

## **Dr. Cornel West to Address the Experiences Students of Color Confront at Prestigious Universities**

Macaulay Honors College Hosts Provocative and Timely Conference

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**For Immediate Release (March 3, 2015)** -- Dr. Cornel West, a distinguished author, educator and intellectual, will be the keynote speaker at Macaulay Honors College of the City University of New York's (CUNY) annual "Supporting Excellence" conference on Friday, March 6, 2015. Dr. West's speech will explore the leadership challenges and opportunities that students of color experience at prestigious academic institutions. Macaulay's annual Supporting Excellence conference was started four years ago by students of color to create an opportunity for CUNY students and the public to proactively examine and address the issues underrepresented students face in higher education.

"I am proud that Macaulay students continue to confront some of the most critical issues facing students – and our society," said Macaulay Dean Ann Kirschner. "We are committed to ensuring that the Macaulay community supports all students and addresses issues or behaviors that undermine any student's experience or opportunity to flourish," she added. "The open and honest dialogue at this conference demonstrates the commitment of Macaulay students to address issues of race and class that too often divide us, when our goal should be to unite."

Currently, Dr. West is a professor at Princeton University and has taught at Union Theological Seminary, as well as Yale, Harvard and the University of Paris. The activist professor has said that he seeks to engage the world as a "multi-platformist." West has authored 19 books, performed with musicians such as Prince and Jill Scott, and has appeared in 25 films, including "The Matrix."

"I am honored to have Dr. West discuss critical issues with students that are often dismissed and silenced," said Macaulay student and Goldsmith Scholar Danica Pagulayan, '15 (Hunter), one of the event's student organizers. "The Macaulay Diversity Initiative's goal is not only to make the realities of students of color known," explained Pagulayan, "but also to understand how we can work towards challenging the obstacles students of color face within academic spaces."

Following Dr. West's keynote address, the Macaulay Diversity Initiative will host a panel that will explore and map out action steps the community and public can take to address the intersections of race and academia. Macaulay student Sheena Som '17 (Hunter) will join Pagulayan on the panel, which will be moderated by Dr. Mike Lamb, Macaulay's Thomas R. Slaughter Scholar-in-Residence.

The Supporting Excellence conference is free and open to the general public and takes place at Macaulay Honors College, 35 West 67 Street (Off of Central Park West) from 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

### **About Macaulay Honors College**

Macaulay Honors College at The City University of New York offers exceptional students a uniquely personalized education with access to the vast resources of the nation's largest urban university and New York City itself. Selected for their top high-school records and leadership potential, Macaulay students receive a full-tuition scholarship to pursue global learning, research and service opportunities while also enrolled in one of eight CUNY senior colleges (Baruch, Brooklyn, City, Hunter, John Jay, Lehman, Queens and Staten Island). For more information visit [macaulay.cuny.edu](http://macaulay.cuny.edu).

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