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Poitier, Kwasniewski, Roberts, McEwan receive the 28th Annual Common Wealth Awards

2007 honorees are distinguished achievers who have made their mark in the world community.

WILMINGTON, Del., April 28 /PRNewswire/ -- Four prominent leaders and achievers who have influenced modern society through their work and their accomplishments are being honored tonight with the 28th Annual Common Wealth Awards of Distinguished Service. The awards recognize and encourage outstanding achievement worldwide in designated fields of human endeavor.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070428/CLSA012>)

The 2007 Common Wealth Award winners are:

- * Sidney Poitier, Academy Award-winning actor and cinematic trailblazer, for Dramatic Arts;
- * Aleksander Kwasniewski, former two-term president of the Republic of Poland; co-founder of the Social Democratic Party, for Government;
- * Cokie Roberts, veteran broadcast journalist and best-selling author; political analyst for ABC News and NPR senior news analyst, for Mass Communications;
- * Ian McEwan, acclaimed and award-winning British novelist, short-story and screen writer, for Literature.

The honorees receive a shared prize of \$200,000 at the Common Wealth Awards ceremony, hosted by PNC Bank, Delaware, at the Hotel du Pont.

The final selection of the honorees is the decision of the Executory of the Common Wealth Trust. PNC Bank, Delaware has been trustee and administrator for the Common Wealth Awards since their inception. PNC Bank, Delaware is a member of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC).

The Common Wealth Awards of Distinguished Service were first presented in 1979 by the Common Wealth Trust, created under the will of the late Ralph Hayes, an influential business executive and philanthropist. In their 28-year history, the awards have conferred \$4 million in prize money to 161 honorees of international renown. The awards are funded by the Common Wealth Trust.

Ralph Hayes served on the board of directors of PNC Bank, Delaware's predecessor banks from 1935 to 1965. Through the Common Wealth Awards, he sought to recognize

outstanding achievement in eight disciplines: dramatic arts, literature, science, invention, mass communications, public service, government, and sociology. The awards also provide an incentive for people to make future contributions to the world community.

"The Common Wealth Awards symbolize achievement, excellence and leadership, and the 2007 honorees possess these qualities in abundance," said Connie Bond Stuart, president of PNC Bank, Delaware. "Each honoree has traveled a different road to success, and, on the journey, has left indelible marks on modern culture. It's exciting to see Ralph Hayes's charitable legacy come alive once again through these accomplished people."

The roster of past honorees reveals the caliber of talent and the global scope of the awardees and their achievements. Among the past winners are 11 Nobel laureates, including human rights leader Desmond Tutu, former statesman Henry Kissinger and author Toni Morrison. Other winners include former Secretary of State Colin Powell; children's television icon, the late Fred Rogers; Queen Noor of Jordan; stage and screen director Mike Nichols; primatologist Jane Goodall; ocean explorer Robert Ballard; actress Meryl Streep; television journalist Walter Cronkite; and World Wide Web inventor Tim Berners-Lee.

2007 Common Wealth Award Winners

Sidney Poitier receives the 2007 Common Wealth Award for Dramatic Arts. He is a pioneering film legend whose work has influenced American culture for more than 50 years. Through his many groundbreaking performances, he resisted Hollywood's racial stereotypes and opened doors for new generations of artists. Poitier became the first African American to win the Academy Award for best actor for his starring role in the 1963 film, *Lilies of the Field*. Other landmark films that led him to prominence include *The Defiant Ones*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* and *In the Heat of the Night*.

Aleksander Kwasniewski receives the 2007 Common Wealth Award for Government. He is considered one of the most influential political leaders to emerge in Eastern Europe since the fall of communism. As president of the Polish Republic from 1995 to 2005, Kwasniewski co-authored and signed into law the country's new democratic constitution. He led economic reforms that moved Poland to a market economy, and he worked vigorously to get Poland admitted to NATO in 1999 and the European Union in 2004. Under his leadership, Poland became a full-fledged member of the international community and an attractive site for international investment.

Cokie Roberts receives the 2007 Common Wealth Award for Mass Communications. She is an esteemed and successful broadcast journalist with more than 30 years on the airwaves. She is a political commentator for ABC News where she covers Congress, politics and public policy. She also serves as senior news analyst for National Public Radio. From 1996 to 2002, she and Sam Donaldson co-anchored the weekly ABC interview program *This Week*. Roberts has won two Emmy Awards and countless other tributes for her work. She has penned three bestselling books, including *From This Day Forward*, written with her husband, Steven V. Roberts.

Ian McEwan receives the 2007 Common Wealth Award for Literature. He is a British writer of international renown. He burst on the literary scene in 1975 with his first volume of short stories, *First Love, Last Rites*, which was published to sensational critical acclaim. Since his auspicious debut, McEwan has penned a celebrated body of work that has secured his standing as one of modern fiction's greatest writers. His 1998 novel, *Amsterdam*, won Britain's prestigious Booker Prize. Other award-winning novels include *The Comfort of*

Strangers, *The Child in Time* and *Atonement*, which many literary critics hail as McEwan's masterpiece.

SOURCE The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc.