



PRESS RELEASE

*For Immediate Release

Contact: Priscilla Clarke
Tel. 240-476-9643, priscilla@clarkepr.com

U.S. DREAM ACADEMY RECEIVES ONE MILLION DOLLAR DONATION AT 20TH ANNIVERSARY GALA FROM OPRAH WINFREY

The Gala honored Award-Winning Icon Cicely Tyson, MENTOR CEO David Shapiro, and Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy Alumna, Mpumi Nobiva

Hosted by Award-Winning Actor Larenz Tate and
WHUR Radio Personality, Triscina Grey

(Washington, D.C.) May 23, 2018 – The U.S. Dream Academy hosted an exciting 17th Annual “Power of A Dream” Gala themed “Living the Dream” on May 8th at the Washington, D.C. Marriott Marquis presented by Amway in honor of the organizations 20th Anniversary. The gala fundraising goal of \$1 million for the 450 attending guests was exceeded when global media leader Oprah Winfrey had Mpumi Nobiva, an alumna from the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy who was being honored at the event with the DreamBlazer Award, make a surprise announcement that Winfrey would match all donations made during the gala celebration.

“Oprah Winfrey is a long-time supporter of U.S. Dream Academy, but this donation was an incredible surprise! This generous donation from Oprah and our other critical supporters, such as Amway, make our programs to serve children all over the country through our after school tutoring, mentoring and our dream building possible,” said, Wintley Phipps, Founder & CEO, U.S. Dream Academy.

“It was a perfect moment, having one of Oprah’s mentee’s from her Leadership Academy, make the announcement. Nobiva’s accomplishments demonstrate the power of mentoring combined with hard work and perseverance to make “Dreams” come true. We were thrilled to honor Mpumi as our DreamBlazer Awardee and then to have her surprise us with this announcement, was a great way to end the evening,” said C. Diane Wallace Booker, founding Executive Director for U.S. Dream Academy.

The gala was co-hosted by popular award-winning actor, producer and director **Larenz Tate** (known for co-starring in *Girls Trip* - Universal Pictures, *Power* - Starz Network, *Deuces on Netflix*) along with WHUR popular radio personality **Triscina Grey**. This years honorees, **Cicely Tyson** (President’s Award), **David Shapiro, CEO of MENTOR:National Mentoring Partnership** (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Service Award) and **Mpumi Nobiva** (DreamBlazer Award) are passionate advocates of mentorship, edu-

cation and philanthropy, working to make a lasting impact in their respective fields, in our communities and around the world.

One of the many highlights of the evening was an inspiring performance and heartfelt personal words from honoree and icon **Cicely Tyson** who spoke words of inspiration directly to the more than 120 DreamKids and the Takoma Academy Chorale after their choir performance on stage. Tyson then led the group in an impromptu song of “Jesus Loves Me”, as students of the choir joined softly in with Tyson. Many of the young people were visibly moved to tears by this moment of unity between the students and Tyson singing together. The magic continued with a special performance by the U.S. Dream Academy founder and Grammy nominee, **Wintley Phipps**, the **Takoma Academy Chorale** and the **DreamKids**. In addition, the Southwest Mentor of the Year Award was presented to three recipients this year, including; **Darwin Kemp**, (Washington, D.C.), **Roosevelt Neely** (Houston, TX.) and **Beverly Smith** (Indianapolis, IN).

Dream Academy students also participated in a XS Gum Design Contest with Amway during the course of the school year. On stage, Jim Ayres (Managing Director - Amway North America) and David Vanderveen (VP and GM for XS, Amway Global) awarded the 1st place prize to one student, Kaleem Payne a 7th grader from the Baltimore City Dream Academy. He will receive a cash award of \$2,500.00 and his design will be on every box of XS Energy GUM packaging that will be produced and distributed around the world, along with the US Dream Academy.

The US Dream Academy **2018 Honorary Congressional Committee**, included: The Honorable **Pete Aguilar**, The Honorable **Anthony Brown**, The Honorable **Benjamin Cardin**, The Honorable **Elijah Cummings**, The Honorable **Val Demings**, The Honorable **Kamala D. Harris**, The Honorable **Orrin G. Hatch**, The Honorable **Eleanor Holmes Norton**, The Honorable **Sheila Jackson Lee**, The Honorable **John P. Sarbanes** and The Honorable **Chris Van Hollen**.

For ten years, Amway has served as the Presenting Sponsor of the gala. Additional sponsors that have contributed to make this year’s fundraiser successful include: Centera Transport Inc., Southwest Airlines, MarkerMan Productions, QTS, IBOAI, Giant Foods, BWW CHARITIES, CCMG, Richard & Mo Anderson and Sue Ann Wells.

Since 2001, the annual Power of a Dream Gala has raised more than \$19 million to assist with the provision of high-quality after-school programs specifically tailored for children living in high-risk communities. Today, there are more than 700 young people in seven (7) cities across this nation who benefit each day from evidence-based comprehensive youth development programming delivered through Dream Academy Learning Center Communities, including in Baltimore, Washington, DC., Philadelphia, Houston, Orlando, Indianapolis and Salt Lake City.

The 2018 U.S. Dream Academy Award recipients;

Cicely Tyson, Iconic Emmy and Tony winning Actress, was honored with the **President’s Award** for her tireless work ensuring that the next generation has the tools to succeed. Throughout her career, Ms. Tyson has always been an advocate for children and their need for education. A staunch supporter of the fine arts, Cicely co-founded the Dance Theatre of Harlem. She was honored by having a Performing Arts School named after her, **Cicely L. Tyson Community School of Performing and Fine Arts**. Her work and achievements have inspired the leaders of tomorrow to live their dreams. Special guest presenter alongside Mr. Phipps to present the award to Ms. Tyson, was inspirational speaker, **Wanda Durant**, also known as The Real MVP (Mother of Tony and NBA Champion Kevin Durant).



David Shapiro, CEO of MENTOR, who received the **Martin Luther King Jr. Community Service Award** for his work in the mentoring field and impacting the future success of our children in underserved communities. MENTOR's mission is to fuel the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships and ultimately close that gap, to ensure that every young person must have the supportive relationships they need to grow and develop. Since Shapiro took leadership, MENTOR launched In Real Life, a national mentoring public awareness campaign, with the support of the NBA and has worked extensively with the Obama Administration on the mentoring component of My Brother's Keeper. MENTOR was also selected by the U.S Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to lead the National Mentoring Resource Center.

Honoree **Mpumi Nobiva**, is an International Speaker and Communication Strategist. She has spoken at the White House, congressional fundraisers, corporate functions and nonprofit initiatives in several countries. She excelled in the first class of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls, and serves as the first alumna on the Board of Directors of the Academy. Mpumi is developing the digital infrastructure for Share Your Story Africa - an initiative inspired by her advocacy work uniting youth against HIV/AIDS and domestic violence in South Africa. The U.S. Dream Academy honored her with the First ever **DreamBlazer Award** for her innovative work.

###

U.S. Dream Academy

The U.S. Dream Academy, founded in 1998, is a national after-school program that aims to break the cycle of intergenerational incarceration. The mission of the U.S. Dream Academy is to inspire and elevate the lives of children of incarcerated parents and vulnerable young people through high performance relationships with caring adults. We seek to maximize their potential by building dreams, perseverance, academic skills and character. The program, founded by renowned Grammy Nominated gospel singer Wintley Phipps, is currently operating in 7 cities nationwide including; Baltimore, MD., Houston, TX., Indianapolis, IN., Orlando, FL., Philadelphia, PA., Salt Lake City, UT., and Washington, D.C.

###

Website; <http://www.usdreamacademy.org>

Twitter; https://twitter.com/US_DreamAcademy (@US_DreamAcademy)

Facebook; <https://www.facebook.com/USDreamAcademy/>

YouTube; <https://www.youtube.com/user/USDreamAcademyinc>

Media Contact: Priscilla Clarke, at Clarke & Associates Tel. (240)476-9643, Email. Priscilla@clarkepr.com

For Tickets or Sponsorship Opportunities Contact: phone: [410.772.7143](tel:410.772.7143), email: info@usdreamacademy.com <https://usdreamacademy.org/events-gala-5-18-18.cfm>