



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 his wife Kathryn Will Be Feted at 77th Annual USC Alumni Awards Gala

December 14, 2009

Los Angeles – Taylor Hackford '68 (USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences) will receive the Asa V. Call Alumni Achievement Award, the University of Southern California's highest alumni honor, at the 77th Annual Alumni Awards Gala 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. Taylor Hackford is an Academy-Award®-winning film director and producer whose best-known films include *An Officer and a Gentleman* (1982), *Dolores Claiborne* (1995) and *Ray* (2004). He is also the current president of the Directors Guild of America.

In addition to Hackford, the USC Alumni Association will recognize six other distinguished alumni for their achievements and contributions. Janet Evans '95 (USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism), Ming Hsieh '84 (USC Viterbi School of Engineering) and Melissa Ward '86 (USC Marshall School of Business) will receive Alumni Merit Awards, given to individuals whose remarkable accomplishments speak well for the range and quality of a USC education. Janet Evans is a five-time Olympic medalist in distance swimming who holds world records in four events. Ming Hsieh, a USC Trustee, is the founder of Cogent, Inc., a provider of fingerprint ID systems, and co-founder of AMAX Information Technologies. He is also the benefactor of the USC Ming Hsieh Department of Electrical Engineering. Melissa Ward is a United Airlines pilot, the first African-American woman to serve as a pilot for a commercial airline, and was also the first female African-American flight instructor in the United States Air Force.

Alumni Service Awards, which recognize volunteer efforts on behalf of the university, will go to Gale Bensussen '70 (USC Marshall School of Business) and his wife Jane Bensussen MA '69 (USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism), and to Roger W. Rossier MS '62, EdD '72 (USC Rossier School of Education). Gale Bensussen is a former USC Trustee, a past president of the USC Alumni Association, and is CEO of Coral Street Partners. Jane Bensussen is the executive director of ITNGreaterLA, a volunteer organization providing transportation to seniors and the visually impaired. She is chair of the upcoming 2010 USC Women's Conference. Both Gale and Jane are benefactors of the Bensussen Research Floor of the USC School of Pharmacy. Roger W. Rossier, benefactor of the USC Rossier School of Education, is co-founder of Rossier Educational Enterprises and chair of the USC Orange County President's Council.

The 2010 USC Alumni awards will also feature a special alumni tribute to USC President Steven B. Sample and his wife Kathryn. Sample became USC's 10th president in March 1991 and has announced that he will be stepping down in August 2010.

Every year since 1932, the USC Alumni Association has paid tribute to distinguished members of the Trojan Family. The annual Alumni Awards Gala is the premier event sponsored by the alumni association. All proceeds from the event support the alumni association's programs, services and scholarships. Past recipients of the Asa V. Call Alumni Achievement Award include Grammy-winning trumpeter Herb Alpert, former Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher and legendary film star John Wayne. 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 associate senior vice president for university relations 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>.