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For Immediate Release

Contact: Beverly James
Assistant Director, Media Relations
Phone: 678-891-2686
Fax: 678-891-2966
email: Beverly.James@gpc.edu

GPC to honor Chinese group, DeKalb Sheriff at MLK celebration

Georgia Perimeter College will honor the National Association of Chinese Americans, Atlanta Chapter (NACA), and DeKalb County Sheriff Thomas Brown with Humanitarian Awards at its 13th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration, to be held at 7 p.m. on Jan. 15. The event, free and open to the public, will be held at Beulah Missionary Baptist Church, 2340 Clifton Springs Road, Decatur.

GPC established the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Awards to honor individuals and corporations who contribute in significant ways to the fulfillment of Dr. King's dream. This year, the MLK committee added the additional criteria of an activity which represents an historic first, to support the 2009 program theme. Dr. Mae Jemison, the first black woman in space, will be the keynote speaker.

"I am proud to recognize our alumnus Tom Brown in particular because of his dedicated service to our community, and NACA because of its consistent support of higher education," said GPC President Dr. Anthony S. Tricoli. "Both Sheriff Brown and NACA embody the spirit of Dr. King's dream to not only succeed, but to help others attain their goals."

NACA, the winner of the 2009 Corporate Humanitarian Award, has partnered with GPC for nearly 30 years through a wide array of programs and projects that impact the lives of students and communities. NACA supported the King Papers Society to bring the Martin Luther King Jr. Papers to Atlanta and supports community organizations

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working for minority culture preservation and diversity development in Atlanta.

NACA's members represent a great number of first generation immigrants, most of who continue to support other first generation Chinese-Americans. The organization has raised more than \$30,000 to help survivors of last year's earthquake.

Closer to home, NACA funds GPC's Center of International Language and Culture's Chinese-American Exchange Program, as well as a nursing scholarship. The award is given to a student with Asian language skills who can help meet the health service needs of the Asian community.

GPC is proud to count several NACA representatives as Foundation Board members, including NACA Chair Lani Wong and NACA Past President Henry Yu. "It's important that we give back," said Wong, "especially since we've done so well since coming to America."

For the past 26 years, Brown has enjoyed a distinguished career in public service. He began as a firefighter with the City of Atlanta in 1972, before becoming DeKalb County's fire chief when he was only 31 years old, making him the youngest person in the nation to hold that position.

In 1990, he was appointed as DeKalb County Public Safety Director, pioneering the concept of Community-Oriented Policing, or COPS, and established a number of fire safety initiatives taught in the DeKalb schools that resulted in large drops in fire-related deaths at home. In his current role as sheriff, Brown is responsible for operating the county jail, serving all warrants, and for providing security at the county courthouse.

Brown's commitment to community is reflected in part by his 20 years of service on various boards and committees, such as the DeKalb Rape Crisis Center and the Georgia Center for Children. Brown is also a board member for Nicholas House, which assists homeless families, and he works with Project Destiny, a church-based counseling organization for first-time, nonviolent juvenile offenders and their families.

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Georgia Perimeter College, the third largest institution of the University System of Georgia, serves nearly 23,000 students through four campuses and several sites in metro Atlanta. For additional information, visit www.gpc.edu.