



**For Immediate Release**

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**BARRINGTON IRVING AND THE HONORABLE ELIJAH H. WILLIAMS TO BE RECOGNIZED DURING THE MCDONALD'S® NATIONAL SALUTE TO AMERICAS HEROES<sup>SM</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL COMMUNITY RECOGNITION DAY ON MAY 2**

*Local public high school students to receive scholarships for their early achievements*

**Fort Lauderdale, Fla.** (March 27, 2007) – Barrington Irving, the first African American to fly solo around the globe and the Honorable Elijah H. Williams, Circuit Judge, 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, will be honored during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual McDonald's® National Salute to Americas Heroes<sup>SM</sup> Community Recognition Day on Wed., May 2, 10:30 a.m. at the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center, 2650 NW 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Fort Lauderdale. This event, presented in part by the Westside Gazette and Success South Florida Magazine, will also award three deserving Broward County Public Schools' high school students with continuing education scholarships.

"This year's event marks another great example of African-American achievement with two South Florida individuals who have earned great success and made an impact on the community," said Johnny Williams, president of Pro Series, Inc., and executive director of the McDonald's® Air & Sea Show®. "Now celebrating our 13<sup>th</sup> year, we strive to foster programs such as this one that will enlighten, honor and motivate others to be the heroes of tomorrow."

Barrington Irving, 23 years old, will be the first African-American and youngest person ever to fly solo around the globe. He departed from Opa-Locka Airport on March 23<sup>rd</sup> on his World Flight Adventure with stops scheduled in Spain, Greece, Egypt, Dubai, Thailand and Japan. His mission will take five weeks to complete in his plane appropriately named "Inspiration."

This Kingston, Jamaica native moved to Miami when he was six and became interested in airplanes at the age of 15 when a Jamaican-born pilot took him to see the cockpit of a Boeing 777 airplane. While a junior at Miami Northwestern Senior High School, Barrington spent most his free time washing planes and learning to fly on the flight simulator software at the Opa-Locka Airport.

Barrington earned a Bright Futures Scholarship and attended Florida Memorial University, where he earned his Private, Commercial Pilot and Certified Flight Instructor licenses, as well as his Instrument and Multi-Engine Rating. Irving logged over 800 hours of practice flight time in the United States, Columbia and Jamaica in preparation for his historic flight.

The Honorable Elijah H. Williams, Circuit Judge, 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, Broward County, Florida, is the second African-American male, and the third appointed to the Circuit bench in Broward County. A Fort Lauderdale native, Williams graduated from Plantation High School in 1976 at age 16 and enrolled in University of Florida.

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In 1980, Williams entered both the University of Florida's graduate program and law school. In August of 1983, Williams attained both his Master of Arts degree in Political Science/Public Administration and a Juris Doctorate degree.

In 1984, William's life and career changed his outlook when he was commissioned as a Captain in the United States Air Force and was assigned to the Staff Judge Advocate General's Department. Williams had a stellar career in the USAF where he received many accolades and awards for his outstanding achievement in the field of law and was chosen as one of Great Britain's ten (10) best public speakers.

Upon returning back to South Florida in 1990, Williams embarked on another journey to give back to his community and set an example for others to follow. In July of 1990, Williams was appointed as Assistant State Attorney in Broward County, where he prosecuted a variety of offenses from DUI to 2<sup>nd</sup> degree murder. In 1993, Williams decided to take a position as the assistant General Counsel to the Sheriff of Broward County with the Law Firm of Whitelock, Soloff and Rodriguez, where he became a partner in January 1995. In May 1998, Williams further exerted his legal mind and leadership abilities to lead the Legal and Risk Management Department in the Broward County Sheriff's Office, which included a team of 20 employees that included six attorneys on an interim basis.

William's hard work and persistence led to his name being forwarded to Governor Jeb Bush and his ultimate appointment to Broward's Circuit Court on March 1, 2002. Judge Williams presided over felony criminal cases for a period of four (4) years. On April 3, 2006, Judge Williams assumed his current division, where he presides over juvenile delinquency cases.

"We kicked off this program last year honoring 14 of the original Tuskegee Airmen and it had a direct impact in influencing Barrington Irving to complete his solo flight mission around the world," said Johnny Williams, Executive Director of the McDonald's<sup>®</sup> Air & Sea Show<sup>®</sup>. "We hope it will inspire others to follow their dreams."

Working with Broward County Public Schools, high school seniors are eligible to submit a personal statement, letters of recommendation and required documentation for the chance to receive a continuing education scholarship from the McDonald's Air & Sea Show. The selected student recipients will be recognized during the event.

The McDonald's Air & Sea Show has partnered with The Westside Gazette, Broward County's oldest African-American owned newspaper and Success South Florida Magazine, which profiles African-Americans in business and leadership roles to present the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Community Recognition Day event.

The McDonald's<sup>®</sup> Air & Sea Show<sup>®</sup> and Fleet Week USA<sup>®</sup> presented by McDonald's<sup>®</sup>, as part of the McDonald's<sup>®</sup> National Salute to America's Heroes<sup>SM</sup> pays tribute to the brave men and women who serve in all five branches of our armed forces. Since its inception in 1995, the show's goals have been to encourage patriotism, assist the U.S. military in recruiting efforts, generate national exposure and revenue for sponsors and showcase South Florida with a world class event. The show is the official kick-off to National Military Appreciation Month held each May.

For more information about this event and other official community programs as part of the McDonald's Air & Sea Show visit [www.nationalsalute.com](http://www.nationalsalute.com).