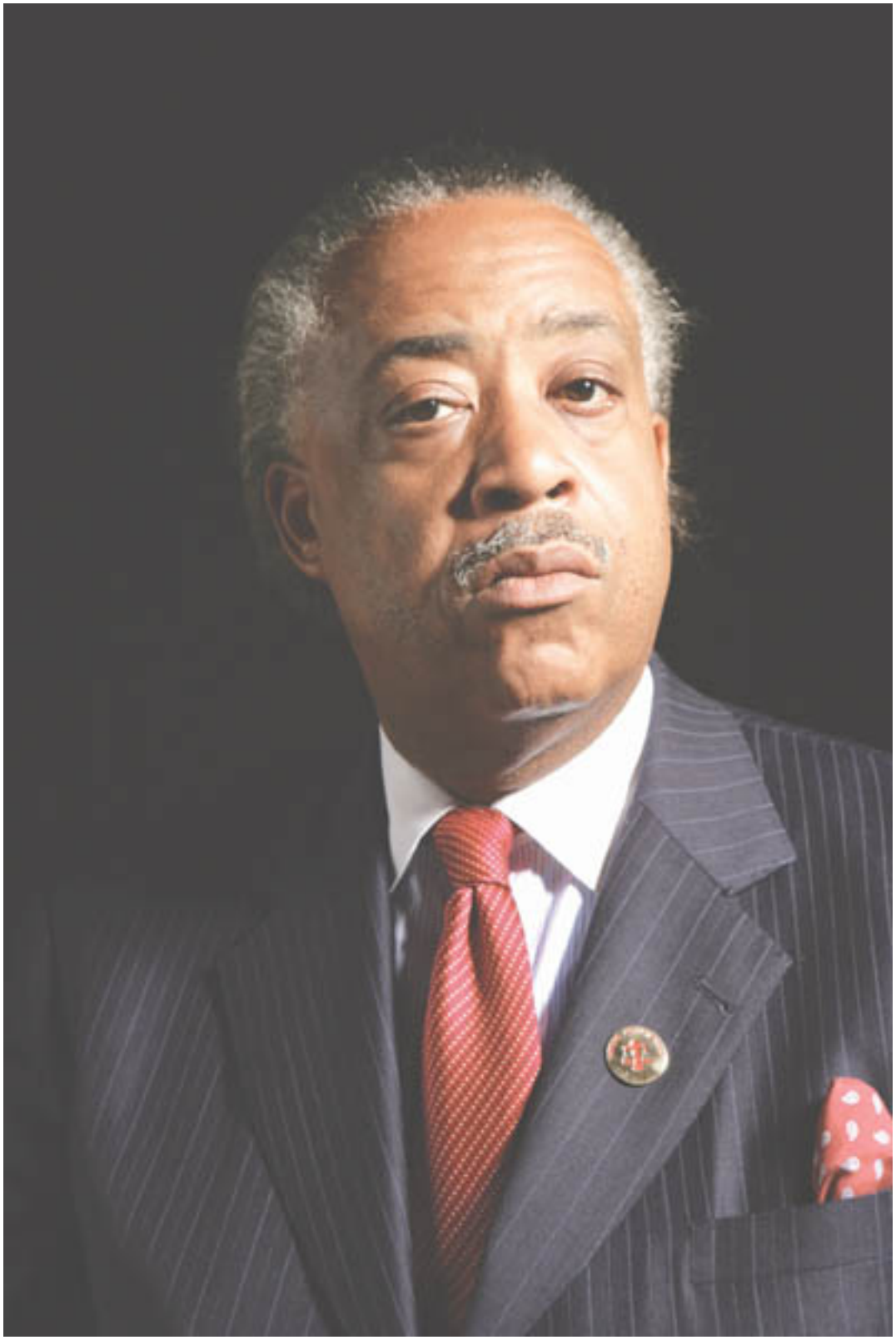

Rev. Sharpton will be the keynote speaker at tonights dinner at the Hyatt Hotel in Columbus, Ohio.

By JAMES W. WADE III

Staff Reporter

The Ohio Legislative Black Caucus (OLBC) announced their First Annual Statewide Convention and Dinner will take place on Oct. 7-9, 2011 in Columbus. The convention is the first of a statewide magnitude since 1984, when the late State Representative C.J. McLin convened a statewide meeting of Black elected officials. The convention, titled “Today’s Vision, Tomorrow’s Reality,” will focus on all aspects of African American life in Ohio. The keynote speaker for Saturday’s dinner will be Rev. Al Sharpton.

“The African American community faces huge challenges, including high unemployment rates, high drop-out rates for students and a lack of affordable health care. Now with House Bill 194 our voting rights are under attack,” said State Representative and OLBC President Sandra Williams (D-Cleveland). “This convention is vital to every African American in Ohio. The people attending will develop action plans designed to bring about change.”

The convention will bring together around 350 Black elected officials from throughout Ohio to develop action plans for key issues based on input from moderators, panelists and attendees. The plans will serve as the group’s strategic blueprint for the future.

The convention will include a series of workshops that will help with the process on fundraising, entrepreneurship/unemployment, get out the vote efforts, healthcare and redistricting/reapportionment. Invited panelists include business leaders, clergy, community activists, politicians, educators, members of the African American media, and health care experts.

“This convention will be the most meaningful political event in state of Ohio for 2011,” said OLBC advisor and political strategist Mr. Arnold Pinkney. “I encourage all elected officials and their supporters to attend this historic event.”

The state dinner on Saturday, Oct. 8, will feature world renowned community activist, radio show host and host of MSNBC's "PoliticsNation," Rev. Al Sharpton, who will deliver the keynote address and highlight key issues impacting the African Americans community.

The dinner will honor the Mayors of Cleveland Mayor Frank G. Jackson, Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman, and Cincinnati Mayor Mark Mallory.

The OLBC convention will take place at the Hyatt Regency Columbus, 350 North High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215 .
The State Dinner will be in the Hyatt's Regency Ballroom. Tickets for the convention are $35 dollars with a lunch included, with some scholarships are available. State Dinner tickets are $125 dollars. The OLBC has arranged for discounted rooms, which includes free parking, through the Hyatt Regency Columbus. For more details and for registration for the State Dinner please visit www.olbc1967.org. For more details and for registration for the convention, please visit www.olbcfoundation.org. The OLBC can be reached at 614-233-3028. The Hyatt Regency Columbus may be reached at 614-463-1234, please mention Ohio Legislative Black Caucus Convention.

The Ohio Legislative Black Caucus was founded in 1967 by State Representative CJ McLin, the first organization of black legislators in the nation. The OLBC is comprised of fifteen active African American members of the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate, who work to improve the quality of life of African Americans in the State of Ohio. The OLBC has several chapters around the State including
Lima
,
Cincinnati
, Youngtown-Warren/Mahoning County, Canton/Stark County and
Miami University
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