



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

USC Alumni Association to Honor Academy Award-Winning Film Director Taylor Hackford

Hackford, Six Other Prominent USC Alumni and USC President Steven B. Sample and First Lady Kathryn Sample Will Be Feted at 77th Annual USC Alumni Awards

April 13, 2010

Los Angeles – Academy Award-winning film director Taylor Hackford will receive the Asa V. Call Alumni Achievement Award, the University of Southern California’s highest alumni honor, at the 77th Annual USC Alumni Awards on April 24, 2010, at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in downtown Los Angeles.

Named for the 1931-32 president of the USC Alumni Association, the Asa V. Call Alumni Achievement Award “recognizes alumni who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to the university and the community by giving generously of their time, energy, and leadership.” Past recipients include Grammy Award-winning trumpeter Herb Alpert, Apollo 11 astronaut and first man on the moon Neil Armstrong, opera great Marilyn Horne and screen legend John Wayne.

In the 32 years since he won an Academy Award for his live-action short *Teenage Father* (1978), Hackford has directed such films as *An Officer and a Gentleman* (1982), *Dolores Claiborne* (1995), *The Devil’s Advocate* (1997) and *Ray* (2004), which earned him two Academy Award nominations. His producing credits include *La Bamba* (1987) and the Academy Award-winning documentary *When We Were Kings* (1996). An active member of the Directors Guild of America (DGA) for more than 30 years, he was elected DGA president in 2009.

In addition to Hackford, the USC Alumni Association will also recognize six other distinguished alumni for their achievements and contributions. Five-time Olympic medalist Janet Evans, USC trustee and Cogent, Inc. founder Ming Hsieh and Captain Melissa Ward, the first African-American woman to serve as a commercial airline captain, will receive Alumni Merit Awards, recognizing “individuals whose remarkable accomplishments speak well for the range and quality of a USC education.” Former USC trustee Gale Bensussen and his wife Jane Bensussen, benefactors of the Bensussen Research Floor of the USC School of Pharmacy, and Roger W. Rossier, benefactor of the USC Rossier School of Education, will receive Alumni Service Awards for “outstanding volunteer efforts on behalf of the university.”

The 77th Annual USC Alumni Awards will also feature a special alumni tribute to retiring USC President Steven B. Sample and First Lady Kathryn Sample, commemorating their 19 years of service to the university.

“This year’s honorees represent the very best of the Trojan Family,” said Scott Mory, USC Alumni Association CEO. “We look forward to welcoming them, and our guests, to this year’s celebration.”

Every year since 1932, the USC Alumni Association has paid tribute to distinguished members of the Trojan Family. The annual Alumni Awards is the premier event sponsored by the Alumni Association. All proceeds from the event support the Alumni Association’s programs, services and scholarships. Past honorees include architect Frank O. Gehry, WNBA star Lisa Leslie and Academy Award-winning filmmaker Robert Zemeckis. For more information, please visit <http://alumni.usc.edu/awards/>.

ABOUT THE USC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1923, the University of Southern California Alumni Association honors through its many events and programs the university’s rich history and the intellectual, cultural and economic contributions of the Trojan Family. A full-time staff headed by the alumni association CEO helps 300,000+ USC alumni worldwide build and maintain lifelong connections to their alma mater and one another. For more information, call (213) 740-2300 or visit <http://alumni.usc.edu/>.

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