



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **TAVIS SMILEY LAUNCHES TOUR TO TAP EMERGING LEADERS AT NATION'S HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES**



**LOS ANGELES - (August 12, 2008)** – Influenced by the teachings of W.E.B. DuBois, television and radio talk show host Tavis Smiley targets college students for the future of Black leadership and hopes to inspire new leaders from five of the nation's universities.

The **Talented Tenth HBCU Tour**, presented by the Navy, will kick off this fall with visits to Bethune Cookman University, Alabama A&M University, University of the District of Columbia, Southern University and A&M College at Baton Rouge and South Carolina State University. "I created this tour to enlighten, encourage, and empower students to think about what their own leadership legacy will be. That is what they can do today that will echo throughout their communities, careers, and ultimately throughout history," said Smiley. "I'm convinced that the students who attend these institutions of higher learning are the scholars, the exceptional – the leaders of the future. They possess the courage and talent to set the standard for the next generation of leadership for our country."

At each of the campuses, Smiley will lead a two-hour interactive discussion on the characteristics of successful role models in the areas of business, public service, religion and academia. And, he will challenge the students to develop their leadership guiding principles. The title sponsor, the Navy, will host a special session to examine how leadership skills developed within its organization has helped many achieve a lifetime of success. The special session will be open to students on each campus.

"The Navy is honored to support Tavis Smiley's vision and the need to cultivate strong leaders within our community," said Captain Anthony P. Barnes, Director of Operations, Commander, Navy Recruiting Command. "We are at a time in Black America in which those who have access to a college education are poised to surpass the accomplishments of their parents and grandparents. The questions I must pose to these talented students are: 'How will you lead, and how will you serve our community, our nation and the world?'"

Smiley's lecture also will address the existing issues and challenges of Black leadership, while emphasizing examples of ethical, effective and transformational leadership for emerging leaders.

(MORE)

## TAVIS SMILEY LAUNCHES TOUR

### Page 2

A recent Gallup Poll and a survey in Black Enterprise magazine identified Smiley the “youngest Black leader” shaping the future of Black America.

Additional partners supporting the *Talented Tenth HBCU Tour* include Black PR Wire ([www.blackprwire.com](http://www.blackprwire.com)), Education Highway ([www.eduhwy.com](http://www.eduhwy.com)), Black News ([www.blacknews.com](http://www.blacknews.com)), Black Students ([www.blackstudents.com](http://www.blackstudents.com)) and HBCU Connect ([www.HBCUconnect.com](http://www.HBCUconnect.com)).

The **Talented Tenth HBCU Tour** runs from September through November 2008.

#### **Talented Tenth HBCU Tour Stops:**

- 9/5/08: **Daytona Beach, FL**, Bethune-Cookman University, **6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.**
- 9/19/08: **Normal, AL**, Alabama A&M University, **6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.**
- 9/25/08: **Washington, DC**, University of the District of Columbia, **1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.**
- 10/24/08: **Baton Rouge, LA**, Southern University and A&M College at Baton Rouge, **6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.**
- 11/7/08: **Orangeburg, SC**, South Carolina State University, **6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.**

#### **About Tavis Smiley Presents**

**Tavis Smiley Presents** is an event production company dedicated to bringing thought-provoking discussions, engaging town hall meetings, and consumer expos to communities across the country. During the last six years, its programs have reached more than 300,000 conference attendees and attracted millions of television viewers nationwide. Tavis Smiley is the host of *Tavis Smiley* on PBS, a weeknight half-hour talk show, and the host of *The Tavis Smiley Show from PRI*, a two-hour news and opinion program featuring provocative commentary and exclusive interviews. He's the editor of the *Covenant with Black America* and author of 12 books, including his memoir, *What I Know for Sure*. He founded the Tavis Smiley Foundation to provide leadership training skills to youth ages 13–18. For more information, visit: [www.TavisTalks.com](http://www.TavisTalks.com).

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