

National Council for Research on Women to Honor 2009 *Making a Difference for Women* Awardees: Allen—Cantor— Holzer—Kidjo—and Taylor at Stellar Event

For Immediate Release

New York (February 18, 2008) – The **National Council for Research on Women** will honor five leaders from business, academia, and the performing arts at its 2009 *Making a Difference for Women* Awards Dinner to be held on Tuesday, March 3rd at Cipriani Wall Street.

Honorees will include **Sharon Allen**, Chairman of the Board, DeloitteLLP, **Nancy Cantor**, Chancellor and President of Syracuse University, **Sunita Holzer**, Executive Vice President and Worldwide HR Officer at *Chubb & Son*, **Angélique Kidjo**, Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter and **Sharon Taylor**, Senior Vice President, Human Resources from *Prudential Financial*.

In a stellar gathering emceed by CNN Correspondent **Alina Cho**, the *Awards Dinner* will bring together influential leaders from business, philanthropy, academia and media as well as experts from the Council's network of 120 research, policy and advocacy centers.

The five awardees include: **Sharon Allen**, one of only a handful of women board chairs of Fortune 500 companies, **Nancy Cantor**, a defender of diversity and excellence in academia, **Sunita Holzer** and **Sharon Taylor**, both diversity champions and leading role models in their field, and **Angélique Kidjo** – a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador originally from Benin and a major star of world music.

“We are honoring these extraordinary women for their leadership and the pathways they are creating to ensure that other women have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. In these precarious economic times, we realize more than ever the importance of having a diversity of experiences and perspectives, including those of women, at decision-making and leadership tables. Only then will we be able to create a more equitable and sustainable future for all,” said Council President Linda Basch.

Ms. Kidjo will give a special live performance at the awards ceremony. She will be introduced by filmmaker/philanthropist **Abigail Disney** who worked with her on the award-winning documentary *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*. Playwright/performer (and former NCRW

Awardee) **Eve Ensler**, will present Ms. Kidjo with the *Making a Difference for Women Award*. Other presenters will include **Martin Bandier**, CEO of Sony / ATV Music Publishing; **Mark Grier**, Vice Chairman of Prudential Financial; **Maritza Gomez Montiel**, Regional Managing Partner, Southeast, Deloitte LLP; **Paul Krump**, Executive Vice President at Chubb Corporation; and NCRW Board Chair, **Eleanor Horne**, VP, Social Investment Fund of the Educational Testing Service.

The *Making a Difference for Women Awards* are presented to individuals or organizations that have made a difference in the lives of women and girls through extraordinary achievement and through courageously challenging the status quo. Past honorees have included feminist leader **Gloria Steinem**, actors **Glenn Close** and **Ruby Dee**, former President of Ireland **Mary Robinson**, and the **WNBA**, among others.

For more information, contact: ncrw@cmevents.net, telephone 212.763.8591 or visit the Council website: www.ncrw.org. For media queries, contact: Vivienne Heston-Demirel, email: vheston-demirel@ncrw.org, tel: 212.785.7335, ext. 201.

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Honoree Bios

Sharon Allen, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Deloitte LLP

Sharon Allen is Chairman of the Board of Directors of Deloitte LLP and a member of the Global Board of Directors of Deloitte Touche Tohatsu, where she serves as the U.S. representative on the Global Governors Committee and chairs the Global Risk Management Committee. She also currently serves on the President's Export Council and is a member of the Women's Leadership Board at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. Ms. Allen has been recognized many times for her contributions to business and community leadership including the *Forbes* list of "the 100 most Powerful Women in the World" and the *Wall Street Journal's* "50 Women to Watch" as well as *Woman of the Year* by the New York City Police Athletic League. Ms. Allen holds an honorary doctorate in Administrative Science from her Alma Mater, the University of Idaho.

Nancy Cantor, Chancellor and President, Syracuse University

Nancy Cantor is Chancellor and President of Syracuse University, as well as Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Women's Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences. Previously, she had been Chancellor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, dean of the graduate school and then provost and executive vice-president for academic affairs at the University of Michigan, and chair of Princeton University's department of psychology. At the University of Michigan, she was closely involved in the university's defense of affirmative action. In 2008, she was granted a Carnegie Corporation Academic Leadership Award and previously received the Woman of Achievement Award from the Anti-Defamation League. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. She

received an A.B. from Sarah Lawrence College and a Ph.D. in psychology from Stanford University.

Sunita Holzer, Executive Vice President and Worldwide Human Resources Officer, Chubb & Son Inc.

Sunita Holzer initially joined Chubb as worldwide human resources officer in 2003 with responsibility over all global HR functions. In December 2007, she was promoted to Executive Vice President. Before joining Chubb, Ms. Holzer held positions at GE, including Vice-President of Human Resources of GE Capital Corporate. Prior to GE, she held HR positions at American Express and AIG. She currently serves on the Board of Jersey Battered Women's Service, Inc., a full-service domestic violence and domestic abuse prevention agency. Ms. Holzer holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, a Master of Science degree in Human Resources Management from the School of Labor Relations at the New York Institute of Technology and a Six Sigma certification.

Angélique Kidjo, Grammy Award-winning artist, Goodwill Ambassador, UNICEF

Grammy-winner Angélique Kidjo is one of the most electrifying performers in world music today. Her striking voice, stage presence and multi-cultural fluency have won her an international following. She has a unique style that blends afro-funk, reggae, samba, salsa, gospel, jazz, Congolese rumba, souk and makossa. She has collaborated and recorded with musical legends including Peter Gabriel, Alicia Keyes, Josh Groban, Carlos Santana, Joss Stone, Branford Marsalis and Ziggy Marley. Ms. Kidjo also founded [The Batonga Foundation](#) which supports girls' secondary school and higher education in Africa through scholarships, building schools, increasing enrollment, improving teaching standards, providing school supplies, strengthening mentor programs, exploring alternative educational models and advocating for public awareness about the value of education for girls.

Sharon Taylor, Senior Vice President Human Resources from *Prudential Financial*

Sharon C. Taylor is Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Chair of the Prudential Foundation and a member of Prudential's Senior Management Committee. Ms. Taylor is the top global human resources officer reporting to the Chairman and is accountable for human resources consulting, policies, strategies, programs and infrastructure that support Prudential's domestic and international businesses. She serves as Chair of the Newark Regional Business Partnership and sits on the boards of the Human Resources Outsourcing Association, the American Repertory Ballet, the Human Resources Policy Association and the advisory board of the National Council of La Raza. She is a founding member of Prudential's Black Leadership Forum. Ms. Taylor graduated *magna cum laude* from Temple University where she earned a BA in foreign languages.