

# WOMEN POWER

## Sister Friends honors leaders

Story and photos by Helaine R. Williams

Five community leaders were honored at the second annual Women of Excellence Awards, a May 15 banquet hosted by Sister Friends United Inc. at the Wyndham Riverfront hotel in North Little Rock. Rhonda Aaron, Sister Friends United president, welcomed guests.

Honorees were Jannie Cotton, chief executive officer of Professional Counseling Associates in Little Rock and the first black woman in Arkansas to serve as CEO of a major mental-health organization; Jacquelyn Richardson-Hampton, longtime teacher, special education coordinator and principal for the Pulaski County Special School District; Michele Wright, North Little Rock-based "success expert" and author of the book *Dear Success Seeker*; Debrah Mitchell, editorial director and co-owner of *Stand! News*, a monthly community publication based in North Little Rock; and minister Alice Lovelace. The women were presented by 2009 honorees Katherine Mitchell, Emma K. Rhodes, Evangeline Parker, Annie Abrams and, via video, Korto Momolu.

J'Meia Molina, an honor student at Mills High School, and Kayla Love, an honor student at McClellan High, were awarded scholarships of \$500 each.

Sister Friends United is a nonprofit organization of about 30 women who support and empower its members as well as women and families in the community. The group provides a variety of free educational workshops, wellness programs and college scholarships to young women.



Honoree Michele Wright (second from right) with mother Frankie Wise (left) of Tuskegee, Ala., sister Monica Wise and husband Terry Wright



Honoree Jacquelyn Richardson-Hampton (right) with husband Garland Hampton