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## 2009 Effie H. Jones Humanitarian Award Winners



**Lois Harrison-Jones**, past-president of the National Alliance of Black School Educators, is a visionary educator with a long and devoted record as a promoter and facilitator of systemic change. Under her stewardship as chair of the Department of Educational Administration and Policy at the Howard University School of Education in Washington, D.C., the department has over 100 graduate students, of which more than 80 percent are women. She has exhibited a single-minded goal to improve schools for all children, especially those who are underprivileged. Her work history is punctuated with numerous anecdotes of her courageous leadership with relentless and unwavering persistence during challenging times. Dr. Harrison-Jones has mentored and promoted women and individuals from minority backgrounds throughout her 54-year career and five of her protégés (three of which are women) are currently serving as school superintendents. Despite media reports of controversy, she has appointed women to her administrative cabinets because of their stellar qualifications and proven records of effective leadership. And by example, Dr. Harrison-Jones has served to overcome and remove all stumbling blocks to achieve the goals of equity being the first woman superintendent in Richmond, Va., and Boston, Mass., Public Schools, the highest ranking woman in the Dallas, Texas, Public Schools and the first African-American woman superintendent in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



**Sarah D. Jerome** has been a superintendent for 18 years in two districts and is currently superintendent of Arlington Heights School District 25 in Arlington Heights, Ill. She is a long-time champion for the advancement of women and minorities in education, taking bold, courageous action in employing the first women and minorities in key administrative positions in districts where she has worked. Dr. Jerome took a bold and courageous step in her own life when she became the president of AASA, becoming the second woman president in the Association's 144-year history. She has appointed women and minorities to AASA committee positions at every opportunity. She has been a strong advocate for AASA research, publications and partnerships with organizations promoting and encouraging women in education. Cardinal Stritch University and Women Leading Education Across Continents have become a formal partner with AASA as a result of Dr. Jerome's strong advocacy. She has written and spoken about the need to serve all 48 million U.S. public school children and to let each one of them know that they have unlimited opportunities and to let each one see a role model like themselves close up. Jerome says, "If children have to see one to be one, then we need more women leading schools and districts. We must confront the gender barriers with grace, diplomacy, persistence and skill. Our country can't afford to lose 50

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percent of its talent pool due to bias and imprecise thinking.”



**Wilfredo T. Laboy** is the superintendent of Schools in Lawrence, Mass., and past-president of the Association for Latino Administrators and Superintendents. During his tenure as superintendent, he has made equity and opportunities for students and adults one of his highest priorities. Student enrollment in advanced placement courses and college acceptance rates have risen, with the top graduating high school students accepted by MIT, Harvard, and the U.S. Naval Academy. Dr. Laboy implemented opportunities for career advancement for all teachers, but particularly women and teachers of color. The Leadership in Education Advancement Program, operated in partnership with the University of Massachusetts Lowell, gives teachers the opportunity to advance as supervisors and administrators in the district. Because of the strength of the program, the Lawrence Public Schools has been able to develop a diverse work force of highly skilled leaders attuned to the needs of a minority student body that is nearly 90 percent Hispanic. Most recently Laboy created a district-based doctoral cohort of 18 principals, assistant principals and supervisors, two-thirds of whom are female, minority, or both.



**Charol Shakeshaft** is professor and chair of the Department of Education Leadership at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. Since 1979, she has worked with graduate students, particularly women, helping to prepare them for leadership in school administration. Dr. Shakeshaft has been studying equity in schools for over 30 years, documenting gendered practice in the classroom and in school administration. She is an internationally recognized researcher in the area of gender patterns in educational delivery and classroom interactions. Her work on equity in schools has taken her into school systems across the United States, Canada and Europe where she has helped educators make schools more welcoming to females and students of color. Shakeshaft gives talks, presents workshops, evaluates programs and curriculum, and conducts gender audits. She serves as an expert witness and consultant in a number of legal proceedings on sexual harassment of students, and works with school districts to develop policies and practices that decrease sexual harassment of all within the educational community. Dr. Shakeshaft was also the principal investigator for the National Science Foundation on a multiyear project to increase the achievement of low-income students of color in science and mathematics and is the principal investigator on a \$5.3 million grant for the equitable preparation of assistant principals and principals with a focus on instructional leadership.

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