



**Office of the Mayor
City of Los Angeles**

ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA

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MAYOR VILLARAIGOSA CAPS OFF AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH WITH STAR-STUDED PROGRAM

Performers Tyrese, Forest Whitaker, Tichina Arnold and others join Mayor for closing ceremony of City's heritage month celebration

LOS ANGELES – Capping off a month of cultural activities, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa joined a host of actors, writers, musicians and community leaders for an entertainment-packed closing ceremony of the City's African-American Heritage Month celebration.

Along with a special performance by Grammy nominee Tyrese, the Mayor presented the City's three honorees for the month: Bishop Charles E. Blake of the Church of God in Christ, artist Artis Lane and Oscar-winning actor Forest Whitaker.

"African-American Heritage Month has provided each of us with an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of the African-American community throughout the history of Los Angeles," Mayor Villaraigosa said. "The entire nation has come a long way from the firehoses and 'whites only' signs of an earlier generation, and this month's festivities have demonstrated our collective belief in the diversity and equality that rests at the core of this City's success."

The closing ceremony also featured a silent auction of winning posters from the City's African-American Heritage Month poster contest. The competition featured more than 500 entries from kindergarten through 12th grade students throughout Los Angeles, who learned about the legacy of the African-American community and celebrated this history through their creativity and artistic ability.

"Our City family continues to do an outstanding job in presenting events that tell a story of our shared past, celebrate our diversity, and showcase our many successes, and this year was no different," Councilmember Jan Perry said. "I thank the many participants and sponsors for helping us present another wonderful celebration of Los Angeles and global culture this month."

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On the auction block with the posters were several bundles, including hotel and VIP ticket packages to see "The Color Purple," Clippers and Avengers games, Disneyland and California Adventure theme park, donated by The Center Theatre Group, Wells Fargo, The Nielsen Company, Time Warner Cable and The Walt Disney Company, the City's African-American Heritage Month title sponsor.

"Wells Fargo is honored to have been able to participate in the city of Los Angeles' 2008 African-American Heritage Month festivities and commemorate the contributions African-Americans have made throughout history," said Brenda Ross-Dulan, Wells Fargo Los Angeles Crossroads Community Bank regional president. "We'd like to once again congratulate this year's honorees and all the winners of the African-American Heritage Poster Contest for their achievements."

African-American Heritage Month featured a wide variety of programs and events across Los Angeles. The festivities included opening worship services at Brookins AME Church; Music LA Classes; the Pan African Film Festival; a tour of Black LA, hosted by Our Authors Study Club; and the poster and creative writing contests.

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