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Rev. Connie “CJ” Jackson Selected to Receive the Emerging Leader Award During the ITC’s 52nd Charter Day and 13th James Costen Awards Dinner

February 25, 2010 – Atlanta – As the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) prepares for the 52nd Charter Day and 13th James H. Costen Awards Dinner and Silent Auction, one of the 2010 honorees, an ITC alumna, is the Rev. Connie “CJ” Jackson who continues to demonstrate transformative leadership in cutting edge ministry and public service throughout the local, national and world communities. In recognition of these contributions, “Rev. CJ,” as she is affectionately known, is the recipient of the 2010 Emerging Leader Award.

Rev. CJ is a dynamic combination of minister, entrepreneur and political activist, roles she performs with integrity. Prior to attending seminary, Connie Jackson was a trailblazer among women in the political arena. Mentored by the late Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, Rev. CJ earned the distinction of being the first African American woman to be elected to a city council position in the 153-year history of Galveston County, with her election to the City Council of Texas City, Texas in May of 1992. This accomplishment was documented by *The History Makers* – a non-profit video oral history archive dedicated to preserving African American history.

Always one to rise to a challenge, Rev. CJ has always exceeded expectations of her ability to serve as a true leader. In her role as student body president at ITC she exhibited unparalleled drive and enthusiasm, by helping to transform the campus into an environment for greater student comfort and activity. In addition to being President of the ITC Student Christian League, Rev. CJ was a Presidential Fellow during the tenure of former president and now Ambassador to the African Union, Michael A. Battle Sr. She was also the recipient of the Isaac R. Clark Preaching Award. As an alumna, she continues to advocate for ways to move the institution forward. She remains one of ITC’s most vocal “drum majors,” putting ITC in the line of vision and ears of potential underwriters and donors.

While matriculating at ITC, she also served as campaign strategist for her best friend, Rev. Dr. Sarah Davis, resulting in Davis’ historic election to the office of Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 2004. After graduating from ITC in 2005, Rev. CJ joined Bishop Davis in Southern Africa to serve as a global development consultant; raising funds to build healthcare facilities, schools and orphanages. In July of 2006, Rev. CJ returned to Atlanta to assume the position of Executive Director of City of Hope Ministries, Inc., a non-profit 501 (c) 3, community development corporation where she developed affordable housing initiatives, a school-based children’s healthcare program, and financial education programs for low to moderate income families.

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A native Texan, Rev. CJ received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Government from the University of Texas at Austin, a Master of Divinity degree from ITC, and graduated from the Harvard Divinity School Urban Leadership Certificate Program.

Rev. Jackson is a prophetic preacher and a prolific writer. Among her published works is “Faith Under Fire” in the *Women on the Cutting Edge of Theology* edition of the Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC). Rev. Jackson has also been a contributing writer for Essence Magazine Online and several religious publications.

As president of J. Trinity Communications, Rev. CJ accepts invitations to lecture and preach across the globe, and is also enhancing her ability to reach an even broader audience as she currently hosts a new radio talk show “*On the Edge with Rev. CJ,*” which airs on Radio One’s Praise 92.1 FM in Houston and is slated to expand to an AM station in April 2010.

Further details about the Charter Day and James H. Costen Awards dinner are available at 404-527-7718 or on the ITC website at www.itc.edu.

ITC is a consortium of six different denominational seminaries including: Gammon Theological Seminary, Morehouse School of Religion, Turner Theological Seminary, Phillips School of Theology, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, and C.H. Mason Theological Seminary. The Center also welcomes students of other denominations to matriculate as part of its Harry V. and Selma T. Richardson Ecumenical Fellowship, named for its founding president and his wife. The Lutheran Theological Center is also housed on the ITC campus and its students enjoy the benefits of the ecumenical afro-centric academic environment.

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