



**NAACP**  
*Pennsylvania*  
STATE CONFERENCE

## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 25, 2020

### CONTACT:

Diana Robertson, Communications

Email: [communications@pastatenaacp.org](mailto:communications@pastatenaacp.org)

### **2020 VIRTUAL 86<sup>th</sup> NAACP PENNSYLVANIA STATE CONFERENCE CONVENTION**

Out of the 86 years the NAACP State Conference has had a convention, in keeping with the unprecedented times of virtual platforms, this year represented its first virtual convention addressing the theme of *Together We Rise!*

Although virtual, this convention included all the necessary components from legislative delegate sessions held both Friday and Saturday to forums with professionals who shared valuable information regarding their fields of expertise. The Friday components included an important discussion on the areas that coincide with what is referenced in NAACP as the game changers. Panelists discussed health, education, economic development and criminal justice. Saturday forums included a religious affairs roundtable discussing the topic of the Role of Social Justice in ministry and what needs to be done for interfaith communities to unite in addressing social justice issues? Also, there was a Youth and College Division session where various youth units and college chapters gathered to discuss topics of interest.

The convention concluded with the Freedom Fund Finale and President Kenneth L. Huston serving as host. This event highlighted the Act-So program with an introduction of performers by Sean Parker, State Conference Act-So Chair. ACT-SO stands for Afro Academic Cultural Technological Scientific Olympics, the "Olympics of the Mind". This initiative of the NAACP was founded in 1978, by renowned author and journalist Vernon Jarrett. ACT-SO provides a forum through which youth of African descent in grades nine through twelve can demonstrate academic, artistic, and scientific prowess and expertise, thereby gaining the same recognition often only reserved for entertainers and athletes. The following students performed at the National Act-so competition and were the performers of the evening.

They were Lunden McClain of the Greater Harrisburg Branch who performed in the category of poetry-written; Kenneth Moody of the Philadelphia Branch performed in music instrumental – classical; Ashale Brown of Greater Harrisburg Branch performed in the category of music vocal contemporary; and Kyla McKnight of the Philadelphia Branch performed in poetry performance. The State Conference is proud to acknowledge Lunden McClain and Kenneth Moody as bronze medal recipients from the National competition.

The other highlights included Keynote speaker Derrick Johnson, NAACP President and CEO; and honorees Fred Redmond, United Steel Workers, International VP (Human Affairs) recipient of the President's Award, and the recipient of the first John R. Lewis Civil Rights Award, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II. Rev. Barber provided eloquent remarks in accepting the award which also served to provide inspiration and a continued challenge in the work of civil rights to the NAACP State Conference.

Beginning on Friday, October 23, the first delegate legislative session kicked off the Convention at 9:00 am. Panel participants included:



# NAACP

Pennsylvania  
STATE CONFERENCE

**The State of the Commonwealth – Part I** with moderator, Ryan Houston, Anchor/Reporter  
(WPXI-TV Channel 11)

President Kenneth L. Huston  
Dr. Rachel Levine, Secretary of Health  
Dr. Validia Giddens, Special Educator  
Carol L. Kilko, Deputy Secretary for Business Financing and  
Workforce Development within the PA Department of Community  
and Economic Development

**The State of the Commonwealth – Part II** with moderator Khadija T. Diggs, Esq., Board Member,  
**Criminal Justice Reform** PA Parole Board

**Panelists:** Attorney General Josh Shapiro  
Superior Court Judge Carolyn H. Nichols  
Attorney Lisa Freeland (Federal Public Defender for  
the Western District of Pennsylvania  
Attorney Keir Bradford-Grey, Chief Defender of  
Philadelphia  
Attorney Robert L. Listenbee, First Assistant  
District Attorney for Philadelphia  
George Little, PA Department of Corrections,  
Executive Deputy Secretary

**Saturday, October 24, 2020:**

**Religious Affairs Roundtable -**

Moderated by Pastor Kenneth L. Huston

**Panelists:** Bishop J. Louis Felton, Senior Pastor of Mt. Airy Church of God in Christ, Philadelphia, PA  
Rev. James A. Pollard, Sr., PhD, Pastor, Zion Baptist Church of Ardmore, PA  
Rev. Dr. Randall Bush, Senior Pastor, East Liberty Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, PA  
Rev. Regina Ragin-Dykes, Pastor, New Life AME Church  
Religious Affairs Chair, NAACP PA State Conference

###

Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest nonpartisan civil rights organization with a mission to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities. The Pennsylvania State Conference was established in 1934 and pursues the same mission throughout the Commonwealth.