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The Executive Leadership Council Announces 2009 Award Winners

Gaylord National Harbor is Site of Oct. 8th Recognition Dinner

Sponsored by Financial Services Leader ING

WASHINGTON, DC – July 20, 2009 – General Colin L. Powell, entrepreneur Earvin “Magic” Johnson, and Johnson & Johnson will be honored by The Executive Leadership Council (ELC) and Foundation at its 2009 Annual Recognition Dinner. The Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center in National Harbor, Md., will be the venue on Thursday, Oct. 8, where more than 2,000 leaders in business, higher education and government will gather.

“ING is delighted to serve as lead sponsor of this annual celebration of African-American leadership and the corporate commitment to diversity and inclusion in American business,” said Thomas J. McInerney, chairman and CEO, ING Americas. “The Executive Leadership Council Annual Recognition Dinner has always been an important event attended by the nation’s leading CEOs and the most senior African-American executives. Our support for this event reflects our belief in the value of ELC’s work, our pride in the accomplishments of this year’s award winners and our confidence in the enduring value of diversity and inclusion.”

2009 Alvaro L. Martins Heritage Award will be presented to **General Colin L. Powell**, a soldier and statesman who served presidents as National Security Advisor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of State. The Heritage Award, which celebrates the African-American business legacy of the late Xerox executive, is being presented to Gen. Powell for his service to his country and community. He is the first and only African-American to serve on the Chiefs of Staff and the first African-American Secretary of State. The Harlem native and his wife, Alma, founded the nonprofit, America’s Promise Alliance, to provide support for young people.

2009 Achievement Award will be presented to **Earvin “Magic” Johnson**, chief executive of Magic Johnson Enterprises and the Magic Johnson Foundation. Last year, Johnson launched his book, *32 ways to be a Champion in Business*, offering detailed advice, real-world expertise and the enthusiasm of an entrepreneur who pioneered economic development in long-neglected urban communities.

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2009 Corporate Award will be presented to **Johnson & Johnson**, a global name brand that has lived up to its Credo, challenging its employees and partners to put the needs and well-being of the people it serves first. *DiversityInc* magazine named Johnson & Johnson the top company for diversity this year. The Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies considers diversity a central part of its culture and fundamental to its employees' passion for improving the health and well-being of people throughout the world.

“We are thrilled with the slate of this year’s honorees,” said Carl Brooks, president and CEO of The Executive Leadership Council and The Executive Leadership Foundation. “There is no doubt that this historic and challenging year for our nation and for business is the right time to recognize these champions of fairness and excellence.”

CNN’s Roland Martin and Ms. Shon Gables of the *Black Enterprise Business Report* will emcee this year’s recognition dinner. As in years past, the dinner will be preceded by a daylong summit of members of The Executive Leadership Council and their Fortune 500 CEOs. The following day, young African-American executives and managers will participate in the Mid-Level Managers Symposium where they will develop professional, personal and intellectual skills with the help of experienced executives and facilitators.

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About The Executive Leadership Council

The Executive Leadership Council is an independent, non-profit 501(c)(6) corporation founded in 1986, providing African-American executives of major U.S. companies with a professional network and forum to offer perspective and direction on national and international business and public policy issues. Our programs develop future business leaders, filling the pipeline from the classroom to the boardroom. It is the preeminent organization that recognizes the strengths, success, contributions, and impact of African-American corporate business leaders. Council members – more than 460 executives, one-third of them women – represent more than 250 Fortune 500 corporations. For more information, please visit www.elcinfo.com.

About ING

ING is a global financial institution of Dutch origin banking, investments, life insurance and retirement services to over 85 million private, corporate and institutional clients in more than 40 countries. With a diverse workforce of about 115,000 people, ING is dedicated to setting the standard in helping our clients manage their financial future.

In the U.S., the ING (NYSE: ING) family of companies offer a comprehensive array of financial services to retail and institutional clients, which includes life insurance, retirement plans, mutual funds, managed accounts, alternative investments, direct banking, institutional investment management, annuities, employee benefits, financial planning, and reinsurance. ING holds top-tier rankings in key U.S. markets and serves nearly 30 million customers across the nation.

ING’s diversity management philosophy and commitment to workforce diversity, diversity marketing, corporate citizenship and supplier diversity fosters an inclusive environment for employees that supports a distinctive product and service experience for the financial services consumer.

For more information, visit www.ing.com/us.