

## NEWS RELEASE

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— FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE —

## **The Jackie Robinson Foundation (JRF) to Host Third Annual JAZZ on the Grass Benefit on September 20<sup>th</sup>**

- **Kenny Rankin, Rick Braun, Carmen Lundy, Freda Payne, Michael Henderson, Paul Jackson Jr. and Brian Bromberg Among Jazz Luminaries Set to Perform in Sherman Oaks, California**
- **Concert will Continue Iconic Tradition of Jazz and Jackie Robinson that Dates to 1963, Marking 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of First Jazz Fundraiser at Robinson's Stamford, Connecticut Estate**
- **Event Slated for Home of Lynne and Oz Scott, Noted Hollywood and Theatrical Director**

(Los Angeles)--The Jackie Robinson Foundation will host its third annual Jazz on the Grass benefit on September 20<sup>th</sup> beginning at 2 pm at the Sherman Oaks, California home of Lynne and Oz Scott. The star-studded event will benefit the Jackie Robinson Foundation, a college scholarship organization founded in 1973 to perpetuate Jackie Robinson's legacy by providing four-year college grants as well as extensive mentoring and leadership development training to academically gifted minority students. The Foundation, currently celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary, has supported over 1,200 Scholars who have maintained a 97% graduation rate, more than twice the national average for minority students. Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier on April 15, 1947, and was an ardent civil rights activist during and following his pioneering career on the baseball diamond.

Kenny Rankin, Kathryn Bostic, Brian Bromberg, Paul Jackson, Jr., Carmen Lundy, Freda Payne, Michael Henderson Sylvester Rivers, Rick Braun and Harold Wheeler are just a few of the musicians who have generously donated their time to play at this year's concert. In addition, Rivers will also serve as the event's musical director. Performances will also include surprise guest artists.

The event continues a rich heritage of jazz that has been part of the Jackie Robinson legacy for over four decades. Inspired by the March on Washington, Jackie and Rachel Robinson organized their first jazz concert at their home in Stamford, Connecticut, in 1963 to raise bail money for jailed civil rights activists including the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The concert was an instant success, and attracted some of the most iconic names in jazz including Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah

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Vaughn and Dizzy Gillespie. After Jackie Robinson's death in 1972, the concert became a fundraiser for the Jackie Robinson Foundation and enjoyed enormous popularity.

In 2006, JRF brought the event to its supporters on the west coast as part of its national growth efforts. The Foundation opened an office in Los Angeles in 2005 and currently serves 280 scholarship recipients at 106 colleges and universities and hailing in 34 states.

"*JAZZ on the Grass* is a wonderful opportunity for those who share the Foundation's commitment to 'opportunity through education' to come together for an exciting and memorable afternoon of electrifying entertainment and fellowship," said Jackie Robinson Foundation President and CEO Della Britton Baeza. "We are very excited to continue our proud tradition of jazz concerts for our west coast supporters."

Event host Oz Scott added: "Lynne and I are thrilled to open our home for this fantastic occasion. We are delighted to be able to further the Foundation's mission of developing future leaders who will carry on Jackie Robinson's values and ideals."

Pat Prescott of 94.7 The Wave will once again serve as Mistress of Ceremonies. Event sponsors include Ford Motor Company, Broadway Federal Bank, CBS Paramount, City National Bank, Hennessy, New Era, Nordstrom and UCLA.

In addition, JRF/Los Angeles Dodgers Team 42 Scholars Anthony Diamond and Nicolette Robinson will perform. Diamond, a talented saxophonist and rising senior at Stanford University has performed with Branford Marsalis and graced the stage at the Foundation's 2007 Annual Awards Dinner at New York's Waldorf=Astoria Hotel, while Robinson, a junior at UCLA and an accomplished vocalist and actress, performed at both last year's *JAZZ on the Grass* event and also sang 'God Bless, America' at Dodgers Stadium on April 15, 2007 in commemoration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jackie Robinson's barrier-breaking first game.

Previous *JAZZ on the Grass* artists have included Lalah Hathaway, Marcus Miller, Brian McKnight, Dave Koz, Jeffrey Osborne, Patti Austin, and George Duke.

Tickets to the event are \$300 and may be purchased by calling Jai Phillips at the Jackie Robinson Foundation's Los Angeles office at (213) 330-7726.

Please log onto [www.jackierobinson.org](http://www.jackierobinson.org) for updates on performers and other event information.