



## **National Civil Rights Group Honors Moneytree CEO Dennis Bassford**

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SEATTLE – The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) recently recognized Moneytree Inc. founder and CEO Dennis Bassford for his philanthropic contributions at its 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Ambassadorial Reception and Awards Dinner held on January 21, 2008.

Held at the New York Sheraton Hotel and Towers, more than 2,000 people attended the awards dinner, making it one of the nation's largest events honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Organized by CORE, a national civil rights organization, the annual dinner received broad support from leaders in the business, diplomatic, civic, religious, entertainment and philanthropic communities.

"I am humbled and honored to be recognized by CORE," stated Mr. Bassford. "CORE is an important and historic champion of equality in America and its work is as relevant and crucial today as when they first took up the cause in 1942."

In addition to his personal and professional philanthropic contributions, Mr. Bassford was recognized as a pioneer in the financial services industry and for the vital role his industry has played in bringing real access, as well as increased choices and financial services to people from all walks of life.

"Mr. Bassford's personal commitment to giving back is part of his company's corporate mission," said CORE Chairman Roy Innis. "Moneytree's support of financial literacy and job training, its commitment to providing consumers with real access to the financial tools and education by which they can better their lives not only matches our values at CORE but puts action to the causes that Dr. King championed."

In addition to Mr. Bassford, CORE also will recognize Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez (Ret.), former commander of US troops in Iraq and ministerial and business visionary Bishop T.D. Jakes at this year's celebration. Multiracial and nondenominational, the Potter's House, Bishop Jakes' church in Dallas, has more than 50 active outreach ministries, more than 30,000 members and a full-time staff of 300.

Past Honorees include notables such as: Nobel Peace Prize laureates Elie Wiesel and Dr. Norman Borlaug; former Secretary of State James Baker; Secretary Generals of the United Nations Javier Perez de Cuellar and Boutros Boutros Ghali; Civil Rights veteran & Chairman of Innerscity Broadcasting, Percy Sutton; Neurosurgeon Dr. Benjamin Carson; music and entertainment legends Patti LaBelle, Nancy Wilson, Leonard Bernstein, and Toni Braxton; film and stage legends Richard Pryor, Morgan Freeman, Robert DeNiro, Audrey Hepburn, Oliver Stone, James Earl Jones and Samuel L. Jackson; sports legends Willie Mays and Roy Jones, Jr., World Heavyweight Champions Evander Holyfield and Muhammad Ali; Olympic Champions Carl Lewis and Jackie Joyner-Kersey; media giants Ted Turner and Connie Chung, Baseball Legend Hank Aaron and the Mother of the modern day civil rights movement, Mrs. Rosa Parks.

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### **About Dennis Bassford**

Dennis Bassford is the founder and CEO of Moneytree, Inc., a retail financial services company based in Seattle, Washington. Mr. Bassford opened the first Moneytree store in 1983 at the age of 26. Since then, Moneytree has grown to become one of Washington's largest privately held companies with more than 130 branches in five western states. Moneytree is an industry and business leader and has consistently been voted by its employees as one of Washington's Best Companies to Work For in surveys by *Washington CEO Magazine*, *The Puget Sound Business Journal* and *NWjobs.com*.

Mr. Bassford graduated from Boise State University in 1980 with a Bachelor's in business administration. In 1999, he was honored by his alma mater for his personal leadership and commitment to community involvement with the Distinguished Alumni Award.

Regarded as an expert and a pioneer in the short-term credit industry, Mr. Bassford is a founding and current member of the Board of Directors of the Community Financial Services Association (CFSA), the national trade association of payday lenders. He also has served as the President of the Washington State trade association, the Financial Service Centers of Washington (FiSCWA) since 1994, and has served as a board member of the Financial Service Centers of America (FiSCA) since 1999.

Mr. Bassford's personal commitment to giving back is part of his company's corporate mission which has earned it tenured recognition as one of Washington's Top 25 Most Philanthropic Companies.

Mr. Bassford is an accomplished speaker and regularly presents to civic and other groups on topics such as consumer credit trends, regulation and financial services. Mr. Bassford's experience and insights also have been featured in scholarly articles, as well as in countless local and national televised and print media interviews.

### **About Moneytree**

A privately-owned, family run business, Moneytree is headquartered in Seattle and is the premier provider of check cashing and payday loan services on the West Coast. In addition to these core services, Moneytree offers prepaid debit and gift cards, money orders, wire funds transfers, and ATM services. A leader in philanthropic giving, Moneytree supports many organizations that benefit youth, families and financial literacy. For more information about Moneytree, please visit [www.moneytreeinc.com](http://www.moneytreeinc.com).

### **About CORE**

Founded in 1942, CORE is the third oldest and one of the "Big Four" civil rights groups in the United States. From the protests against "Jim Crow" laws of the 40's through the "Sit-ins" of the 50's, the "Freedom Rides" of the 60's, the cries for "Self-Determination" in the 70's, "Equal Opportunity" in the 80's, community and economic development in the 90's, to their current focus on financial literacy and financial choice, CORE has championed true equality. As one of the pioneers of the civil rights movement, CORE has paved the way for the nation to follow.