

**AUDREY'S SOCIETY WHIRL**



By Audrey J. Bernard  
Lifestyles & Society Editor

"For 24 years, the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) has been the catalyst for community revitalization, leading the effort to rebuild the Harlem community and to transform the lives of its residents. Our honorees are a reflection of our goals and dedication to Harlem," stated Attorney Lucille L. McEwen, president, HCCI, prior to presenting awards to the 2010 honorees of HCCI's 8<sup>th</sup> annual "Let Us Break Bread Together" awards gala.

The event recently took place at Gospel UpTown in Harlem, New York and was attended by attendees from an array of dedicated Harlem business owners, civic leaders, community activists, healthcare professionals and the political arena, including Governor Mayor David N. Dinkins, Marci McCall, manager, new development, Emblem Health, and retired Dr. Muriel Petlin, the matrix of medicine in Harlem.

This year's honorees included First Lady Michelle Paige Paterson who was surprised by the unexpected attendance by her husband, Gov. David Paterson and daughter Ashley Dennis. Ms. Paterson was feted for her dedication of the Healthy Steps to Albany program helping

**8th Annual Gala**

**HCCI honors New York City's First Lady Michelle Paige Paterson at GU**



Michelle Paige Paterson, Marci McCall, Councilwoman Inez Dickens, Governor David Paterson, Ashley Dennis, Ron White

youth fight obesity. Additional honorees included Dr. Azeez B. Alarifi, president of the NAACP's New York Branch who was the recipient of the coveted Rev. Cason Frederick B. Williams Community Service Award for her decade's long commitment to civil rights and the labor movement, and Rev. Dedrick Blue, Pastor, Ephesus Seventh Day Adventist Church, actor and philanthropist Kalfin David.

Another highlight of the award giving program was the presentation of HCCI's annual Cultural

Frederick B. Williams Scholarship award to scholar Natasha Murphy. The esteemed award was established through support by the Rockefeller Foundation. The ambitious Howard University student was awarded a scholarship for \$1000 for her achievements during her freshman year.

The stellar event kicked off with James Brown's stirring rendition of "Let Us Break Bread Together." In addition to the award program, guests enjoyed mingling, each other for fabulous auction items such as Broadway tickets to see

Key Award nominated Hazel Washington and Viola Davis in August Wilson's Fences, golfing tickets and artwork designed by HCCI's Cooperator Clubhouse.

"HCCI remains undaunted in its efforts to uplift the Harlem community. While we have done much, we see greater things on the horizon as we go forward in these turbulent times," stated HCCI chair Rev. Dr. Charles Curtis.

Proceeds from this event will benefit the ongoing work of HCCI, a diverse, interfaith com-

munity of over 100 congregations established to revitalize the physical, economic, cultural, and spiritual conditions of the Harlem community.

HCCI has made a substantial impact on the mental and living conditions prevalent in Harlem by developing low to moderate income housing, creating supportive health and human service facilities and programs, providing commercial development opportunities to local businesses, and expanding cultural programs.



Michelle Paige Paterson, Dr. Joan O. Dawson, David N. Dinkins, Joyee Dinkins, Dr. Muriel Petlin



Dr. Dedrick L. Blue



Councilwoman Inez E. Dickens, Natasha Murphy



Randy Tucker Jr., Dr. Charles Curtis, Dr. Annie B. Martin, Rev. Patricia Reebberg



Pastor Jaime Kowlessur, Dr. Balrick L. Blue, Dr. Joan O. Dawson



Ray Johnson, Lucille L. McEwen, Michelle Paige Paterson, Ashley Dennis



Dr. Charles Curtis, Dr. Annie B. Martin, Rev. Patricia Reebberg, Mr. George H. Weidman

(Photos by Robert Johnson)