

Valencia Nelson, March of Dimes State Director of Program Services, will be honored at High Tea' gala set for Memphis Botanic Gardens on April 29

The *Tri-State Defender* will host its 4th Annual Women of Excellence "High Tea" Awards Reception on Friday, April 29 at 3 p.m. at the Memphis Botanic Gardens, 750 Cherry Rd.

The annual event will celebrate and honor 50 African-American women who motivate and inspire others through their vision and leadership, exceptional achievements, and personal contributions to community service.

Over the past 3 years, the *Tri-State Defender* has had the pleasure of honoring 150 female professionals and leaders distinguished by their remarkable civic contributions and career achievements.

Throughout generations, African-American women have continued to set standards and carve new paths, making profound impacts in our community development and global growth. And for 60 years, the *Tri-State Defender* has been a trusted leader for recognizing this work and bringing this kind of information to Memphis and the surrounding areas.

"We had a phenomenal response from the community this year with nearly 80 nominations. We had a hard time narrowing it down because each and every one was deserving of the honor in their own right but we were able to select 50 of which we are very proud," said Bernal E. Smith II, President and Publisher of the *Tri-State Defender* Smith stated.

"We are extremely excited about this opportunity to recognize and honor such a distinguished and deserving group of women."

Honorees were selected based upon the following criteria: African-American woman executive, business owner, community or non-profit leader, proven success within her profession/industry, positive role model whose contributions encourage others and highly active in community service or organizational involvement leading to positive impact on the lives of others.