



MEDIA RELEASE

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REVEREND JESSE JACKSON IN TORONTO

CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER TO APPEAR AT INTERNATIONAL BOWL KICKOFF LUNCHEON

Toronto, Ontario – The Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr., Founder and President of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition will be the keynote speaker at the 2009 International Bowl Kickoff Luncheon at the Sheraton Centre Hotel Ballroom in Toronto on Friday, January 2nd, 2009. Reverend Jackson is one of America's foremost civil rights, religious and political figures. Over the past 40 years he has played a pivotal role in virtually every movement for empowerment, peace, civil rights, gender equality, and economic and social justice.

Rev. Jackson will be appearing at this year's luncheon in conjunction with the 50th anniversary celebration of the University at Buffalo's 1958 team that took a courageous stand against segregation. The team declined its spot in the Tangerine Bowl after learning of a county rule in Orlando that barred black players from competing with white players on the same field. This would have meant leaving behind players Willie Evans and Mike Wilson, and the team unanimously voted against it.

"We are honoured to have Rev. Jesse Jackson attend our luncheon and pay tribute to the '58 Buffalo team, whose unity and commitment to a cause remains as relevant now as it did 50 years ago," International Bowl President Don Loding said. "Rev. Jackson has been a major proponent in the advancement of human rights and equality and what these football players did in 1958 to sacrifice a chance to play in a sports event embodies human rights and equality. Together Rev. Jackson and the surviving members of the '58 team will be an inspiration for everyone who attends this year's International Bowl Kickoff Luncheon."

A hallmark of Rev. Jackson's work has been his commitment to youth. Through visiting thousands of high schools, colleges, universities and correctional facilities he has encouraged excellence and hope while challenging young people to study diligently and stay drug-free.

His two historical presidential campaigns broke new ground in U.S. politics. In 1984 his campaign registered over one million new voters, accumulated 3.5 million votes, and helped the Democratic Party regain control of the Senate in 1986. His 1988 campaign registered over two million new voters, garnered seven million votes, and helped boost hundreds of state and local elected officials into office.

As a central member of the mainstream media, from 1992 to 2000, Rev. Jackson hosted *"Both Sides with Jesse Jackson"* on CNN and continues to write a weekly column of analysis which is syndicated by the Chicago Tribune/Los Angeles Times. He also hosts a weekly, two-hour radio talk show, "Keep Hope Alive with Jesse Jackson," on over 50 Clear Channel stations nationwide, and his Saturday Morning Forum at PUSH Headquarters is broadcast over The Word Network every Saturday.

He is the author of two books: *Keep Hope Alive*, and *Straight From the Heart*. In 1996, Rev. Jackson co-authored the books *Legal Lynching: Racism, Injustice, and the Death Penalty* and *It's About The Money* with his son, U.S. Representative Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.

This year's International Bowl Kickoff Luncheon at the Sheraton Centre Hotel Ballroom will be from 11:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. The two head coaches, University at Buffalo's Turner Gill and University of Connecticut's Randy Edsall, will also be speaking.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL BOWL:

The International Bowl is the only NCAA Division I football game played outside the U.S. The third annual International Bowl will be played on Saturday, January 3, 2009 at Rogers Centre with a noon kick-off.

The game will be broadcast on The Score in Canada and ESPN2 in the US. The game will also be heard live on the Fan 590.

Tickets are now on sale at all Ticketmaster outlets, online at Ticketmaster.ca or by calling 416-872-5000.

For further information, including media credential requests, please visit the official International Bowl website at www.internationalbowl.org.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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Don Loding is available for interviews for any members of the media seeking additional information.

