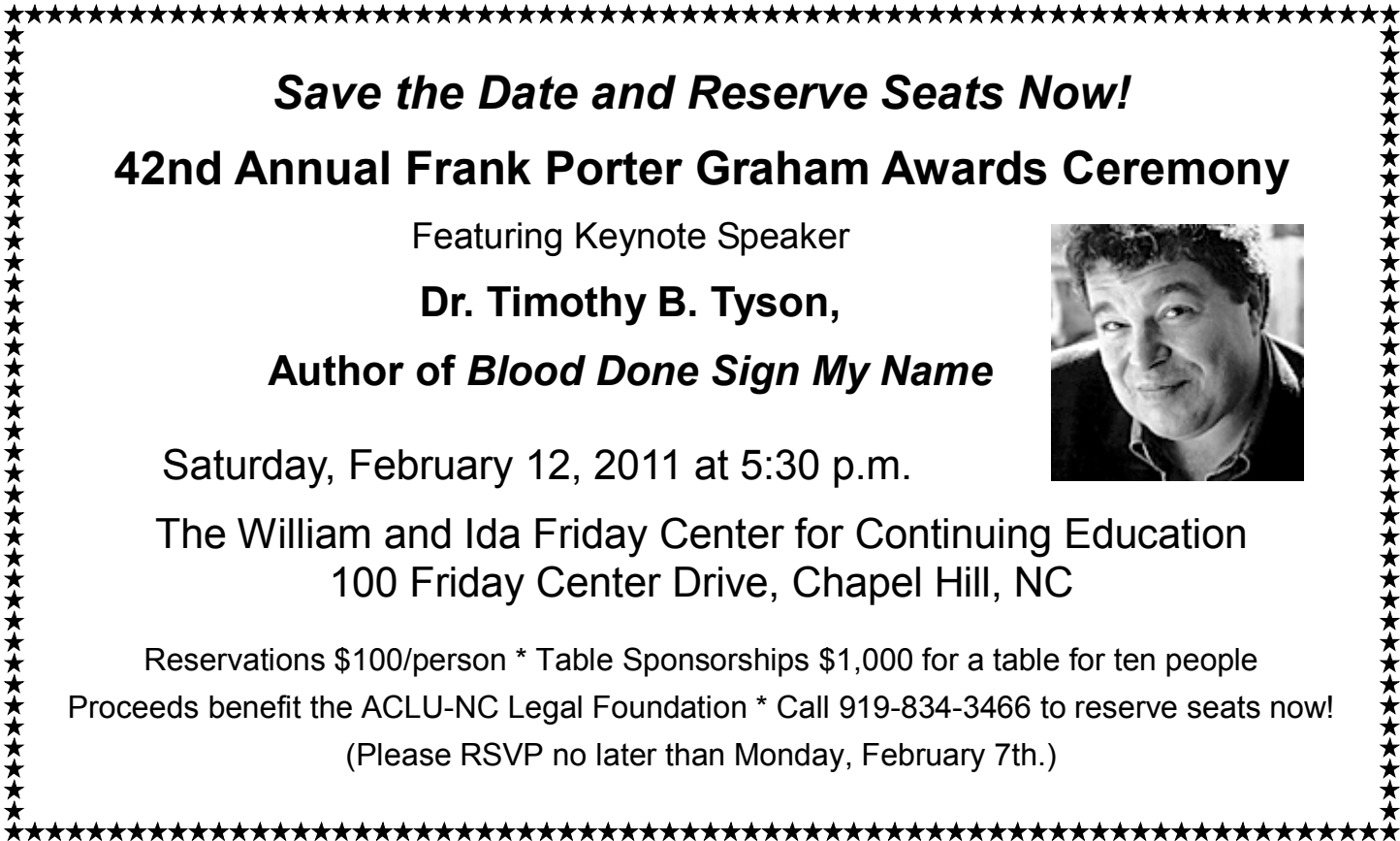


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***Save the Date and Reserve Seats Now!***

**42nd Annual Frank Porter Graham Awards Ceremony**

Featuring Keynote Speaker

**Dr. Timothy B. Tyson,**

**Author of *Blood Done Sign My Name***



Saturday, February 12, 2011 at 5:30 p.m.

The William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing Education  
100 Friday Center Drive, Chapel Hill, NC

Reservations \$100/person \* Table Sponsorships \$1,000 for a table for ten people

Proceeds benefit the ACLU-NC Legal Foundation \* Call 919-834-3466 to reserve seats now!

(Please RSVP no later than Monday, February 7th.)