

Sharpton hosts NAN Triumph Awards

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Terrence Howard with Rev. Al Sharpton BILL MOORE PHOTO

Tuesday, Oct. 9, 2018, folks put on their glad rags, sparkles and bright smiles and headed down to Manhattan's Jazz at Lincoln Center for the Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network Triumph Awards. The ninth annual awards gala recognized six "outstanding nominees from the legal, corporate, and entertainment fields for their ongoing work within their communities to promote racial justice in Donald Trump's America."

"The challenges are so great for the civil rights and social justice communities in the United States that we often fail to celebrate our successes as we move from fight to fight," said Sharpton, NAN's president and founder. "The Triumph Awards are a yearly opportunity to recognize and celebrate high-profile figures that are both successful leaders in their fields as well as staunch advocates for equality and justice. These are people who can be celebrated, lifted up and ultimately emulated in their work."

Sharpton hosted the show honoring seven nominees: Starbucks COO Rosalind Brewer, a pioneering Black woman in the corporate sector who has overseen the coffee chain's global supply chain, product innovation and store development, received the Corporate Executive of the Year Award; Academy Award-nominated actor Terrence Howard, the star of hit Fox television show "Empire," received the Triumphant Entertainer of the Year Award; Jeffrey Wright, whose starring role in hit HBO series "Westworld" has catapulted him into the spotlight, even as he works around the world to promote tolerance through the

Ebola Survival Fund, the United Nations Democracy Fund and his role as a Peace by Piece Ambassador with the government of Sierra Leone, received the Chairman's Award for Historic & Transformative Services in the Arts; President of Combs Enterprises Dia Simms, who has worked her way up to the highest echelons of the music world since her time serving as Sean "Diddy" Combs' assistant, received the Triumphant Woman of the Year Award; Joe Tacopina, managing partner of the law firm Tacopina & Seigel (and one-time lawyer for one of the police officers in the controversial 1997 Abner Louima case and recently a lawyer for rapper Meek Mills), received the President's Award for Service and Humanitarian Efforts; and AT&T's head of Multicultural Engagement and head of Strategic Alliances and founder of the Humanity Connection, Tanya Lombard, and Essence Communications and People en Español President Michelle Ebanks, a visionary media and communications executive who has dedicated much of her professional life to the empowerment of Black and Brown women and girls, received the President's Award for Leadership and Community Service.