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Dr. Benjamin Hooks, Remarks to NAACP Convention, Nashville, Tennessee

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7-8-92
#2

REMARKS

**BENJAMIN L. HOOKS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NAACP
ACT-SO CEREMONY
83RD NAACP CONVENTION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
JULY 1992**

ACT-SO Participants; Parents
and Friends; Advisors;
Corporate Supporters, Ladies
and Gentlemen:

What a joy it is to see so
many young people engaged in
the pursuit of excellence.

The NAAF's ACT-SO program
is all about excellence.

When that perceptive and
provocative journalist, Vernon
Jarrett, brought this idea to
us, we embraced it with
alacrity.

We saw in the ACT-SO
concept a means to spur our
young people to achievements in
the sciences, the creative and

performing arts, and in technology.

ACT-SO is the acronym for the Afro-Academic Technological, Cultural and Scientific Olympics.

But ACT-SO stands for more.

Too often in our community, we have honored star athletes, but have overlooked those who excel in scholarly pursuits.

Don't misunderstand: Athletics are important; athletes are worthy of honor.

But, sd s people, African-Americans must develop the potential of all. We have produced great American athletes.

But we have also produced great scholars -- DuBois, Bunche, great writers, from Phillis Wheatley to Toni Morrison. Now we must be about the task of producing new

scholars, thinkers, and
scientists to ensure this
legacy continues unabated and
shines with greater luster.

ACT-SO is our shining
opportunity to honor
achievement.

And, through ACT-SO awards
and scholarships, we have been
able to provide enhanced
opportunity to those who have
achieved.

This is a beautiful sight.
This is a panorama of the
flower of the young manhood and
young womanhood of the race.

You know, when I was
young, it was popular to urge
young African-Americans to be a
credit to the race. These young
men and women are a credit to
the race . To the human race.

7-7-92
pm

Today, Death claimed the body of Juanita Jackson Mitchell, one of the greatest freedom fighters in the history of Maryland and the nation.

However, Death can claim no victory over the spirit of service and bravery represented by the life of Juanita Jackson Mitchell.

The daughter of one outstanding civil rights leader and the wife of another, Mrs. Mitchell is remembered for the achievements she made in her own right and for the battles she fought.

From her mother, the incomparable Lillie Carroll Jackson, she inherited a fighting spirit and a keen sensitivity to injustice.

To her husband, Clarence Mitchell, Jr., the long-time chief Washington lobbyist of the NAACP, she was a comrade in arms and a sustainer and supporter.

Mrs. Mitchell was the first national director of the NAACP's Youth and College Division. She was the first African-American woman admitted to the practice of law in the State of Maryland.

Her achievements were many. Now she is at rest. But her spirit remains among us, to inspire us for the continuing struggles for freedom.

May she now hear a Voice saying:

"Many daughters have done excellently, but thou excellest them all."

Because of what she

did, generations will rise
up and call her name
blessed.