

BET Networks Presents Extensive Coverage of the Historic Inauguration of President-Elect Barack Obama, Including All-Day News Coverage and Star-Studded Events

BET Special "YES WE WILL!: BET'S INAUGURATION CELEBRATION" Premieres Tuesday, January 20 at 8:00 P.M.*

Gabrielle Union, Tyler Perry, Mary J. Blige, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Wyclef Jean, Nick Cannon, Terrence Howard, Cedric The Entertainer, Samuel L. Jackson,

Queen Latifah, Anthony Hamilton, Anita Baker, Ne-Yo, Joss Stone, Yolanda Adams, Jazmine Sullivan, Common, Hill Harper and the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater to Participate in BET's Inaugural Weekend Activities

Colin and Alma Powell to Represent America's Promise Alliance at BET's First-Ever Inaugural Ball

NEW YORK, Jan. 12 -- Tuesday, January 20, 2009 marks a defining moment in U.S. history, and BET Networks will be all over our nation's capitol all weekend to celebrate the Inauguration of America's first African American president.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070716/BETNETWORKSLOGO>)

BET Networks announced that Queen Latifah, Ne-Yo, Anthony Hamilton, Anita Baker, Joss Stone, Yolanda Adams and the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater will be performing at THE BET HONORS on Saturday, January 17 at the Warner Theatre in Washington, D.C. Terrence Howard, Cedric The Entertainer, Samuel L. Jackson and Hill Harper will also make appearances. As the kick-off to Inaugural weekend, THE BET HONORS will be hosted by actress Gabrielle Union and will honor the accomplishments of Tyler Perry, Mary J. Blige, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, B. Smith, Judith Jamison and Congressman James E. Clyburn. This year's show will premiere on BET on Monday, February 9 at 9:00 p.m.*

On Tuesday, January 20 at 8:00 p.m.*, Nick Cannon will host YES WE WILL! BET'S INAUGURATION CELEBRATION, a one-hour special commemorating the massive voter turnout and what African Americans are committed to doing in order to implement the change initiated by Barack Obama's presidency. This televised event will feature incredible performances by Chicago's own Common and Grammy Award-nominated Jazmine Sullivan and live shots from BET's Inaugural Ball, and will take a look back at the election and the significant campaign that led the way to America's first Black president.

BET Networks will host its first-ever Inaugural Ball on Tuesday, January 20 at the Mandarin Oriental hotel, with a special performance by Wyclef Jean. The Ball will be in support of the opportunities facing our next generation of national and local leaders and highlight what all Americans can do to improve the lives of children and youth in this country. To support these efforts, the Ball will be held in partnership with America's Promise Alliance, the nation's largest non-profit alliance dedicated to the well-being of children and youth founded by General Colin and Alma Powell, who will both be present at the Ball to speak about this historic opportunity to make young people a national priority. Additionally, BET's Ball will support two institutions that are committed to the education and advancement of today's youth in Washington, D.C. -- Dunbar High School and the Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

"This is a weekend we'll all remember for the rest of our lives, in honor of a historic achievement many of us never dreamed would happen in our lifetimes," said Debra L. Lee, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, BET Networks. "We're so excited about everything we have planned to celebrate President-elect Obama's hugely significant and meaningful Inauguration, and we're thrilled that we'll have so many wonderful friends joining us, including General and Mrs. Powell."

"On this historic weekend -- as we welcome our new President and celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. -- Americans have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to ensure that our priorities reflect what makes this nation unique and exceptional, and that is our children," said Alma J. Powell, chair, America's Promise Alliance. "We're excited to partner with a dedicated organization like BET to raise awareness of the tireless efforts underway to make this nation a place where all our young people can succeed. When several thousand teenagers drop out of school each day, and millions more are without health care, we know we must do better and indeed we will."

BET News Coverage

Throughout the weekend, BET News will provide extensive on-air and online coverage of the momentous Inauguration of the 44th President of the United States. Through live coverage, news specials, extended news briefs, on-air crawls, from the swearing in ceremony to the parade to the White House, BET News will chronicle the significance of this day of celebration, reflection and inspiration for its audience.

As thousands venture to the nation's capitol, BET News will document the multi-level components that go into such a notable event. From the journey of spectators to the integral inside circles of the campaign, BET will tell the stories of a dream realized and document this unprecedented passage of power as George W. Bush extends the presidency to President-elect Barack Obama.

On Tuesday, January 20, Hill Harper (BET J's The Best Shorts, CSI: NY) and Rene Syler (former host of The Early Show) will co-anchor BET News' coverage of the Inauguration Swearing-In Ceremony and Parade. Harper and Syler will be joined by Jeff Johnson and the rest of the BET News team, celebrities, intellectuals and iconic figures as they walk our audience through the significant moments in our history that led to this day, and reflect on the community -- both young and old. BET will broadcast from the following three locations in Washington, D.C.:

- Rooftop on N. Capitol
- Capitol Position on the ground
- Ben's Chili Bowl - U Street Corridor

On Monday, January 19 and Tuesday, January 20, BET News will also feature:

NEWS SPECIALS

-- Specials: BET News will broadcast news specials throughout the day focusing on this historic moment:

Monday, January 19

-- BET NEWS: KING TO OBAMA: This special examines Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s influence on President-elect Barack Obama.

-- 10:30-11:00 p.m.* (encores Tuesday, January 20 at 9:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.*)

-- BET NEWS: THE OBAMA EFFECT: From 6-year-olds to 106-year-olds, Black people of all generations have been moved by our President-elect. A cross-section of Americans of all ages reflects on this historic moment.

-- 11:00-11:30 p.m.* (encores Tuesday, January 20 at 9:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.*)

Tuesday, January 20

-- 106 & PARK: PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION SPECIAL: Cable television's top music countdown show will celebrate the historic day.

-- 6:00-8:00 p.m.*

-- YES WE WILL! BET'S INAUGURATION CELEBRATION: This special will capture the excitement surrounding the historic Inauguration of the first Black President, Barack Obama.

-- 8:00-9:00 p.m.* (encores from 10:00-11:00 p.m.*)

-- Extended News Briefs: BET News correspondents will file reports uniquely relevant to its audience on the different events leading up to the Inauguration. These reports will put the historic nature of this day in context, while stressing the role the African American community played in making it happen. These news briefs will also be available on BET.com's broadband player, BET On Blast.

-- Inauguration Packages: BET News will present several 3-5 minute segment packages between regular coverage, all of which capture the tone set by this monumental occasion.

-- Additional BET News Specials: Inauguration coverage will also be supplemented with encore telecasts of BET News specials JOURNEY TO THE WHITE HOUSE, PRESIDENT-ELECT OBAMA'S VICTORY SPEECH and FIRST BLACK PRESIDENT.

-- Crawls and On-Air Messaging: Throughout the day, crawls will be provided with up-to-date information on the events taking place and the large anticipated crowds gathering in Washington, D.C. The crawls will also provide up-to-the-minute updates as well.

BET.com Initiatives:

-- Next Stop: Inauguration: Users will be invited to go to BET.com to discuss their journey to Washington, D.C. for the Inauguration. BET.com users will have the opportunity to share their experiences as they come to witness history in the making. The initiative will be supported via pictures, video and short stories highlighting how they are going, why they are going, etc.

-- Kids for Obama: While visiting BET.com, users will be able to talk about the special moments they shared with their children leading up to this momentous election. Whether their child accompanied them to the voting polls, has his/her own Obama t-shirt, or is a big Obama fan, users can upload their favorite photos to the special kid friendly area "Kids for Obama" destination on BET.com.

-- Obama & Me: Obama has toured the country and won the hearts and votes of America. BET.com asks users to share any interaction or encounter they may have shared with the President-Elect while he was campaigning in their town. Users will be encouraged to upload their photos with Obama so the world can see who he connected with during his campaign for President.

*All times ET/PT

For more on BET Networks' 2009 Inauguration coverage, please visit www.bet.com/beheard.

About BET Networks

BET Networks, a division of Viacom Inc. (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), is the nation's leading provider of quality entertainment, music, news and public affairs television programming for the African-American audience. The primary BET channel reaches more than 98 million households and can be seen in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom and sub-Saharan Africa. BET is the dominant African-American consumer brand with a diverse group of businesses extensions: BET.com, a leading Internet destination for Black entertainment, music, culture, and news; BET Digital Networks - BET J, BET Gospel and BET Hip Hop, attractive alternatives for cutting-edge entertainment tastes; BET Home Entertainment, a collection of BET-branded offerings for the home environment including DVDs and video-on-demand; BET Mobile, which provides ringtones, games and video content for wireless devices; and BET International, which operates BET in the United Kingdom and oversees the extension of BET network programming for global distribution.

About America's Promise Alliance

America's Promise Alliance is the nation's largest partnership alliance comprised of corporations, nonprofit organizations, foundations, policymakers, advocacy and faith groups committed to ensuring that children receive the fundamental resources - the Five Promises -- they need to lead successful, healthy and productive lives and build a stronger society. Building on the legacy of our founder General Colin Powell, the Alliance believes the success of our children is grounded in experiencing the Five Promises -- caring adults; safe places; a healthy start; an effective education; and opportunities to help others -- at home, in school and in the community. For more information about America's Promise Alliance, visit www.americaspromise.org.

SOURCE: BET Networks

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