



2008 NAACP Annual Banquet

Saturday, June 7, 2008

“Eliminating the Education Gap”

Keynote Speaker:

Rep. Eric Pettigrew (D-Seattle)



Rep. Eric Pettigrew (D-Seattle) has championed legislation and funding to eliminate the education gap because he believes education is the doorway to opportunity and equality.

He is living proof. The grandson of a one-armed sharecropper, Rep. Pettigrew attended Oregon State University on a football scholarship. After graduating from Oregon State he moved to Seattle in 1985 and received a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from the University of Washington in 1987.

Since receiving his master's degree, Eric has worked in a variety of jobs in government, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector. He worked as Deputy Chief of Staff for Public Safety to Seattle Mayor Norm Rice, he worked as a recruiter to increase diversity in the UW School of Social Work, and he was the director of the Minority Youth Health Project, which reduced teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease rates in Seattle.

Most recently he developed the SAFECO Jackson Street Center, an innovative approach to economic development which provides training and job opportunities to residents of Seattle's Central Area, as well as diversifying SAFECO's employees and customer base.

Representative Pettigrew's community involvement also includes service as the Past President of the Rainier Valley Chamber of Commerce, the board of the Rainier Vista Boys and Girls Club and the ACT Theatre, membership in the Children of Color Organizers and Advocates, and as a little league baseball and basketball coach.

Representative Pettigrew was elected as State Representative for the 37th Legislative District in 2002. In the legislature, Representative Pettigrew serves as the Vice-Chair of the Community, Economic Development and Trade Committee, and on the Appropriations and Early Learning and Children's Services Committees. He is also leading the effort for the Washington State House of Representatives on a Safety Net Workgroup Committee and co-chairs a task force that addresses disproportionality issues in foster care.

Representative Pettigrew's awards include the 2007 Urban League Spirit Award, Washington State Housing Finance Commission's *Friend of Housing Award*, Ike Ikeda *Public Service Award*, Future Leaders of America, Ebony Magazine *Community Service Award*, National Board of Black Accountants *Community Service Award*, and Children of Color Organizers and Advocates.

Representative Pettigrew lives with his wife, Jada, and their son, Justin (20), and daughter Linda (8), in the Mt. Baker neighborhood in Seattle.