



WE ARE FAMILY FOUNDATION

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**WE ARE FAMILY FOUNDATION® TO HONOR NELSON MANDELA,
A TRIBE CALLED QUEST AND DIKEMBE MUTOMBO AT
2017 CELEBRATION GALA**

EVENT TO TAKE PLACE ON FRIDAY, APRIL 28 AT HAMMERSTEIN BALLROOM

New York, NY (March 10, 2017) – We Are Family Foundation® (WAFF) announced today its 2017 gala celebration will recognize honorees **Nelson Mandela** (posthumously accepted by his family), **A Tribe Called Quest** and **Dikembe Mutombo**. We Are Family Foundation is a not-for-profit organization, founded by legendary GRAMMY® Award winning musician **Nile Rodgers**, which is dedicated to the vision of a global family. The organization creates and supports programs which promote cultural diversity while nurturing the vision, talents, and ideas of young people who are positively changing the world. The 2017 gala will take place on Friday, April 28th at the Hammerstein Ballroom in New York City.

“The We Are Family Foundation® is proud to honor Nelson Mandela and his family, Dikembe Mutombo and A Tribe Called Quest this year. Individually and collectively they have moved the world and the human spirit forward,” said Nile Rodgers, Founder and Chairman, We Are Family Foundation.

Nelson Mandela’s family will be present to receive the posthumous **Mattie J.T. Stepanek Peacemaker Award**, which honors a person who has made a significant contribution towards promoting a peaceful society. Mandela spent much of his life fighting against apartheid and fostering racial reconciliation in South Africa. He served as the President of South Africa from 1994 – 1999 and President of the African National Congress (ANC) party from 1991 to 1997. The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Peacemaker Award was named in honor of the late 13-year old best-selling poet and peacemaker, Mattie J.T. Stepanek. Previous honorees include, President Jimmy Carter, Dr. Maya Angelou, Desmond Tutu, Deepak Chopra and Paul Simon.

“When I first met Nelson Mandela, he shared a story about hearing “We Are Family” while in his jail cell and feeling uplifted, because under apartheid his white prison guards were ‘singing along with black girls talking about being a family,’ said Rodgers. “Today, Nelson Mandela’s



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extraordinary legacy is being kept alive by the Mandela family through their multiple levels of charitable, organizational and artistic contributions worldwide.”

Legendary hip-hop group **A Tribe Called Quest** will receive the **Unity Award**. The Unity Award honors those in the public eye who have made tremendous efforts and inroads into making the human condition better around the world through their work as artists. The group, which formed in 1985, have consistently sought to highlight social issues and political unrest in their music, with messages of activism and empowerment weaved throughout their powerful songs. The band helped to pave the way for many future innovative artists. Previous honorees of the award include Adam Lambert and Kool & the Gang.

“When A Tribe Called Quest came along they were true music industry game changers and they have evolved into one of the most original and legendary hip hop groups of all time. Their cachet, cleverness and charisma are second to none. And after all these years, their latest album went straight to number one!” said Rodgers.

Retired professional NBA player **Dikembe Mutombo** will receive the **Humanitarian Award**, which honors a person in the public eye who has made tremendous efforts and inroads into making the human condition better throughout the world. Mutombo played 18 seasons in the NBA, while becoming equally well known for his humanitarian work. He started the Dikembe Mutombo Foundation, which strives to improve living conditions in his native Democratic Republic of Congo. He is also a spokesman for the international relief agency, CARE and is the first Youth Emissary for the United Nations Development Program. He also helped to build the Biamba Marie Mutombo Hospital, which opened in 2007 on the outskirts of his hometown, the Congolese capital of Kinshasa. Previous recipients of the Humanitarian Award have included Bono, Sir Elton John, Sting & Trudie Styler, Steven Van Zandt, Nile Rodgers, Jackson Browne, Patti LaBelle and Peter Gabriel.

“Dikembe Mutombo is a giant amongst giants. His 18 years in the NBA landed him in the Hall of Fame, and as a humanitarian, his accomplishments are deserved of Hall of Fame status as well,” said Rodgers. “It goes without saying that Dikembe has had a huge impact on thousands of souls through his role as a UNICEF USA board member, CDC Foundation board member, NBA Global Ambassador, UNICEF Ambassador for Children’s Health and his Biamba Marie Mutombo Hospital.”

A Tribe Called Quest and Nile Rodgers along with his band CHIC will perform at the event.

The funds raised will support WAFF’s mission and programs including WAFF’s signature program, Three Dot Dash, which identifies, supports and mentors Global Teen Leaders actively working on programs that address basic human needs and promoting a more peaceful world; and TEDxTeen, a global educational platform for extraordinary teenagers to share their ideas, stories and inspire millions.

Each year We Are Family Foundation identifies 25 – 35 Global Teen Leaders and brings them to New York City to attend the Three Dot Dash Just Peace Summit. The Summit will kick off on Friday, March 10 and run through Friday, March 17. A group of 30 teens will come to New York City from 16 countries on 5 continents to take part in weeklong activities. During this time, they will participate in a mentorship program where they will be paired with a mentor who will



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use various tools and resources to form bonds and set intentions and goals for the year ahead. Three Dot Dash will welcome industry leaders to host intimate, engaging and interactive discussions and workshops at the summit. The experience will expand on this group of young people's drive and vision to make an impact on the world.

"We are honored to recognize Nelson Mandela, A Tribe Called Quest and Dikembe Mutombo at this year's gala for their lifelong courage and commitments to making the human condition better. They are our role models who provide inspiration to us and to the generations who come after us." said Nancy Hunt, President, We Are Family Foundation. "And, with our honorees in mind, we are proud to welcome our 2017 Global Teen Leaders as its more important now than ever to support, amplify and nurture our youth and their ideas as they solve some of the biggest issues our world has faced in recent times. They are the NOW and the future."

To purchase tickets, or to make a contribution to the **We Are Family Foundation**, please visit wearefamilyfoundation.org. Contributions are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

About We Are Family Foundation

We Are Family Foundation (WAFF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the vision of a global family by creating and supporting programs that promote cultural diversity while nurturing the vision, talents, and ideas of young people who are positively changing the world. Through global initiatives like Three Dot Dash and TEDxTeen, WAFF has mentored and empowered extraordinary youth from more than 64 countries on six continents by giving them platforms to share their messages, tell their stories, inspire others, amplify their work and foster respect and understanding across cultures.

For more information and tickets, visit wearefamilyfoundation.org

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