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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Kevin Johnson to receive John R. Wooden Lifetime Achievement Award**

The Paralysis Project of America Recognizes St. HOPE's founder for Community Service

Sacramento, CA - [St. HOPE](http://St.HOPE) announced today that founder and CEO [Kevin Johnson](http://Kevin.Johnson) has been selected as the 2008 recipient of the [John R. Wooden](http://John.R.Wooden) Lifetime Achievement Award by [The Paralysis Project of America](http://The.Paralysis.Project.of.America) (PPA). Johnson is scheduled to receive the award on Saturday, February 23, 2008 during PPA's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Sports Legends Awards in Los Angeles.

"I am honored and humbled to be this year's recipient of the John R. Wooden Lifetime Achievement Award," said Johnson. "The Paralysis Project of America should be commended for their service to the sports community and I am proud to be associated with this great organization."

Johnson, a three-time NBA All-Star with the [Phoenix Suns](http://Phoenix.Suns), excelled both on and off the court throughout his more than 12-year playing career. His compassion for children and education prompted President George Bush to honor Johnson with the 411<sup>th</sup> Point of Light in 1991. In addition to also being selected as one of the "15 Greatest Men on Earth" by *McCall's Magazine*, Johnson has received the NBA's J. Walter Kennedy Citizenship Award, the Good Morning America Award from *Sports Illustrated*, the "Most Caring American" award by the Caring Institute, and induction into the World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame in Boise, Idaho, and the Pac-10 Hall of Fame.

"I consider Coach Wooden the most respected coach in this country, a mentor and a good friend," said Johnson. "To be recognized with an Award in his name is truly special and I will treasure it always." Today, when not leading St. HOPE's efforts, Mr. Johnson speaks regularly to universities and community groups on education, economic development and public policy issues, as well as on the importance of being a good neighbor and giving back to communities.

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The Paralysis Project of America honors world class athletes for their contributions to society through the Coach John Wooden Lifetime Achievement Award. The Paralysis Project of America was founded in 1987 by a group of concerned parents whose children were injured in accidents. The Paralysis Project funds novel lines of Scientific Research to assist those suffering from Spinal Cord Injury and Paralysis. Scientific Grants are awarded to researchers based on the funds made available from the Paralysis Project's fundraising activities. The mission of Paralysis Project is to accelerate progress toward finding a cure for paralysis caused by spinal cord injury (SCI). [www.paralysisproject.org](http://www.paralysisproject.org)

### About St. HOPE

[St. HOPE](#) Academy began in 1989 as an after school program in a portable classroom at Sacramento High School. Founded by NBA All-Star and Oak Park native Kevin Johnson, St. HOPE is a nonprofit community development corporation whose mission is to revitalize inner-city communities through public education, civic leadership, economic development and the arts. Over the last 19 years, St. HOPE has dramatically improved educational outcomes in Oak Park as well as made a significant economic impact.

In 2003, St. HOPE formed [St. HOPE Public Schools](#), a pre-K-12 independent charter school system that provides high-quality education to nearly 1500 students. [Triumph Center for Early Childhood Education](#) serves 55 students ages 3 and 4, [PS7](#) serves 350 students in grades K-8 and [Sacramento High School](#), which houses four small schools on one campus, serves over 1100 students in grades 9-12. St. HOPE Public Schools will expand nationally with the opening of the St. HOPE Leadership Academy in Harlem, New York on August 13, 2008. Through its Nonprofit Business Model, St. HOPE has also brought 11 businesses, over 200 jobs, and \$7.5 million in development projects to Oak Park.

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