



# 41ST NAACP IMAGE AWARDS

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## **WYCLEF JEAN TO RECEIVE THE NAACP/FORD VANGUARD AWARD DURING LIVE BROADCAST OF "41<sup>ST</sup> NAACP IMAGE AWARDS" FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, ON FOX**

Grammy Award-winning songwriter/musician/producer and humanitarian Wyclef Jean will be honored with the prestigious Vanguard Award at the 41<sup>ST</sup> NAACP IMAGE AWARDS, broadcast live from Los Angeles' historic Shrine Auditorium, Friday, Feb. 26 (8:00-10:00 PM ET live/PT tape-delayed) on FOX.

The NAACP/Ford Vanguard Award is presented to a person whose groundbreaking work increases understanding and awareness of racial and social issues. Previous honorees include Tyler Perry, Russell Simmons, Aretha Franklin, Prince, Stanley Kramer and Steven Spielberg.

"The NAACP is proud to honor Wyclef Jean this year's Vanguard Award for his continued activism and dedication," said NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous. "His passion for social justice and helping those in need should be applauded. It was Wyclef who was on a plane shortly after the devastating earthquake hit his homeland of Haiti, and it was his dedication to the people of Haiti that helped spur all of us to donate what we could and keep the people of Haiti in our hearts and prayers."

A founding member of the pioneering hip-hop group the Fugees and a prolific solo artist, Wyclef Jean has effortlessly crossed genres, generations and geographic boundaries with his music. Jean's musical journey began in Haiti where he first sang in his father's church at age 3. At 10 years old, he moved with his family to the United States, where he formed his first serious musical collaboration, the Tranzlator Crew, with his New Jersey classmates Lauryn Hill and Pras Michel. By 1994, the Tranzlator Crew had become the Fugees, and the group enjoyed its first critical acclaim with its debut album, "Blunted On Reality."

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Jean’s talents as a producer and performer have led to myriad successful projects over the past two decades, including collaborating with Bono on “New Day” and Shakira on the Grammy-nominated international smash hit “Hips Don’t Lie,” as well as writing and producing Carlos Santana’s Grammy Award-winning “Supernatural” and Whitney

Houston’s “My Love Is Your Love.” Wyclef is currently working on his seventh solo LP, entitled Wyclef Jean. The forthcoming album returns Wyclef to his musical roots and will be released in Summer 2010 via Carnival House/Columbia Records/Sony Music.

In 2005, Jean founded Yéle Haiti, a grassroots movement inspiring change in Haiti through programs in education, sports, the arts and environment, to provide aid and assistance to his native Haiti. The organization’s community service programs include food distribution and mobilizing emergency relief. The term “yéle” was coined by Wyclef in a song and means “a cry for freedom.” After the devastating earthquake in January, all programs now focus on the relief and reconstruction of the island nation.

Event sponsors for the 41<sup>ST</sup> NAACP IMAGE AWARDS include FedEx, Pepsi, UAW/Chrysler, AT&T, Ford Motor Company, Hyundai, Sprint and American Airlines

Founded on Feb. 12, 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is the nation’s oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its half-million adult and youth members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, and monitor equal opportunity in the public and private sectors. For more information on the NAACP IMAGE AWARDS, please visit [www.naacpimageawards.net](http://www.naacpimageawards.net).

