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## Honorary Degree Citation: Jesse L. Jackson Jr.

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Granted 1998

## JESSE L. JACKSON JR.

Born in Greenville, SC, when your famed civil rights activist father was marching in Selma, you were destined for a life of political activism. You became the 91st African American elected to Congress when you were sworn in December 12, 1995 as a member of the 104th U.S. Congress, serving the second district.

Before your congressional service, you served as the National Field Director of the National Rainbow Coalition, where you instituted a non-partisan program that successfully registered millions of new voters. You also created a program to educate voters on the importance of the political process.

A recent *New York Times* article said that you, Rep. Jackson, exemplify "the new black politics, the new black middle-class ... You are an uncommon Chicago politician who can speak a language that seems to be understood by blacks and whites alike."

By focusing on creating economic opportunities you, Rep. Jackson, find common ground among your constituents. You advocate job training and creation of a third Chicago-area airport in Peotone. In the House, you serve on several committees that reflect your commitment to improving economic conditions: the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, the Committee on Small Business. Also, you are the Ranking Minority Member on the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform and Paperwork Reduction, a member of the Congressional Steel Caucus and the Congressional Urban Caucus.

You attended St. Albans School in Washington and then North Carolina A&T. You went on to earn a master's degree at Chicago Theological Seminary and a law degree from the University of Illinois. Governors State University is honored to recognize a young man who has accomplished so much and promises even more for the future, with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.