

For Immediate Release
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Leader of D.C. Nonprofit to be Honored by Ebony Magazine
for SisterMentors Program

Dr. Shireen Lewis, Executive Director of D.C. nonprofit, EduSeed, and Founder of its SisterMentors program, will receive an award from Ebony Magazine on Saturday, August 29, 2009, at the Willard InterContinental Hotel in Washington, D.C. Ebony is honoring Dr. Lewis as an "Unsung Hero" who is making a difference for children, schools and communities. Ebony, a news magazine published by Chicago-based Johnson Publishing Company since 1945, chronicles the achievements of blacks in America.

Dr. Lewis' distinguished career includes almost 30 years of mentoring and coaching women and girls, dating back to her work as an educator in her home country of Trinidad and Tobago. As the Founder of EduSeed's SisterMentors program, Dr. Lewis has helped 32 women of color to earn doctorates and two groups of girls of color to get into college, including to Duke University in Durham, North Carolina; Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland; and Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. Many of the women graduates now serve in many roles in communities in the U.S. and abroad, including as leaders of nonprofits and professors at universities.

"The impetus for my work," says Dr. Lewis, "is my experience as a child attending the first school in my village in Trinidad and Tobago. It was there that I was mentored by a young woman teacher when I was quite young. That mentoring relationship profoundly changed my life and boosted my self-esteem to such an extent that I went on to excel in college, earn a law degree, and a Ph.D."

SisterMentors women and girls are African Americans, Latinas, Asian Americans and immigrants. SisterMentors helps women of color doctoral candidates to complete their dissertations and get their doctorates. The women in turn, while in the program, give back by mentoring girls of color from disadvantaged backgrounds, inspiring girls to stay in school, do well and go to college. The girls are in elementary, middle and high school in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The women serve as role models --- women of color who have achieved academic success despite the odds.

"Dr. Shireen Lewis epitomizes SisterMentors' core value --- education to serve," said Montana Cole, Chair of EduSeed's Board of Directors. "We are so proud of her service to the women and girls of SisterMentors, and are heartened that Ebony is recognizing her accomplishments."

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EduSeed is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C. For more information on EduSeed visit www.eduseed.org. For more information on EduSeed's SisterMentors program visit www.sistermentors.org.

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