



# NEWS RELEASE

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## High Point Housing Authority

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## High Point Housing Authority Honors Two Community Leaders in its Third Annual Pillars of Fame Award Ceremony

**High Point, NC** – The **Pillars of Fame Award** was established in 2006 by the Housing Authority of the City of High Point (HPHA) and was modeled after the Wall of Fame in Columbia, SC. The objective of this award is to inspire community youth with positive, encouraging images, and role models that are former HPHA residents of public housing and Section 8 who overcame obstacles and became successful leaders and pillars of the community.

The Selection Committee composed of Mary McInnis, High Point Housing Authority public housing resident; community volunteers, Tonia Stephenson and Heidi Majors; and Housing Authority Commissioners Bob Davis and Dr. Burdell Knight, had the difficult task of reading all the outstanding applications and making the final selections.

The **2008 Pillars of Fame Award** recipients are **Valda Boyd-Ford** and **Bruce E. Davis**.

**Valda Boyd-Ford** lived in the Clara Cox, Carson Stout, Daniel Brooks, J. C. Morgan Courts, and “turnkey” communities of the High Point Housing Authority from 1958 – 1971. She has spent a large part of her life developing and enhancing diversity initiatives and cultural competency throughout the world.

Ms. Ford, MPH, MS, RN, is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Center for Human Diversity, Inc. This center is an Omaha-based, non-profit organization that develops customized training programs to enhance organizational leadership, interactive

communications, workforce performance, diversity initiatives and management and cultural competency.

Early in her career, Ms. Ford worked as a critical care registered nurse in Saudi Arabia. She quickly rose through the ranks to In-service Educator and Nurse Manager. While in the Middle East, she worked with staff from thirty-three different countries and realized the serious gap in cultural competency. She developed her own training module to include in new employees' orientations in Saudi Arabia and later the Caribbean. In the Caribbean, she also developed the first cardiac, stroke and physical rehabilitation center in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Studying the roots of cultural dysfunctions, Ms. Ford realized that the health and medical professionals in the United States needed to be better prepared culturally while still students. She eventually accepted a position on the faculty at Creighton University School of Nursing in Omaha, Nebraska in 1997.

During her first year in Nebraska Ford was called upon to assist professionals and community members with communicating between and among people of different races, cultures, ethnicities, and spiritual backgrounds. There was also a need for more trained professionals able to teach these cultural competency and other communication skills. This led her to create the Center for Human Diversity in 1998 as an engine to train individuals that could return to their organizational environments and communities to help develop or facilitate programs and initiatives that can lead to greater diversity and cultural competent work forces.

Some of her training programs and presentations include: *Leadership for a Changing World; Cultural Competency for a Global Economy; Diverting Diversity Disasters; The Paralysis of Political Correctness; Customer Service in the Real World; Learning from and Sharing with Diverse Cultures; and Cultural Competency 101: Starting Points and Definitions.*

Ms. Boyd-Ford is the author of chapters in two medical textbooks and several articles in national and/or peer-reviewed journals. She is a regular contributor to an online health column and a columnist for the local newspaper. She provides services to people all over the world and mentors young women who want to help improve the world.

Today, Valda Boyd-Ford is a member of the National Speakers Association, the Council of Public Representatives of the National Institutes of Health, Society for Human Resource Managers and has worked or presented in China, Australia, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, Poland, Denmark, Wales, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Wales, Afghanistan and twenty-five (25) states in the USA. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Winston Salem State University, a Master of Public Health in Health Policy Analysis and Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a Master of Nursing Administration from Creighton University. She has also completed some work towards a PhD at the University of Nebraska.

Her many honors/awards include the 2008 Legacy of Health Award from the National Coalition of 100 Black Women; *Lincoln Journal Star* “Woman of Influence in Multicultural Leadership” in 2007; 2006 Woman of Distinction from the Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women; 2006 Humanitarian of the Year from United for Sight (International Refugees Support Agency); and 2005 Volunteer of the Year from United for Sight.

**Bruce E. Davis** lived in the Carson Stout Community from January 1972 through July 1975. He has spent the majority of his life living in and striving to make High Point and Guilford County a better place to live and work for everyone.

Serving in his second full term on the Guilford County Board of Commissioners, Bruce Davis is a native of High Point, North Carolina where he was graduated from High Point Central High School. He proudly served in the United States Marine Corps for twenty (20) years where he studied at the Marine Corps Institute. He earned his AAS degree in Business from GTCC and his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from High Point University. He is Co-founder and President of Kid Appeal Learning Center, Inc. in High Point.

Mr. Davis was Chairman of the Guilford County Board of Commissioners in 2005 and has served as liaison on several boards including the High Point Convention and Visitors Bureau, High Point Market Authority and PART’s Heart of Triad Steering Committee. He also serves as a member of the Board’s Inmate Welfare Fund Committee. He previously served on the Piedmont Triad Partnership, Guilford County Partnership for Children, the Guilford County AIDS Partnership, the Guilford County Board of Health and the Guilford County Homeless Coalition.

He is active in numerous civic and volunteer organizations including the Guilford County Elected Officials Black Caucus, the High Point Black leadership Roundtable, the Professional Business Men’s Club, the High Point YMCA Association Board, Carl Chavis YMCA Board of Management and Gethsemane Baptist Church Board of Trustees. He is also an active member of the NAACP.

Mr. Davis was the recipient of the *2008 Triad African American Achievers Award*, was recognized by the North Carolina Interagency Council for coordinating a ten-year plan to end homelessness in Guilford County and he was featured as a “Mover and Shaker” in the April 2004 issue of *Biz Life* magazine.

Mr. Davis and his wife, Angela Boyce Davis, have five children, Bryce, Markisha, Chas, Tandira and Bruce Jr.

Robert L. Kenner, Chief Executive Officer for the High Point Housing Authority, congratulates Ms. Boyd-Ford and Mr. Davis. “Both of our honorees this year are pillars of our community who exemplify strength, integrity and wisdom. It is an honor to recognize them with their induction onto our **Pillars of Fame** as we continue to strive to build a better future for leaders of the next generation.”

The ***Pillars of Fame Award Ceremony*** will be held at Astor Dowdy Towers, 701 E. Green Street, High Point, NC 27260 on September 24, 2008 at 12:00 noon and the entire community is invited to the event!

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