



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Glen Fullmer

Mobile: 847-440-6787

Email: gfullmer@raceamity.org

NCAA Basketball Coach John Calipari to Receive Race Amity Medal of Honor

University of Kentucky Basketball Coach John Calipari, one of the NCAA Division I all-time winningest coaches, will be honored this fall with the National Center for Race Amity's Race Amity Medal of Honor for his equally impressive record of courage and commitment to advancing racial justice, equity and access in collegiate sports.

"Beyond his undeniable athletic record as one of our nation's top basketball coaches, Coach Calipari has demonstrated a profound humanitarian commitment to his players, especially players of color, mentoring them and standing by them in an exemplary fashion," said Dr. William "Smitty" Smith, Founding Executive Director of the National Center for Race Amity.

Dr. Smith cited Coach Calipari's decision to take the knee with his team during the national anthem prior to a game at Florida in 2021 as a "distinctive statement of moral courage, as he was the only notable coach in the sports community that took such a laudable action." Dr. Smith also noted the work of the Calipari Foundation, which mentors and supports youth in underserved and minority communities.

Coach Calipari will join a roster of notable Race Amity Medal of Honor recipients, which include civil rights leader Dolores Huerta, documentary filmmaker Ken Burns, President Michael Higgins of Ireland, renowned philosopher and activist Cornel West, and recently deceased law professor and attorney Charles Ogletree.

The National Center for Race Amity created the Race Amity Medal of Honor awards program in 2013 to recognize and honor individuals who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to advancing access and equity in society through interracial partnerships. The awards are generally presented at a banquet held annually on the eve of the National Race Amity Conference each November.

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This year's Race Amity Medal of Honor awards ceremony will be held on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 6:30 PM at Atlanta's historic Mary Mac's Tea Room, located at 224 Ponce De Leon Ave NE.

Along with Coach Calipari, this year's recipients are Debby Irving, best-selling author of *Waking up White*; Steve Sarowitz, philanthropist founder of the Wayfarer Foundation and principal of Paylocity and Blue Marble companies; and Fortune 500 diversity consultant Robert C. Henderson, Ed.D.

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