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CNN Analyst Roland S. Martin to be Commencement Speaker at LeMoyne-Owen

MEMPHIS, TN (April 22, 2011) – LeMoyne-Owen College President Johnnie B. Watson announced today that nationally syndicated columnist **Roland S. Martin** will be the keynote speaker at the College’s upcoming commencement ceremony. The LeMoyne-Owen College 141st Convocation for the Conferral of Baccalaureate Degrees will be held on Saturday, May 14, 2011 at 10:00 a.m., at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church-Westwood located at 620 Parkrose Avenue in Memphis. President Watson stated, “Roland S. Martin is a credible and celebrated journalist throughout this country and the world. We are delighted that he has graciously agreed to attend the LeMoyne-Owen Commencement Services as keynote speaker to address our students, alumni, parents, College family, and the community.”

Martin is a commentator for TV One Cable Network and host of *Washington Watch with Roland Martin*, a one-hour Sunday morning news program. He is a CNN News Analyst who has appeared on numerous networks. He has also served as senior analyst on The Tom Joyner Morning Show. In the years 2008, 2009 and 2010, Ebony Magazine has named Martin as one of the 150 Most Influential African Americans in the United States. He received the NAACP Image Award for Best Interviews in both 2008 and 2009 for two separate interviews with the Obama’s.

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In 2008, he interviewed Senator Barack Obama; and in 2009, he interviewed Michelle Obama. Also in 2009, CNN received the Peabody Award for its outstanding 2008 election news coverage. Martin was a part of the CNN team that was named: the *Best Political Team* on Television. In the United Kingdom, Martin was also named as one of the top 50 political pundits by the Daily Telegraph newspaper; and was awarded the 2008 President's Award by the National Association of Black Journalists. In that same year, he was also inducted into the Texas A & M University Journalism Hall of Fame.

The 2011 Convocation Service will also feature:

- **Two summa cum laude graduates. Alana Antoine, an international student, is valedictorian of the 2011 Graduating Class.** Her parents are traveling to the United States from the Caribbean island of Trinidad to attend the graduation. The second summa cum laude graduate is Kioni Logan of Memphis, a Criminal Justice major. Over the semester, Kioni competed and won Best Advocate in the 2011 Tennessee Regional Mock Trials Competition and the 2009 Memphis Local Mock Trials Competition. She has won a total of \$46,000 in tuition waivers through the National Diversity Mock Trials Competition to attend John Marshall Law School in Chicago.

The College will honor three Alumni Classes: The **1951 Bronze Class** will be present with alumni who graduated 60 years ago. The **1961 Gold Class**, recognizes alumni who graduated 50 years ago. This legendary class, chaired by Ms. Grace Austin Meacham, was one of the most controversial, because several of its students participated in the landmark Civil Rights Movement

sit-ins that were occurring in the 1960s. Some of the 1961 class alumni include: Ms. Meacham, former Memphis City School Board member Carl Johnson; longtime school board member Sara Lewis, and Katherine Kirk. Then, the **1986 Silver Class** honors alumni who graduated 25 years ago.

- **The Doctorate of Humane Letters** will be presented by LeMoyne-Owen College Board Chairman Robert Lipscomb and President Watson to two outstanding individuals who have made significant contributions their the community.
- **Students in the 2011 Graduating Class** will be awarded the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Business Administration Degrees.

LeMoyne-Owen College provides a transformative experience educating students for urban-focused leadership, scholarship, service and professional careers. *LeMoyne-Owen College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award the baccalaureate degree.*

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