



National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

Office of Media Relations

PRESS RELEASE

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Convention President, Dr. Julius Scruggs speaks of the relevance of the Convention

During the opening session of the 2013 Mid Winter Board Meetings of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., Convention President, Dr. Julius R. Scruggs, shared some Presidential Reflections. During this moment, Dr. Scruggs shared the relevance of the Convention.

He stated that while many persons in America and persons even within our Convention carry an opinion of the convention of being irrelevant for current times, the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. is more relevant and impactful than at any time in history.

Dr. Scruggs took this time to highlight some of the areas of impact the Convention has had during his administration, thereby pointing out the continued relevance of the Convention.

“We partnered with the NAACP in helping to increase voter registrations and thereby having a direct impact on the 2012 elections. We also led in establishing a coalition of all the black Baptist denominations to stand together and fight voter suppression that was being set up to control the outcome of the 2012 Presidential Election.”

Dr. Scruggs then called upon Rev. Nelson Rivers of the NAACP to further speak to this matter and the influence the National Baptist Convention continues to have politically.

Rev. Rivers stated that because of our direct impact and influence, we were able to help the NAACP register more African American voters for the 2012 election than had voted in the 2008 election. The prevailing thought around the nation in many right wing groups was that there would be less African Americans going to the polls for 2012. But due to the efforts of Dr. Scruggs and the Convention, we were able to celebrate the inauguration of the 2nd term of President Barack Obama.

Rev. Rivers also stated that Dr. Scruggs was pivotal in helping not only the NBC USA, Inc. family to remain focused, but was able to get the other black Baptist convention Presidents to lead their people in remaining focused on the “bigger picture.” Many Christians were somewhat dismayed at President Obama’s stance on Same Sex Marriage. But Dr. Scruggs reminded us all that we are more than a “One Issue Convention and people.” As a result of Dr. Scruggs statement and support of President Obama, we were able to focus on the good that President

Obama's administration has done for the African American community in particular and the global community at large.

Dr. Scruggs then spoke of the influence and impact we, as a Convention, have been able to have in the areas of Disaster Relief. He pointed out that three natural disasters have taken place since he was elected president.

During his first year, we were faced with the devastation of the earthquakes in Haiti. The Convention was able to provide both manpower and resources to those impacted by this earthquake. We, as a Convention, gave \$1 million dollars thru Habitat for Humanity, to help build more than 25,000 homes for the displaced citizens of Haiti.

During the second year, we were faced with tornado destruction in Alabama... particularly in Birmingham and Tuscaloosa. Several of our churches were directly impacted. As a result of the relationship and partnership the Convention has established with the American Red Cross and FEMA, we were able to get immediate assistance for those communities from both the American Red Cross and FEMA.

Dr. Scruggs shared a testimony of one of our member churches that was impacted due to the influence of our convention. This particular church's pastor had previously experienced a very negative interaction with the American Red Cross. As a result, he had complete distrust in this organization. But once he was able to speak with Dr. Scruggs and see the assistance we were able to secure for him and his community, this pastor shed tears of joy.

Dr. Scruggs also stated that just this past year, we responded to the victims of Super Storm Sandy.

Dr. Randy Vaughn, the head of our Office of Disaster Management then spoke on behalf of the impact and influence of our National Convention. Dr. Vaughn stated that Disaster is more than mere natural disasters such as Hurricanes, Tornadoes and Floods. Disaster also comes in the form of man-made situations such as the killings in New Town, CT. As a result, Disaster Relief and Disaster Management has become a trillion dollar business. He stated that many persons think of Disaster Relief only in terms of "blankets, band-aids, and biscuits." But when one realizes the full scope of Disaster Relief and the money that is involved, it moves from blankets, band-aids and biscuits to Disaster Management.

As a convention, we've been able to establish relationships that help us direct some of those dollars to our members. There are contracts that are secured to help with clean up efforts. Those are dollars we now are able to help influence.

Our Convention now is invited to the table of several established organizations that exist for disaster management.

In 2009, our Convention entered into partnership with the American Red Cross. As a result, our Convention President and First Lady travel to the National Headquarters of the American Red Cross in Washington, DC every year and share the cares and concern of our convention. This partnership has been strengthened, in part, because of our First Lady, Josephine Scruggs,

being named in 2009 to the position of honorary National spokesperson for the American Red Cross. Mrs. Scruggs has helped lead the convention in staging blood drives during both our National Congress and Annual Sessions. These annual blood drives have enabled the American Red Cross to collect countless pints of blood and plasma.

We are also in relationship and partnership with both the National Black Social Workers and the National Black Mental Health Workers. These relationships further strengthen the impact and influence of our Convention.

President Scruggs closed by stating, that while he has only highlighted these two particular areas of impact and influence our Convention has, there are many more such as our National Congress of Christian Education, our Sunday School Publishing Board, our Women's Convention and our Laymen's Movement to name but a few. We also have direct impact on the ministry and work at American Baptist College.

Enrollment has continued to grow under the leadership of Dr. Forest Harris. But, due to there not being adequate housing for out of town students, the school has become more commuter oriented. In order to better serve those who seek to matriculate at American Baptist College, Griggs Hall, the only dormitory at the school needs to be renovated.

Dr. Scruggs, a consistent and long time supporter of the school, gave \$50,000 of his personal finances towards the renovation project. As a result, the school has been able to put a new roof on Griggs Hall and replace the soffits. But, there is more to be done. All of the windows at Griggs Hall have to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$300 per window. As a result of this plea, an immediate offering was received with those moneys earmarked for Griggs Hall renovations.

Dr. Scruggs stated yet again, "The Convention is Relevant!" We, as a Convention family must help to spread the word that we have impact and influence in ways that have never been experienced before. We must embrace and pray for the vision and the work of our National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.

For more information on the 2013 Mid Winter Board Session of NBC USA, Inc., or how to become a member, please go to www.nationalbaptist.com.

The National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. is the nation's largest African American religious organization. The National Convention President is Dr. Julius R. Scruggs, Pastor, First Missionary Baptist Church, Huntsville, AL (www.fmbc.org).