

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

Media Release

Interchurch Center, Suite B 0245 SW Bancroft Street Portland, Oregon 97239
phone (503) 221-1054 *fax* (503) 223-7007 *Web site* www.emoregon.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact person: Carla Starrett-Bigg, (503) 221-1054
csbigg@emoregon.org

EMO honors Charles McGee III with inaugural “Young Visionary Award”

Charles McGee III, founder and president of the Black Parent Initiative, will be the first recipient of the “Young Visionary Award” on May 18, 2016, at the *Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) Annual Community Awards & Celebration Dinner*. The award is presented in recognition of McGee’s visionary leadership that inspires hope for future generations.

McGee founded the Black Parent Initiative at age 19. As president and CEO of the nonprofit organization, he works to transform the lives of children one parent at a time—creating stable, engaged adults by instilling a new ethic of self-reliance, empowerment, voice and determination within their family culture. McGee was born in Liberia and fled the violent civil war at age five with his family. He grew up in northeast Portland. While a student at Franklin High School, he began a career of activism and community organizing, presenting the school board with a petition calling for race sensitivity training for Portland Public School teachers that led to a district-wide conversation on race. As a student at Portland State University, he ran for a seat on the school board on a platform of increasing student involvement in district decision-making.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s annual event is a joyful celebration of our shared commitment to compassion, justice and goodness of God’s creation. More than 400 faith and community leaders come together in a spirit of hope and service, honoring past successes, pledging ourselves to work for a healthy and equitable Oregon, and applauding outstanding individuals and organizations who are guided by their faith to serve Oregonians in need.

This year, the event will be held on May 18 at the Hilton Portland, 921 SW Sixth Ave. A reception and silent auction to benefit EMO’s ministries will be held from 5 to 6:30 p.m. and the dinner and award presentations will begin at 6:30 p.m. Reservations, available at www.emoregon.org, are \$100 per person or \$1,000 per table of 10. For more information, call Carla Starrett-Bigg at (503) 221-1054, ext. 275, or csbigg@emoregon.org.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.