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**The Executive Leadership Council Announces 2010 Award Winners**  
*The Coca-Cola Company is Lead Sponsor of the Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> Recognition Gala*

**NEW YORK, NY – September 29, 2010** – McDonald’s President and COO Don Thompson and his company will join former chair of the Board of Trustees of the General Mills Foundation Reatha Clark King as honorees at The Executive Leadership Council (ELC) and Foundation 2010 Annual Recognition Gala on Thursday, Oct. 14, 2010. More than 1,800 leaders in business, higher education and government will gather at The Hilton New York to honor the award recipients and launch a year-long celebration of The Executive Leadership Council’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The annual recognition gala raises funds each year to underwrite the costs of leadership development programs and university scholarships for promising African-American students and young executives aspiring to fill corporate leadership positions.

“The Coca-Cola Company is pleased to be a part of this extraordinary event recognizing business excellence and the outstanding contributions of African Americans,” said Muhtar Kent, Chairman and CEO of The Coca-Cola Company. “For more than two decades, The Coca-Cola Company has strongly supported ELC’s mission to build a diverse business leadership pipeline, and we are honored to participate in this year’s gala celebration.”

The **2010 Achievement Award** will be presented to **Don Thompson**, president and Chief Operating Officer of McDonald’s. With a degree in Electrical Engineering, Thompson joined McDonald’s as an electrical engineer in 1990, and has since held a variety of leadership positions including U.S. Chief Operating Officer, Executive Vice President and Division President. Most recently he was president of McDonald’s U.S. Operations. Today he directs global strategy and operations for the 32,000 McDonald’s restaurants in 117 countries.

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The **2010 Corporate Award** will be presented to **McDonald's Corporation**, the global leader in retail foodservices. For decades McDonald's has embraced and empowered a diverse workforce which has been a part of the McDonald's culture. In the mid-1970s McDonald's developed an initial diversity framework, and in 1980 the company hired its first official head of diversity. Today, diversity and inclusion are business imperatives of the company.

The **2010 Alvaro L. Martins Heritage Award** will be presented to **Reatha Clark King**, former President and Board Chair of the General Mills Foundation. Dr. King has broad experience in philanthropy, chemical research and academic administration. She also has been a corporate board director of many companies including ExxonMobil, Wells Fargo & Company, Department 56, Inc., International Trachoma Initiative and Minnesota Mutual Companies, Inc. She has been a Trustee of Clark Atlanta University and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. Additionally, she is a Life Trustee for the University of Chicago. She is a recipient of numerous awards including 14 honorary doctorate degrees.

"We are thrilled with the slate of this year's honorees," said Lawrence M. Drake II, interim president and CEO of The Executive Leadership Council and The Executive Leadership Foundation. "We have planned an exciting program that will include refreshing elements that will make it a night to remember."

Actor and author Hill Harper will emcee this year's gala with ELC Member and marketing executive Jerri DeVard. As in years past, the gala will be preceded by a daylong summit of members of The Executive Leadership Council and their Fortune 500 CEOs. The following day, African-American executives and managers will participate in the Mid-Level Managers' Symposium at the Hilton New York, where they will develop professional, personal and intellectual skills with the help of experienced executives and facilitators. For information about the gala and symposium, please visit [www.elcinfo.com](http://www.elcinfo.com).

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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 400 executives, more than one-third of them women – represent more than 280 Fortune 500 corporations. For more information, please visit [www.elcinfo.com](http://www.elcinfo.com).