

National Medical Association
Opening and Awards Ceremony
Program Script by Richard Bellikoff

Before The Program

On the screen at the front of the auditorium we see:

NMA Logo – Opening and Awards Ceremony

Music: Live Jazz Ensemble Band playing softly

Announcer (Off Stage): Ladies and gentlemen, please stand to welcome the distinguished members and guests we honor this evening, accompanied by the National Medical Association Officers, Board of Trustees and Section Chairs.

Music: Live ensemble band plays music, up full for the procession.

Music: Fades out as the processional ends.

Invocation and Anthem

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen, honored guests, welcome to the Opening and Awards Ceremony of the National Medical Association’s 2006 Annual Convention and Scientific Assembly.

At this time, Dr. Nelson Adams from NMA’s Board of Trustees will deliver the invocation.

ADAMS: *(Comes to podium, delivers invocation and leaves stage)*

Announcer: Please stand for the African-American National Anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” The words will appear on the video screens. We invite everybody to sing along.

Play Video 1: African-American National Anthem

Announcer: Please be seated.

Play Video 2: Animated Open Montage – NMA Points of Light

Announcer: Now please welcome the President of the National Medical Association, Dr. Sandra L. Gadsdon, and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Carolyn Barley Britton.

Entrance of NMA Hosts: Dr. Gadsdon and Dr. Britton enter from off stage.

[Applause]

GADSDON: Thank you and good evening. We're here tonight to honor our colleagues and friends for outstanding achievement in furthering the goals and objectives of the National Medical Association – namely, justice and parity in medicine, and the elimination of disparities in health. We've come a long way since the founding of the NMA over a century ago, but it's far too soon to proclaim "Mission Accomplished."

BRITTON: I'd like to thank [Name of sponsor] for their generous support, making this ceremony possible. I also want to thank [Name of sponsor] for sponsoring our welcome reception, to be held right after this ceremony. We plan to end the ceremony at 9 PM — so synchronize your watches. (Pause for audience reaction) Right after we finish, we'll take the formal photographs of individual award recipients, along with a group photo. Those of you receiving awards, please come to the stage after the ceremony for the photo session. We have quite a few awards to present tonight. And unlike the Oscars, we have no music to let speakers know when their time's up. (Pause for audience reaction) So we ask all award recipients to please keep your remarks brief.

GADSDON: We're honored tonight to receive a welcome greeting from Texas Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson.

[Congresswoman Johnson comes to stage to give welcome remarks]

GADSDON: Thank you, Congresswoman Johnson.

BRITTON: We're also pleased to have with us Helen Giddens, State Representative from Dallas.

[Giddens comes to stage to give welcome remarks]

BRITTON: Thank you, Representative Giddens.

GADSDON: Also in our audience tonight is the NMA's own Dr. Jesse Moss, Jr., President of our Lone Star State chapter.

[Dr. Moss comes to stage to give welcome remarks]

GADSDON: Thank you, Dr. Moss.

GADSDON: Now we'd like to recognize some of the special guests joining us this evening [Insert names when confirmed].

[Applause]

GADSDON: Thank you.

BRITTON: The NMA is fortunate to have a very committed group of volunteer physicians to help us advance our agenda. They're our Board of Trustees.

Play Video 3: Board of Trustees members

BRITTON: Will all of our Board members who are present please stand and be recognized.

[SPOTLIGHT, After Applause]

BRITTON: Thank you.

GADSDON: One of the very best national forums on African-American health and medicine is our Scientific Assembly. NMA Director of Continuing Medical Education, Dr. William E. Matory, leads a group of tireless volunteers who update physicians on the latest breakthroughs. The Scientific Section Heads help NMA keep medical knowledge moving forward.

Play Video 4: Section Heads

GADSDON: Will our NMA Section Heads please stand.

[After Applause]

GADSDON: Thank You

BRITTON: Next, we have some exciting news from the Speaker of the NMA House of Delegates, Dr. Michael A. LeNoir.

[Dr. LeNoir makes announcement]

[Applause]

[Dr. LeNoir leaves the stage.]

GADSDON: Thank You, Dr. LeNoir.

BRITTON: We now honor a group of NMA physicians who have been practicing for 50 years. 50 years ago takes us back to 1956. That year, the first kidney dialysis machines were used, and guinea pigs were discovered to have peculiar dense bodies in their heart cells. In sports, the New York Yankees beat the Brooklyn Dodgers in the World Series. And in 1956, our “Class of Gold,” as we affectionately call them, had just embarked on their long medical careers.

Play Video 5: Class of Gold

BRITTON: We invite all fifty-year NMA physicians who are present to stand for acknowledgement.

[Applause]

BRITTON: Thank you. I hope we all look as good as you do after 50 years in medicine.

GADSDON: And now for our awards. This year, we start by recognizing the contributions of one of our pioneers in medicine with a brand new, first-ever award. Dr. Randall Morgan, NMA Past President and current Executive Director of the W. Montague Cobb/NMA Health Institute, please come to the stage to present this award.

[Dr. Morgan comes to stage]

MORGAN: Thank you, Dr. Gadsdon. Our institute is named after one of NMA’s past presidents, Dr. William Montague Cobb, because of his extraordinary achievements, both in research and as an advocate and organizer for health care parity for African-Americans. During Dr. Cobb’s 41 year career, he fought for racial integration of hospitals and medical schools, advocated national health care coverage legislation before Congress, and was one of the principal guests of President Lyndon B. Johnson at the signing of Medicare legislation in 1965. This institute is a testament to Dr. Cobb’s visionary leadership.

It’s appropriate that the inaugural W. Montague Cobb Lifetime Achievement award should go to Dr. W. Michael Byrd. Dr. Byrd’s illustrious and pioneering career is a tribute to his professional and personal relationship with Dr. Cobb. In the 1970s, early in Dr. Byrd’s medical career, Dr. Cobb recognized the young physician’s unique potential and began mentoring him.

Over the years, Dr. Byrd studied with Dr. Cobb on numerous occasions. He built the intellectual foundation for Dr. Byrd's future groundbreaking work in race and medicine — work which changed healthcare policy in this country. Today, Michael Byrd carries on Dr. Cobb's legacy through his own teaching, writing and mentoring of young medical leaders.

Dr. Byrd, we're thrilled to honor you tonight with the first-ever NMA/W. Montague Cobb Lifetime Achievement Award. Please come to the stage.

Play Video 6: Loop animation of W. Montague Cobb Lifetime Achievement recipient, Dr. W. Michael Byrd.

[Dr. Byrd makes acceptance remarks]

GADSDON: Thank you, Dr. Byrd and Dr. Morgan.

Our next honor is the Distinguished Service Award. It's given for exceptional work in medical service, research or academic achievement. This year's honoree has made his mark as an educator.

Play video 7: Distinguished Service Award, Dr. Donald E. Wilson.

GADSDON: Dean Wilson, please come to the stage.

[Distinguished Service Award remarks, Dr. Wilson]

[Applause]

GADSON: Thank You, Dean Wilson.

BRITTON: No aspect of medical practice is as important as treating patients, because that's where the rubber meets the road. The NMA Practitioner of the Year is a peer recognition award for professionalism, service to the community — and of course, a great bedside manner. (Brief pause before running video for audience reaction)

Play Video 8: Practitioner of the Year, Dr. William F. Demas

BRITTON: If you were sick, wouldn't you want your physician to be Practitioner of Year? Dr. Demas, please come up and accept your award!

[Practitioner of Year Remarks made by Dr. Demas]

[Applause]

BRITTON: Thank You, Dr. Demas.

GADSDON: The Meritorious Service Award is given for noteworthy achievement and prominence. Our honoree has committed his life to serving the disadvantaged, wherever they may be.

Play Video 9: Meritorious Service Award, Dr. Mark J. Wade

GADSDON: Dr. Mark Wade (beckons him to stage) – Arise and walk!

[Acceptance remarks made by Dr. Wade]

[Applause]

GADSDON: Thank you, Dr. Wade.

The Society of the Year Award is given to local medical societies that demonstrate exemplary leadership. Size matters, so tonight we're presenting two awards – for the large and small Societies of the Year. First, the large society. Our award goes to the AMA. Now before you jump to any conclusions, let's show you what that stands for.

Play Video 10: Large Society of the Year: Atlanta Medical Association, Dr. Cyril O. Spann, Jr., President

GADSDON: Dr. Cyril Spann, Jr., President of the Atlanta Medical Association, please come up and accept your Large Society of the Year award.

[Dr. Spann makes acceptance remarks]

[Applause]

GADSDON: Thank you, Dr. Spann.

BRITTON: And now for our Small Society of the Year.

Play Video 11: Small Society of the Year: Mound City Medical Forum, Dr. Consuelo Wilkins, President

BRITTON: Dr. Consuelo Wilkins, please accept our Small Society of the Year award. Small but mighty!

[Dr. Wilkins makes acceptance remarks]

GADSDON: Thank you, Dr. Wilkins.

BRITTON: The collective strength of the NMA comes from our membership. But membership donations alone are not enough to fund all of our vital activities.

GADSDON: On the brink of our second century of existence, NMA remains on the frontlines of the battle against health disparities. Eliminating those disparities also requires the commitment of corporate support.

BRITTON: NMA has a valued circle of corporate supporters who are partners in achieving our goals and objectives. Tonight, meet three members of NMA's Corporate Circle of Partners.

Play Video 12: Corporate Circle Partner – AstraZeneca

GADSDON: We're honored to have joining us tonight AstraZeneca Vice President, Cathy Bonnacelli.

[Cathy Bonnacelli makes remarks]

[Applause]

GADSDON: Thank you.

BRITTON: Now for our second Corporate Circle partner.

Play Video 13: Corporate Circle Partner – GlaxoSmithKline

BRITTON: Representing GlaxoSmithKline tonight is Dr. Edward A. Trott. He's Group Director of Clinical Worldwide Development for Musculoskeletal, Inflammation, Gastrointestinal, and Urology.

[Dr. Trott makes remarks]

[Applause]

BRITTON: Thank You, Dr. Trott.

GADSDON: The third Corporate Circle partner we'd like to recognize this evening is Pfizer.

Play Video 14: Corporate Circle partner, Pfizer

GADSDON: Representing Pfizer tonight is Dr. Evelyn Lewis. She's a Research Specialist and Director of Regional Medical for Pfizer.

[Dr. Lewis makes remarks]

[Applause]

GADSDON: Thank you, Dr. Lewis.

BRITTON: Special thanks to the following corporations, for their contributions to the success of the NMA's Convention and Scientific Assembly.

Play Video 15: Corporations contributing to Convention and Scientific Assembly.

GADSDON: And now we turn to those who are just starting their medical careers – young students whom the NMA's scholarship program helps support.

BRITTON: The scholarship recipients deserve your applause, but please curb your enthusiasm until all their names have been announced. The awards will be accepted on the recipients' behalf by the President of the Student NMA, Brandi K. Freeman.

GADSDON: The Patti LaBelle Medical Scholar recipient is Paulette Grey, a third year student at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

BRITTON: These are the six NMA Emerging Scholar recipients.

1. GADSDON: Nnenna Nkechinyere Aguocha, a third year student at Harvard Medical School.

2. BRITTON: Nevine D. Ali, a third year student at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

3. GADSDON: Edidiong Celestine Ntuen, a second year student at Wake Forest University School of Medicine

4. BRITTON: Marc Addison Callender, a third year student at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

5. GADSDON: Napatia Moree Tronshaw, a third year student at the Pritzker School of Medicine, University of Chicago

6. BRITTON: Kerry-Ann Stewart, a second year student at the University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry

GADSDON: Our apologies for any mispronunciations. Diversity produces some very interesting names. *(Pause for audience reaction)*

BRITTON: We're also awarding one NMA scholarship in Medical Journalism. The JNMA award goes to Christopher L. Watson, a fourth year student at the University of North Carolina.

GADSDON: Will Dr. Beverly Anderson, president of the Auxiliary to the National Medical Association, please come up to present our next award.

ANDERSON: *[Has her own prepared remarks covering all this] (Presents Alma Wells Givens Scholarships. Four scholarships are given every year to students who have completed the sophomore year at Howard University College of Medicine, Meharry Medical College, Morehouse College of Medicine and Charles R. Drew Postgraduate Medical School. This year's recipients are [Names].)*

(ANMA also awards one annual Omega Mason/Maude Bisson Nursing Scholarship to a nursing student. This year's scholarship goes to [Name].)

GADSDON: Thank you, Dr. Anderson. Will the President of the Student NMA, Brandi K. Freeman, please join us and accept all these scholarships on behalf of the recipients.

FREEMAN: *(Makes remarks)*

GADSDON: Thank You, Brandi. (To audience) It's okay to applaud now. (Pause for applause) As physicians, we welcome the SNMA Class of 2006 to the medical professional ranks. We also wish them a good night's sleep during their residency. (Pause for audience reaction)

BRITTON: Our final award category this evening is the Scroll of Merit. The members of this elite group are among the movers and shakers in the African-American medical community today.

Play Video 16 – Scroll of Merit: Pernesssa C. Seele, Founder & CEO, Balm in Gilead

BRITTON: Pernesssa Seale is helping to heal both body and soul. Please come up and accept your membership in the Scroll of Merit.

[Pernesssa C. Seele makes acceptance remarks]

[Applause]

BRITTON: Thank You.

GADSDON: Now for our second Scroll of Merit member.

Play Video 17 – Scroll of Merit: Dr. Zoanne Clack

GADSDON: “Grey’s Anatomy” is a show where young interns struggle to balance their personal and professional lives. Sounds like reality TV to me. (Pause for audience reaction) Dr. Zoanne Clack, ladies and gentlemen!

[Dr. Clack, acceptance remarks]

[After Applause]

BRITTON: Thank you, Dr. Clack.

GADSDON: Well, believe it or not, we’re coming to the end of our awards ceremony. Thank you all for coming tonight. We hope to see you in Honolulu next year.

BRITTON: We ask all of our award recipients to join us on stage now for photographs. Everyone else, please go directly to the reception in [Name of room]. Eat, drink and be merry, but please, a bit of medical advice — everything in moderation.

ANNOUNCER: Our thanks once again to [Sponsor’s name] for sponsoring our reception. And that wraps up tonight’s opening and awards ceremony, Ladies and Gentlemen. Good night and enjoy the convention.