



## **Senator John Kerry Endorses the National Quilt for Haiti**

*A National Day of Remembrance for Haiti at the United Nations, New York, Wednesday, January 12, 2011, 6am Prayer Breakfast Launch - The American Alabaster Quilt for Haiti - 5 year Witherspoon Quilt Project - A Football Field of Hand Written Notes*

**Dec. 11, 2010** - [PRLog](#) -- A National Day of Remembrance, the American Alabaster Quilt for Haiti  
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The “Folk Art” quilt tribute presented by the Witherspoon Institute (WIN) is at once a memorial to those lost in the Haitian Earthquake on January 12, 2010 and a message of hope for the future! Taking the lead are the top ten states in the U.S. where Haitian Americans reside. They are bringing bus loads of citizens from each state to the National Prayer Breakfast in New York on January 12, 2011 to mark the earthquake anniversary. There, the first and last piece of the puzzle quilt will be presented to the 10 tributary states and over the next 5 years a summit will be called until it reaches (100 yards) 1 football field long signifying, “If we are not part of the solution, we are part of the problem. It takes us all to solve world goals”. On January 12 the first piece of the quilt is designed and presented by Sisters in Stitches Joined by the Cloth Quilting Association and the last piece of the quilt is sewn and presented by Howard University’s Caribbean Culture Club (sponsored by NOAH). What happens in the middle is up to us all. A day of hope. A day of remembrance. A day to “Raise your hand for Haiti.”

“I’m enormously grateful to the communities of Massachusetts and across this country for their continued outreach and support to the people and the future of Haiti”, says Senator Kerry of the national coalition founded and lead by the Witherspoon Institute

“The Quilt is a testament of how good communities can work together.” says WIN Founder Alda Witherspoon. “We are pleased that Lionel Jean-Baptiste is leading the charge in Chicago. His background in neighborhood development is well known in the Chicago area Together we can solve many problems. Show you can, “Raise your hand for Haiti!”

Background: Structurally, the Quilting Bee has a national board and state chairs with individual regional boards. Leading the charge in Chicago is Lionel Jean-Baptiste. He arrived with his family in Evanston, IL in 1964 emigrating from Haiti. The City Alderman graduated from Princeton University in 1974 as a political science major and earned his law degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1990. Attorney Baptiste got his start in community activism in the Chicago area working with the Canal Park Neighbors Association. He is an ardent advocate for job training programs and other services for the youth. He lives with his wife and three children.

With the Boston Hub housing the third largest population of Haitians in the U.S., the Witherspoon Institute (WIN), a Boston Based non profit teaching ABLE (academics, ballroom dance, leadership and etiquette to children age 7-18) felt the local citizen's natural connection to the on going needs and suffering of the earthquake torn island of Haiti. The institute launched a year end project with the children of WIN to explain in literal terms how personal and community leadership helps people in need. This leadership course grew out of the classroom into Haitian Heritage Month when Simon Malls agreed to sustain the quilting bee’s launch into a public initiative. WIN toured the state courtesy of Simon’s Massachusetts

malls for several months. With overwhelming response, the project was expanded to a national tour with the support of U.S. Senator John Kerry and Marie St. Fleur, Chief of Inter-Governmental Affairs for the City of Boston, internationally known for her leadership in Haitian affairs.

Event Sponsors: the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization, Haitian American Association, Haitian Pastor Association; Eritaj Foundation of Boston, MA; Haitian Congress to Fortify Haiti of Chicago, IL.; National organization for the Advancement of Haitians of Washington D.C.; Haitian Professionals of Philadelphia of Philadelphia, PA ; First Timothy Christian Church of New York.

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The Witherspoon Institute (WIN), a Boston Based non profit organization teaches ABLE (academics, ballroom dance, leadership and etiquette) to youth and families. Enroll on line at [www.witherspooninstitute.net](http://www.witherspooninstitute.net) . 617-535-9704

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