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LDF Media

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LDF Mourns the Loss of James Earl Jones, Legendary and Groundbreaking Actor

The [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#) is deeply saddened by the death of James Earl Jones, a legendary actor whose powerful performances captivated audiences for nearly seven decades. Mr. Jones passed away at 93 years old in Dutchess County, New York.

LDF President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson issued the following statement:

“It is with heavy hearts that we mourn the loss of beloved and trailblazing actor James Earl Jones and extend our deepest condolences to his loved ones. Mr. Jones’s groundbreaking talent and resounding voice captured hearts and minds across the globe and helped to redefine the boundaries of cinema and theater. During his long and distinguished career, Mr. Jones generously extended his time, wisdom, and support to many, including the Legal Defense Fund.

“Mr. Jones’s tremendous impact on and offstage cannot be overstated. In performances that transported us through time and space, Mr. Jones brought life to characters whose stories spoke to seminal issues including race, class, and justice. Mr. Jones’s illustrious work included portraying Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court Justice and LDF Founder, in the play ‘Thurgood’. We are deeply appreciative of the philanthropic support that Mr. Jones provided to LDF as a member of the Southern California Regional Committee, a fundraising effort of the organization.

“Mr. Jones has left an indelible mark on our cultural and social landscapes, and his absence will be profoundly felt. His remarkable legacy will undoubtedly serve as an inspiration for generations to come.”

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Legal Defense Fund (LDF) - Founded in 1940, the [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. 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 Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that LDF 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.