

# A Simple Expedition

Document National Demand for an  
AP African American Studies Class

# Expedition Messenger

## The William D. Reynolds Award

Presented by the



April 16, 2011



Lt. Colonel Jason D. Mims '75

With this award, **Jason Mims '75** is honored for his years of dedication to improving the lives of young people.

Having grown up in San Antonio, Mr. Mims attended Notre Dame on an Army ROTC scholarship. His firm belief in the importance of a good education took him from a double-major in Government and Modern Languages (French), to completion of a master's degree in National Security Affairs from the Naval Postgraduate School. His studies served him well during his long Army career.

Mr. Mims spent 21 years on active duty. He served around the world, from Africa and the Middle East to Southwest Asia, Europe, and beyond. He also served several tours in the United States, including time at the Pentagon.

In 1995, Mr. Mims retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. At his retirement ceremony, he was awarded the coveted Legion of Merit award for outstanding service and achievements. Around this time, Mr. Mims had a son attending middle school — and it was this son's school experience that led to a newfound passion for improving educational outcomes for public school students in Tampa. In particular, Mr. Mims found many opportunities

to improve the future of black males and other minority students.

In an effort to make a positive impact on students and the community as a whole, Mr. Mims spent years sharing his computer skills with children from Tampa's inner-city neighborhoods, while also working with senior citizens in those same communities. In 2001, he founded the MIMS Institute, which focuses on encouraging minority students to achieve academic excellence, participate in advanced placement classes, and apply to the nation's top universities, including Notre Dame. To date, the MIMS Institute has served more than 350 students.

Mr. Mims has been recognized with multiple awards for his commitment of time and energy on behalf of young minority students. In 2002, the Hillsborough Education Foundation honored him as a Champion of Public Education, and two years later he was given the Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners' Favorite Sons and Daughters Award. In 2005, the Florida Department of Education recognized him as their Adult School Volunteer of the Year. He also received the Black Alumni of Notre Dame 20th Anniversary Distinguished Alumni Exemplar honor in 2006.



## The William D. Reynolds Award

Established in 1985, the  
William D. Reynolds Award  
is conferred on an alumnus/  
alumna (living or deceased) doing  
exceptional work with youth for  
the betterment of quality of life.



### PAST RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARD:

- 2010—Mr. Windell D. Norris, Jr. '65
- 2009—Mr. Ronald L. Gregory '61
- 2008—Mr. Michael Sennett '91 (posthumously)
- 2007—Mr. Michael J. Kennelly '85
- 2006—Mr. David Cleary '63
- 2005—Rev. Alfred F. D'Alonzo, C.S.C. '49, '60 M.A.
- 2004—Dr. Joseph A. DiCara '82
- 2003—Mr. Darrell R. Gordon '88, '89 M.S.A.
- 2002—Hon. Jeanne M. Jourdan '75 J.D.
- 2001—Ms. Elizabeth Bird '91
- 2000—Mr. Benjamin F. Finley Jr. '60
- 1999—Mr. Thomas A. Jaeb '56
- 1998—Dr. William V. Mollihan '59
- 1997—Mr. Willie G. Lipscomb Jr. '75 J.D.
- 1996—Mr. Michael D. Williams '72
- 1995—Mr. Eugene D. Fanning '53
- 1994—Rev. Andre Leveille, C.S.C. '77 M.Th.
- 1993—Mr. George A. Scheuer '28, '75 M.Th.
- 1992—Mr. Lawrence F. Hickey '42
- 1991—Sr. M. Jean Lenz, OSF '67 M.Th.
- 1990—Dr. Dennis P. Cantwell '61
- 1989—Mr. Daniel R. Harshman '68, '69 M.A.
- 1988—Rev. Donald P. McNeill, C.S.C. '58
- 1987—Rev. Robert F. Griffin, C.S.C. '49, '58 M.A.
- 1986—Mr. Frederic C. Shadley '48
- 1985—Mr. Lawrence H. Wentz '59

# The Issue

Provide sufficient evidence of a national demand for the College Board to develop and make a nationally recognized college-level curriculum focused on the history, culture, traditions, opportunities, and challenges of blacks in America available to high school students.

# Key Assumptions

- AP Classes are tools students use to develop critical thinking skills
- Students in AP classes study a variety of disciplines through the 30 existing AP class options
- Some concepts covered in AP classes reflect “Knowledge passed from generation to generation”

# Key Observations

- An AP African American Studies class has not been an option available to students during the thirty years of the US Space Shuttle Program
- Generations of high-achieving students have entered college without critical thinking skills developed in part through a focused study of African Americans

# Opportunity

Provide high-achieving students in the post-Space Shuttle Era the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills about African Americans through an AP African American Studies class

*I admire those odd people who don't accept the world as we have it but think we can change it.*

From Charlie Tweedle's Words of Wisdom

# Expedition Concept

- Travel to at least eight of these states
  - New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts
  - Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California
  - Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Florida
  - Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin
- Conduct Fellowships to document national demand
- Present documentation to media and the College Board NLT November 15, 2011

# Expedition Fellowships

- Fellowship with College Board Leadership
- Fellowships with College and Admissions Officials
- Fellowships with elected officials and community leaders
- Fellowships with parents of pre-high school and high school students
- Fellowships with high school and college students
- Fellowships with school district leaders, administrators, faculty, and other education professionals
- Fellowships with taxpayers who support public education

# Fellowship Outline

- Background Leading to Expedition
- Value of AP Classes
- Current AP Class Options
- Message Transmitted by Adding AP African American Studies
- Individual/Organization position related to adding AP African American Studies
- Action Taken to Demonstrate Demand for class
- Expected Impact on Institution created by having students who take AP African American Studies

# Expedition Timeline

- August 2011
  - College Board, NYU, West Point, UConn, Brown
  - U of Houston, Rice, U of Texas
- September 2011
  - U of Notre Dame, U of Chicago, U of Wisconsin
  - OSU, U of Indiana, U of Illinois
- October 2011
  - ASU, USC, UCLA, Stanford, USF, FAMU, UCF

# Key Expedition Expenses

- Air Travel
- Ground Transportation
- Lodging
- Per Diem
- Communications and Printing
- Fellowship Coordination and Presentation
- Documentation Support

# Potential Expedition Sponsors

Vistra Communications	The MIMS Institute
Café Kili	Highland Falls Women's Association
All Sport Community Services	The Brink Foundation
Fellow Notre Dame Alumni	Black Alumni of Notre Dame
Computer Mentors, Inc.	The BEST Program
Positive Support for Parents In Neighborhoods (Positive SPIN, Inc.)	Pastors On Patrol
The Florida Sentinel-Bulletin	Florida Courier
Academy Prep of Tampa	Notre Dame Club of Greater Tampa Bay
16 x \$100 = \$1,600	16 x \$200 = \$3,200
<b>50 x \$100 = \$5,000</b>	