



## **George E. Curry**

George E. Curry is a journalist, keynote speaker, moderator and media coach. From 2001 until 2007, he served as editor-in-chief of the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Service in Washington, D.C. Curry's work at the NNPA ranged from being inside the Supreme Court to hear oral arguments in the University of Michigan affirmative action cases to traveling to Doha, Qatar to report on America's war with Iraq, accompanying Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) President Charles Steele on a mission to Torino, Italy to institutionalize the concept of non-violence and traveling to Accra, Ghana to cover the 50th anniversary of that nation's independence. His weekly column is syndicated by the NNPA to more than 200 newspapers. He writes another column, "Beyond the Spin," every other Thursday for the Philadelphia Inquirer.

Before joining the NNPA, Curry was editor-in-chief of Emerge magazine for seven years. He is past president of the American Society of Magazine Editors, the first African-American to hold the association's top office. Before taking over as editor of Emerge, Curry served as New York bureau chief and as a Washington correspondent for the Chicago Tribune. Prior to joining the Tribune in 1983, Curry worked for 11 years as a reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and for two years as a reporter for Sports Illustrated. Under Curry's leadership, Emerge won more than 40 national journalism awards. He is proudest of his 4-year campaign to win the release of Kemba Smith, a 22-year-old woman who was given a mandatory sentence of 24 1/2 years in prison for her minor role in a drug ring. In May 1996, Emerge published a cover story titled "Kemba's Nightmare." President Clinton pardoned Kemba in December 2000, marking the end of "Kemba's Nightmare." A movie about Kemba is scheduled to be released in 2009.

As a reporter for the Tribune, Curry covered the 1984 presidential campaign of Jesse Jackson and the vice presidential campaigns of Geraldine Ferraro and the senior George Bush. He accompanied Jesse Jackson to Rome in 1985 for an audience with Pope John Paul II. In 1992, Curry covered the presidential campaign of Bill Clinton and the vice presidential campaign of Senator Al Gore. In 2007, he co-moderated the National Urban League's Presidential Forum.

He is listed in Who's Who in America and Who's Who Among Black Americans. Curry was editor of the National Urban League's 2006 State of Black America report. He is the author of *Jake Gaither: America's Most Famous Black Coach* (Dodd, Mead & Co., 1977), editor of *The Affirmative Action Debate* (Perseus Books, 1996) and *The Best of Emerge Magazine*, (Ballantine Books, 2003). Curry also contributed chapters to three anthologies: *The Darden Dilemma: 12 Black Writers on Justice, Race and Conflicting Loyalties*, edited by Ellis Cose (HarperPerennial, 1997); *Walter Mosley's Black Genius: African American Solutions To African American Problems* (W.W. Norton, 1999) and *Bill Clinton and Black America*, edited by DeWayne Wickham (Ballantine, 2002).

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Born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Curry graduated from Druid High School of that city and attended Knoxville College in Tennessee. At Knoxville, Curry was editor of the school paper, quarterback and co-captain of the football team, a student member of the school's Board of Trustees and attended Harvard and Yale on summer history scholarships. In 1986, he wrote and served as chief correspondent for the widely-praised television documentary, "Assault on Affirmative Action," which was aired as part of the "Frontline" series on PBS. He was featured in a segment of "One Plus One," a national PBS documentary on mentoring.

In 1996, Curry was part of the weeklong Nightline special, "America in Black and White." He has also appeared on the CBS Evening News, ABC's World News Tonight, The Today Show, 20/20, Good Morning America, CNN, C-SPAN, BET, Fox Network News, MSNBC and ESPN. The National Association of Black Journalists named Curry its 2003 "Journalist of the Year." He is on the NABJ's list of Most Influential Black Journalists of the 20th Century. In 2008, the Black AIDS Institute presented Curry with one of its "Heroes in the Struggle" awards for his coverage of the AIDS epidemic.

After delivering the 1999 commencement address at Kentucky State University, he was awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters degree. In May 2000, Lane College in Jackson, Tenn. also presented Curry with an honorary doctorate after his commencement speech. Later that year, the University of Missouri presented Curry with its Missouri Honor Medal for Distinguished Service in Journalism, the same honor it had earlier bestowed on such luminaries as Walter Cronkite, John H. Johnson, Joseph Pulitzer and Sir Winston Churchill.

Curry became the founding director of the St. Louis Minority Journalism Workshop in 1977. Seven years later, he became founding director of the Washington Association of Black Journalists' annual high school journalism workshop. In February 1990, Curry organized a similar workshop in New York City.

Curry's work with aspiring journalists has not been limited to the United States. He has conducted journalism workshops for teens in Germany and in 1995 he directed a program that brought together college students in the U.S. and those studying journalism in Senegal to produce two newspapers for the African/African-American Summit in Dakar, Senegal. His work in journalism has also taken him to Egypt, England, France, Cuba, Ghana, Nigeria, Mexico, Canada, Thailand and Italy.

He is chairman of the Knoxville College Board of Trustees, and serves on the Board of Directors of the Kemba N. Smith Foundation, St. Paul Saturdays, a leadership training program for young African-American males in St. Louis; and Young D.C., a regional teen-produced newspaper. Curry was also a trustee of the National Press Foundation, chairing a committee that funded more than 15 workshops patterned after the one he directed in St. Louis. Curry is a member of the National Speakers Association and the International Federation for Professional Speakers. His speeches have been televised on C-SPAN and reprinted in Vital Speeches of the Day magazine.

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