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Elaine Jones, Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund To Address Civil Rights Issues

U.S. District Court Chief Judge Thelton E. Henderson to Make Introduction March 14

SAN FRANCISCO — Golden Gate University School of Law presents the third lecture in its 1996 series, "Race Relations in America." Elaine Jones, Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF) will speak on *Current Issues in Civil Rights Law* on Thursday, March 14 at 12:00 noon in Auditorium B at 536 Mission Street.

Ms. Jones, LDF's fourth Director-Counsel, is the first woman to hold the post. Her appointment continues a lifetime of breaking barriers and achieving historic firsts. As one of the first African American women to defend death row inmates, she was counsel of record in *Furman v. Georgia*, the landmark Supreme Court case abolishing the death penalty in 1972. Her work with LDF has spanned two decades and put her in the forefront of nearly every civil rights issue as a litigator and activist.

Golden Gate is proud to have Ms. Jones as a speaker in the Race Relations series, not only because of her personal accomplishments, but also because she leads LDF, one of the most effective legal organizations fighting for civil rights in the 20th century. Her long association with LDF gives her a historical perspective on the directions the fight for civil rights has taken in the past 30 years, and her current leadership position enables her to give her listeners an insight as to where the future challenges lie. Since the passage of the Civil Rights Act, a whole generation has come to maturity, many with only a dim understanding of the magnitude and importance of the concept "civil rights."

The Legal Defense and Educational Fund, founded in 1940 by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has been a separate organization, distinct from the NAACP, for over thirty years. LDF's first Director-Counsel was the late United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, who led LDF in the successful campaign to have the courts declare unconstitutional the "separate but equal" doctrine, which had been

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the legal basis for segregation. The LDF defended sit-in demonstrators, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., helped ensure enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, and contributed to the adoption and defense of subsequent Civil Rights Acts.

The LDF currently pursues programs and litigation to meet the social, economic, and political challenges of the 21st century. In education, LDF works to abolish segregation, attacks barriers to education for minorities, and administers scholarship programs. In voting rights, LDF fights laws and practices which deny minorities full participation in the democratic process. In employment and housing, LDF attacks discrimination, homelessness, and substandard housing. In health care, LDF's litigation, education, and advocacy programs are working to expand access to health care for people of color and the poor. In the area of environmental justice, LDF is fighting against the use of minority and poor communities as dumping grounds for hazardous waste and polluting industries.

LDF's Western Regional Office, located in Los Angeles, has been involved in the recent examinations of police brutality and bias that followed the Rodney King beatings. Throughout the country, LDF is working to stop all forms of bias in the criminal justice system; their campaign against the death penalty targets its application against people of color, the poor, the vulnerable and the disabled.

Following Ms. Jones, two other speakers will continue the series. On Thursday, March 21, Eva Jefferson Paterson, Executive Director of the San Francisco Bay Area Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, will speak on *Affirmative Action and the California Civil Rights Initiative*. Finally, on Tuesday, April 9, Professor Charles J. Ogletree, Jr., Director of the Criminal Justice Institute at Harvard University School of Law, will lecture on *Race in America: Lessons from the Million Man March*.

All lectures are free and open to the public. The series is funded by the Helzel Family Foundation, and co-sponsored by the San Francisco Bar Association and the Golden Gate University Black Law Students Association. California attorneys may register for one hour of continuing legal education credit for each event by calling (415) 442-6636 in advance.

Golden Gate University School of Law is located on the San Francisco campus of Golden Gate University at 536 Mission Street. The University is accredited by the Western Association of Colleges and Universities and the Law School is approved by the American Bar Association.