



DATE: June 18, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL FORUM AIRS ON WEDU ***Tavis Smiley Moderates Live Broadcast From Howard University***

Tampa, FL – Democratic presidential candidates Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton, Christopher Dodd, John Edwards, Mike Gravel, Dennis Kucinich, Barack Obama and Bill Richardson will participate in the ***All-American Presidential Forums on PBS, moderated by Tavis Smiley, on WEDU, west central Florida's primary PBS station, Thursday, June 28, 2007, from 9:00-10:30 p.m.*** This forum will be broadcast live from Howard University in Washington, DC. Questions to the candidates will be posed by Smiley and journalists Michel Martin of National Public Radio, nationally syndicated columnist Ruben Navarrette Jr. and USA Today and Gannett News Service columnist DeWayne Wickham.

All-American Presidential Forums on PBS, moderated by Tavis Smiley, marks the first time that a panel exclusively comprised of journalists of color will be represented in primetime. The candidates will be asked about issues ranging from healthcare and housing to Katrina relief, the economy and the environment, among others outlined in the #1 The New York Times best-seller, [Covenant With Black America](#).

"We are encouraged by the enthusiasm of all parties for this historic event," said Smiley. "From the title to the format, the 'All-American Presidential Forums' was created to provide fresh perspectives and an unprecedented level of inclusion for all Americans in general, and people of color in particular, in these critical discussions about our country's future."

"The Forums will give voice to vital questions the American public wants to have answered in this crucial election process," said John Boland, PBS chief content officer. "Kicking off an ambitious line-up of content on multiple platforms for PBS Election 2008, we are proud to help facilitate this important dialogue, which truly represents the mission of public broadcasting."

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Immediate public feedback on the performance of the candidates will be conducted by noted pollster Frank Luntz, who will also appear on “Tavis Smiley” on PBS the following evening to discuss his findings.

The PBS Democratic Forum will be simultaneously webcast on PBS.org, and video of both events will be archived for download and viewing on the Web site. The Web site (pbs.org/tavissmiley) will include additional coverage of the presidential candidates and their positions on key issues of the campaign, including past interviews, backgrounders, viewer polls and a forum blog and election resources. Visitors will be able to submit their own questions for the candidates, read commentary and share their own opinions.

WEDU, a leader in public affairs programming – from both a local and national perspective, will air a second forum for Republican presidential candidates on September 27, 2007, on the campus of Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland.

About Tavis Smiley

TAVIS SMILEY is the host of “Tavis Smiley” on PBS and “The Tavis Smiley Show from PRI” and the author/editor of 11 books, including The New York Times best-sellers *Covenant With Black America* and *What I Know for Sure: My Story of Growing Up in America*. His latest book, *THE COVENANT in Action* is in stores now. For more information, visit www.tavistalks.com.

About the Panelists

MICHEL MARTIN is a host and reporter for National Public Radio. Prior to joining NPR, she was a correspondent for ABC News Nightline, a reporter for The Washington Post and a White House correspondent for The Wall Street Journal.

RUBEN NAVARRETTE JR. is a member of the editorial board of The San Diego Union-Tribune and a nationally syndicated columnist with The Washington Post Writers Group. His twice-a-week column appears in nearly 200 newspapers.

DeWAYNE WICKHAM is a columnist for USA Today and the Gannett News Service. His syndicated column is distributed to more than 130 daily newspapers in the United States. Wickham also serves as director of the Institute for Advanced Journalism Studies at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

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For more information about WEDU programming, special events, outreach efforts and community partnerships visit www.wedu.org or call 800.354.9338. WEDU, a 501(c)(3) organization, is West Central Florida's primary PBS station serving 16 counties including the Tampa, St. Petersburg, Pasco, Polk and Sarasota areas through multiple media disciplines including on-air broadcasting and online experiences. WEDU, recently awarded its second consecutive four-star rating by Charity Navigator, is financially supported by its local community, and provides the highest quality education, information, and entertainment programming on local, national, and international levels.

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