

Diversity Focus introduces an expanded 2012 SHIFT Series

Cedar Rapids, Iowa – January 29, 2012 - Diversity Focus announces the 2012 **SHIFT Luncheon Series** events. The three speakers include: John Quinones, ABC News correspondent and Primetime host (April 18), Geoffrey Canada, President and CEO of the Harlem Children's Zone (August 7), and Michael Soon Lee, retail sales and marketing diversity expert (September 13). In addition to the third annual Luncheon Series, Diversity Focus introduces the inaugural **SHIFT Lecture Series** with director Jordan Thierry and the Iowa premier of his film, *The Black Fatherhood Project*, in Mt Vernon (February 15), Iowa City, (February 17,) and Cedar Rapids (February 18).

All **SHIFT Luncheon Speaker Series** events are from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm, includes lunch, at \$50 per attendee. Registration is required and can be made at www.diversityfocus.org/shift. All **SHIFT Lecture Series** events are free and open to the public, and do not require registration. You can also find more information at www.diversityfocus.org/shift.

The **SHIFT Lecture Series** begins in February, with a screening of *The Black Fatherhood Project*, a film directed by Jordan Thierry, describing the family dynamics and roles of the African-American male as a father figure. Diversity Focus has partnered with Cornell College's Office of Cultural Affairs, University of Iowa's Center for Diversity & Enrichment and The Hubbard Group, the African-American Museum of Iowa, and In the Company of Men for this event. The **SHIFT Lecture Series** events are at the following locations: February 15, 2012, 6:00 p.m. at Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa; February 17, 2012, 7:00 p.m. at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa; and February 18, 2012, 11:00 a.m. at the African American Museum of Iowa, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The **SHIFT Luncheon Speaker Series** starts on April 18, 2012 at the Coralville Marriott with John Quinones, ABC News correspondent and Primetime host. Mr. Quinones is also the host of ABC's *What Would You Do?*, a series of reports that test human nature through hidden camera scenarios. In his career, he has covered various topics including the Chilean Miners disaster, following a young man to Colombia in search of his birth mother, a polygamous religious sect, and homeless children.

The next **SHIFT Luncheon Speaker** will be held on August 7, 2012 at the Kirkwood Hotel with Geoffrey Canada, president and CEO of the Harlem Children's Zone. Canada has been featured in the 2010 documentary *Waiting for Superman*, showcasing the downturn of the public school system in America. Mr. Canada has 20-plus years experience in education and has been nationally recognized for his work helping children and families stay on track throughout their personal and professional lives.

The final **SHIFT Luncheon Speaker** will be held on September 13, 2012, at the Kirkwood Hotel with Michael Soon Lee, retail sales and marketing diversity expert. Lee is the president of Ethoconnect, a consulting and training company specializing in selling to the multicultural market in America. He has spoken around the world on topics of marketing and selling to the diverse marketplace and understanding how different cultures buy products. His clients include Coca-Cola, National Association of Music Merchants, Alticor and many others.

"We will continue to bring world-class speakers to the region and challenge our attendees to **"SHIFT"** the way they think about diversity. Diversity Focus plans to create an environment of action," says Chad Simmons, Interim Executive Director. "We have expanded the **"SHIFT"** brand, so we can reach more people and develop more opportunities for the community, to explore solutions to making the Corridor a better place to live and work."

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Diversity Focus was established in 2005 as a non-profit organization devoted to enhancing the diversity of the Cedar Rapids - Iowa City corridor.

Diversity Focus Vision:

Diversity is the crucial link to economic, cultural, academic, and technological success. Diversity Focus' vision is that the Corridor community be the model of inclusion that values, nurtures, attracts, and retains people of diverse backgrounds, cultures and beliefs.

For more information about Diversity Focus, please visit www.diversityfocus.org.

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John Quinones



Geoffrey Canada



Michael Soon Lee