



Perris Press Release

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Rita Rogers Honored by National Congress of Black Women

As a young woman in New York City, Rita Rogers looked up to Shirley Chisholm—a pioneering educator, U.S. representative and the first African-American to mount a serious campaign for president.

So it was with particular pride when Rogers recently was honored by the organization that Chisholm founded, the National Congress of Black Women.

Rogers received the Woman of Distinction Award—one of several presented by the Inland Empire Chapter of the Congress of Black Women. Other honorees included Moreno Valley City Councilman Bill Batey; Buford Johnson, a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen of World War II and Moreno Valley businesswoman Jhanice Brown-Wilson.

The March 4 presentation took place before a crowd of 300 at the Moreno Valley Convention Center. E. Faye Williams-National Chair of the National Congress of Black served as keynote speaker.

Rogers has served on the Perris City Council for 13 years.

She is also a board member of the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce, former president of the Perris Community Partnership, founder of the Perris Chapter of Cops & Clergy, former commissioner for the Western Riverside Council of Governments, advisory member of the Val Verde School District's superintendent's council and a division director for the Inland Empire March of Dimes.

She also has served as president of four real-estate firms and as president of Rogers & Associates. She has been honored by National Association of Female Executives, the Society for the Thinking Woman, Forbes Alliance, Black Rose, Perris Black History Committee and was listed in 2000 Notable American Women.

Rogers said she is most proud of her work with various youth groups in the Perris Valley. Her job with the March of Dimes puts her in contact with many families struggling to overcome disabilities associated with premature birth.

Away from that job, she works closely with the Perris Patriots Football and is a huge supporter of the P-Town Combat Sports Academy, which teaches boxing and martial arts skills. She also noted that Perris recently celebrated the opening of the \$25 million Big League Dreams sports complex and plans to break ground later this year on a regional aquatics center.

"It's important to do everything you can to help youth succeed," Rogers said. "They are our legacy."

Rogers said she is grateful to be honored by an organization she holds dear. The National Congress of Black Women, which began as the National Political Congress of Black Women, was founded by Chisholm in 1984 as a way to empower African-American women through politics, education and economics. Chisholm enjoyed a long and diverse career in teaching and politics. Chisholm was elected to the New York State Assembly in 1964, and then in 1968 successfully ran for the U.S. Congress. In 1972, she ran for president in the Democratic primary, losing to George McGovern.

"She was always a role model who meant quite a bit to me," Chisholm said. "To think that 28 years after she founded the organization I would be honored by that organization means a great deal to me."

Pastor Benjamin Briggs, of the Greater Light Community Church, called Rogers "indispensable" to the Perris community. He has worked with Rogers on Cops & Clergy and on the Black History Committee.

"She is the voice of reason in our community," Briggs said. "She always maintains a fair and unselfish perspective on issues and she is willing to use her resources to help this City. In times like these, the community looks to her as a champion."

Andre Mitchell is a Los Angeles police officer whose job entails tracking down fugitives all over the country, many who grew up without positive male role models. His work prompted Mitchell to form the Perris Patriots Football League and the P-Town Combat Sports Academy. He said Rogers has supported his efforts from day one.

"She's a magnificent role model," Mitchell said. "She believes in helping the youth of our community, in helping nurture them so they grow into fine young adults."



Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers and Andre Mitchell, founder of the Perris Patriots Football League and P-Town Combat Sports Academy, are pictured at the recent National Congress of Black Women event in Moreno Valley.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, Moreno Valley City Councilman Bill Batey and Mayor Pro-Tem Al Landers with Rita Rogers, who received the Woman of Distinction Award from the National Congress of Black Women.



Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers at her March of Dimes office in Riverside.