



**For Immediate Release
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LDF Statement on the Passing of Renowned Author and Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison

Toni Morrison, the first Black woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature and author of celebrated novels “Song and Solomon” and Pulitzer Prize winning “Beloved”, as well as many children’s books, essay collections, passed away in New York City at the age of 88. LDF’s President and Director-Counsel [Sherrilyn Ifill](#) issued the following statement:

“Toni Morrison is perhaps the greatest American writer ever. But as African Americans we felt that she belonged especially to us. Through her extraordinary work, she freed us to reckon with our past, to love ourselves completely, and to speak our truth. She lifted and centered the interior of African American life in her novels, giving our lives and experiences full literary legitimacy. Most importantly, in her work, African American women were fully realized – our thoughts, our pain, our love, our complicated and rich humanity were allowed the freedom of carrying the story. We were the narrative and the narrator. It matters that Morrison also paid it forward – nurturing, supporting and editing other brilliant Black women writers. Her work exemplified excellence. But rather than distance herself, she fully engaged the struggles of contemporary African American life. Her non-fiction work is penetrating and unsparing in its observations and analysis of race in America. This Nobel Laureate and majestic woman was our treasure. We are proud that she supported the work of LDF. We deeply mourn her passing and celebrate her life’s work and contributions to this nation.”

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes

innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.

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