



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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news
release **MICHAEL P. WILLIAMS RECEIVES
PRESTIGIOUS WESTMINSTER
ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

**Pastor and HCC Board Chair First African American to
Receive Coveted Recognition**

HOUSTON, TX (April 20 2010) – Houston Community College's own Dr. Michael P. Williams received the coveted 2010 Westminster Lifetime Alumni Achievement Award at a special Alumni Honors Convocation Ceremony held April 24, 2010 during Alumni Weekend in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury on the Westminster College campus in Fulton, Missouri. The presentation of the award marks the first time the award has ever been bestowed upon an African American.

The Lifetime Alumni Achievement Award is presented annually to alumni whose accomplishments reflect the Westminster mission and who have distinguished themselves through personal achievements, professional achievements and/or have made significant contributions to society.

"Westminster Colleges develops leaders of character for service in a global community, and Dr. Michael Williams lives that mission every day of his life," explained Barney Forsythe Ph.D., President Westminster College. "Michael Williams exemplifies what is good and right in our society. He has demonstrated through perseverance, great intellectual gifts and piercing vision that people can overcome stereotypes and fundamentally lead change in people and community. His actions have distinguished not only him as a leader and a man of great integrity, but this educational institution. Our graduates are our credentials, and we are very honored to number Dr. Williams among our most illustrious alums."

Williams is the Founding Pastor of Joy Tabernacle in Houston, which in 1999 became the first African American church to relocate to the heart of Houston's inner city. He has also served as Senior Pastor for Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Houston and East End Baptist Tabernacle Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He has preached in 37 of the 50 states, three continents and in the Middle East and founded HOPE for Houston, Inc., a non-profit agency committed to serving at-risk young people and their families.

In 1999, Williams was elected to the Board of Trustees for the Houston Community College system, the largest educational institution in the Gulf Coast region. He has served the

institution's board in numerous capacities, including board chair on two occasions, including the 2010 calendar year.

His honors include induction into the Martin Luther King, Jr., Collegium of Preachers at Morehouse College and The "Big 15"—Houston's Top African American Pastors, the Keeping the Dream Alive Award from the Martin Luther King, Jr., Parade Foundation, Who's Who in Black Houston and Who's Who Among Black Americans. Williams is the author of numerous articles in professional and popular periodicals as well as the author of three books.

"My time at Westminster was marked and marred by the challenges and conflicts of racial diversity," says Williams, class of 1973. "I am deeply gratified that the College has courageously addressed these challenges. Westminster provided for me an essential part of the intellectual and academic foundation upon which I have built a lifetime of service and advocacy. For this I will be forever grateful."

Founded in 1851, Westminster College is one of the Midwest's best private liberal arts colleges, according to the rankings of *U.S. News & World Report*. *Forbes* magazine just selected Westminster as the Top Value College and University in Missouri. This selective college for men and women is situated on an 86-acre residential campus with small class sizes taught by top-notch instructors.

"Even today, Michael remains one of my most prized students. I watched his develop during his time at Westminster through his graduate studies at Yale and throughout his illustrious career," said William E. Parrish Ph.D., former Truman Professor for American History at Westminster. "At school, he was a leader with great foresight and integrity during a time of transition for African Americans at the college and in our society. During his years at the college, he became a strong and effective voice for change."

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About HCC

HCC is one of the country's largest singularly-accredited, open-admission, community colleges offering associate degrees, certificates, workforce training and lifelong learning opportunities for 70,000 students each semester. HCC is composed of six colleges that serve the greater Houston area's diverse communities by preparing individuals to live and work in today's increasingly international and technological society. To learn more go to hccs.edu.