



**Council for
Children's
Rights**

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Council for Children's Rights to Host *A Night for Children's Rights* on February 25th

Charlotte, North Carolina – February 18, 2015 – 2014 NC Teacher of the Year, **James Ford**, will be the featured speaker at the fifth annual ***A Night for Children's Rights***, (ANFCR) hosted by **Council for Children's Rights** (CFCR). Ford will share his thoughts and insights on the evening's theme "**Imagine the Possibilities.**" The Council's largest annual fundraising event will take place at 6 p.m. on **Wednesday, February 25, 2015 in the McGlohon Theater at Spirit Square** and is made possible with generous support from presenting sponsors Bank of America, Wells Fargo and Katten Muchin Roseman LLP.

Ford was named North Carolina Teacher of the Year last April and since then has been on a whirlwind tour of the state representing its 95,000-plus teachers. Along the way, he has gained a reputation as a dynamic orator and a passionate advocate for public education and has received numerous awards for his work including 2014 Charlottean of the Year by *Charlotte Magazine*, Teacher of the Year by the *Charlotte Post* Foundation and the 2014 Teacher of the Year by the National Alliance of Black School Educators.

After hearing Ford speak last fall, CFCR board member Martha Schmitt suggested the Council invite him to present at the annual fundraiser. "I don't believe I have ever heard anyone speak so passionately about issues around children," Schmitt explains. "James impressed upon me how it is all our jobs to provide children with hope. Hope is what leads us down a path of possibilities. James is inspirational in his commitment to children. He inspired me and I know he will inspire our guests at ANFCR"

Nearly 700 guests will gather for a cocktail reception followed by a program in the theatre highlighting the work of the Council. "*A Night for Children's Rights* is a wonderful opportunity for us to gather with individuals who share our passion for creating a better life for children" said Interim Executive Director Robert McCarter. Council hopes to surpass its \$300,000 goal for the evening through a combination of individual donations and corporate sponsorships – all of which help provide direct services to over 2,500 children in the Charlotte area each year.

"One in five of our local children live in poverty, and the number of high poverty schools has quadrupled in the last decade. These are more than statistics to us," adds McCarter. "These are the children who depend on the Council to be their voice and insure their rights in the courts, in the hospitals and in the schools."

The program will also include the presentation of the **2015 Dolly Award**, given annually by the Council to an outstanding child advocate. This year the award is being **presented posthumously to Larry King**, a well-known and revered champion of children in the Charlotte community. This marks the 10th anniversary of his passing and the award will be presented to members of his family in honor of his life and legacy. Music will also be provided by children from the Community School of the Arts.

James Ford will be available to the media for interviews in the Middleton McMillan Gallery at Spirit Square at 5:30 p.m. prior to the event.

For more information, please contact **LuAnn Ritsema, Director of Communication and Marketing** at 704-943-9611 or luann@cfcrights.org.

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About Council for Children's Rights

Since 1979, Council for Children's Rights (CFCR) has been the voice for children's rights in the Charlotte area, leading the community to stand up for every child's right to be safe, healthy, and educated. The organization provides expert legal representation to over 2,500 children annually, and advocates on behalf of all children in Mecklenburg County through research, policy and planning initiatives and partnerships to improve outcomes for children. To learn more, please visit www.cfcrights.org.