



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nichell Taylor Bryant, SoulSource Communications
Tel: 516-623-0404 Mobile: 917-407-3852

**LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE LARGEST ACADEMIC PROMOTION OF BLACK YOUTH
IN AMERICA – NAACP NYC ACT-SO – TO HOLD ITS NEW YEAR
2005 KICK-OFF RALLY**

*New Season the First Since Passing of Program Creator Vernon Jarrett;
Saxophonist Sensation, ACT-SO Alum Mike Phillips Featured Guest;
Rally Launches Students' Journey to "Olympics of the Mind Competition" in Spring*

New York, NY – December 30, 2004 – The New York City chapter of the NAACP Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (NYC ACT-SO), proud sponsors of the "Olympics of the Mind", will hold its **2005 Annual Student Kick-Off Rally on Saturday, January 8, 2005, 11 a.m., at P.S. 84, 32 West 92nd Street, New York, NY (between Columbus Avenue and Central Park West).** NAACP ACT-SO is the largest program dedicated to academic achievement of Black youth in the country. The Kick-Off Rally will feature Mike Phillips, saxophonist sensation and NYC ACT-SO alum; a showcase of exceptionally talented Black high school students; and, prizes and give-a-ways.

Some 300 students from all five boroughs are expected to attend the **NAACP NYC ACT-SO Kick-Off Rally**, which will highlight the wonderful work of NYC ACT-SO scholars throughout the city and include dynamic performances by ACT-SO alumni and a science and visual arts exhibition. The Kick-Off Rally will usher in students' talents for a brand new season, which will be the first since last year's passing of NAACP ACT-SO creator Vernon Jarrett, a legendary award-winning journalist, civil rights activist, and co-founder of the National Association of Black Journalists Inc. (NABJ).

The Kick-Off Rally marks the beginning of the students' journey to and preparation for the annual "Olympics of the Mind" competition to be held in late April, followed by the awards ceremony. Cash prizes will be awarded to the gold, silver and bronze medallists in various academic and artistic categories. Don't miss the chance to see New York's future scientists, inventors, entrepreneurs, dancers, artists, musicians and others!

Kick-Off Rally organizers and attendees will welcome a performance by special guest, saxophonist extraordinaire **Mike Phillips**, a recording artist on the Hidden Beach label and a proud **NYC ACT-SO alumnus**. Mike Phillips recently played on the PRINCE MUSICOLOGY TOUR and has performed and toured with STEVIE WONDER. His second album will be released in Spring 2005.

The NAACP NYC ACT-SO program, a 501(c) (3) volunteer organization funded by public and private donations, is dedicated to promoting academic and cultural excellence among Black high school students and has been an inspiration to more than 4,000 New York City youngsters over the past 17 years. To learn more about the **NAACP NYC ACT-SO** program, you may **visit us on the web at www.actso.org**. **Admission to the Kick-Off Rally is free and open to the**