

PRESS RELEASE

Ossie Davis Serving as Annenberg Professor of Communications at Howard University

Washington, DC (November 3, 2003) --- Ossie Davis, renowned actor, director, writer, producer and distinguished Howard University alumnus recently began his yearlong commitment to Howard University as the Annenberg Professor of Communications.

Mr. Davis conducts seminars for the Annenberg Honors Program and others in the School of Communications. His first lecture, received a standing ovation from overjoyed students. He joined the deans, department chairs and fellow faculty members at a luncheon, followed by a faculty meeting, where he challenged and inspired the faculty members to follow the lead of their predecessors, such as Alain Locke and Sterling Brown. "We are fortunate to have Mr. Davis with us this year, as he continues to contribute to his legacy here at Howard", said Jannette L. Dates, Dean of the John H. Johnson School of Communications.

Visibly excited students are eager to continue their interactions with Mr. Davis and his wife, Ruby Dee. They have already begun to see the potential of what Mr. Davis has to offer to their education. "I feel that Mr. Davis is an inspiration", says Phyllisia Gant, student president of the Annenberg Honors Program. "He is personable and knowledgeable and I look forward to him speaking with the Annenberg students again."

As the year unfolds the countless opportunities for Mr. Davis' interaction with the other students and faculty members are seen as invaluable. Vincent S. Williams, graduate assistant to the Annenberg Honors Program and MFA in film student said, "The experience of having Mr. Davis here is priceless. He can help us transcend the knowledge from his times on this campus and what that meant for African Americans then, to this generation now".

When asked how he's enjoying his new job as a professor, Mr. Davis replied "I owe back the investment that was made in me all those years ago by The National Youth Administration. And, this is payback time."

Mr. Davis' entire tuition at Howard University was paid by The National Youth Administration. The Youth Administration was headed up by Mary McCloud Bethune and Eleanor Roosevelt, during the Depression, and made scholarships available to Black youths who had successfully completed high school and secured an admission to a college or university on their own merit.

Mr. Davis' career spans more than 50 years. He attended Howard University, for four years and then, began his career as a writer and actor with the Rose McClendon Players in Harlem, New York in 1939. In 1946, he made his Broadway stage debut in "Jeb" and subsequently performed in many Broadway productions, including "Anna Lucasta", "The Wisteria", "Green Pastures", "Jamaica", "Ballad for Bamshire", "The Zulu and the

Zayda”, and the stage version of “I’m Not Rappaport”. In 1961, he wrote and starred in the stage play “Purlie Victorious”. He made his film debut in 1950 in “No Way Out” and in recent years, he appeared in the films “Miss Evers’ Boys”, “Dr. Doolittle”, “Get on the Bus”, “I’m Not Rappaport”, “12 Angry Men”, for Showtime Network; and on the CBS television series “Promised Land” and “Touched by An Angel”.

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