



**Unity Care Group, Inc.**  
"Creating Healthier Communities"

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Insurer Honors Three for Contributions to Black Community

**Oakland, Calif., (March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002)** The gathering at the posh Oak Tree Grill and Entertainment Complex in Jack London Square dined on "soul food."

And they sang "Lift Every Voice and Sing," the black national anthem.

Hundreds came for the From Whence We Came awards program on the last day of Black History Month as three African-American leaders were honored with national awards presented by Allstate Insurance for their contributions to the African-American community.

The recipients were Oakland Vice Mayor Larry Reid; Dr. Rev. J. Alfred Smith Sr., pastor of of Allen Temple Baptist Church in East Oakland; and Andre Chapman, president of the Unity Care Group, a San Jose-based nonprofit that counsels troubled youth.

"They are living the From Whence We Came spirit through their commitment to youth and by creating new opportunities for future generations of African Americans," said Robert Barge III, an Allstate vice president. "Each award recipient is creating a unique place in African-American history."

Reid, who was with wife Kim and introduced by daughters Shahida, 16, and Quiyamma, 11, said, "I truly believe in doing what my God put me on earth to do, ... leave my community better than the way it was."

Elected in 1996, Reid has won praise from residents for reopening the Grass Valley Fire Station, which had been closed for 13 years, and enacting ordinances for a moratorium on hazardous materials facilities near homes and a crackdown on drug traffic and most recently the sideshows.

Chapman said a third of his caseload are young people from Oakland. "I urge all of you to just connect with one young person so they don't come to my door or to prison," he said.

Chapman provides 84 residential beds and has a 130-member staff. Some 50 disadvantaged youths are served annually through transitional housing, foster care, drug treatment, mental health services or a pre-engineering program.

Stanley Hall, Bay Area Urban League president, introduced Smith and commended Allen Temple for building housing for seniors, and persons with AIDS and also helping several African countries. "We have to build steppingstones not stumbling blocks," said Smith. "We have to look back for wisdom as we (as a community) plow new ground."

Ebony magazine has named Smith one of the 100 most influential African Americans in the U.S. and one of the nation's 15 "greatest preachers." He is the founding chairman of the Bay Area Black United Fund and his church has started a leadership development institute and family services center.

### **ABOUT UNITY CARE GROUP**

Founded in 1992, Unity Care Group, Inc. is a community-based non-profit multi-service youth and family development agency. Founded with the goal of developing educational and social programs to enrich the lives of at-risk youth, our mission is to provide quality youth and family programs for the purpose of creating healthier communities through lifelong partnerships. For more information contact the Development Department at (408) 971-9822 or visit us at

[www.unitycare.org](http://www.unitycare.org).