

**Contact:** Marcella Gadson, Director of Communications  
[mgadson@mmtconline.org](mailto:mgadson@mmtconline.org) (202) 332-0500

### **MMTC Marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the FCC's Leadership in Equal Opportunity:**

***On July 3, 1968, the FCC Became the First Federal Agency  
to Require Its Licensees to Practice Equal Opportunity in Employment***

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 3, 2018):** The Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC) notes a landmark in history: the decision by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), 50 years ago today, to ban race and gender discrimination in broadcast employment. This act paved the way for Hon. Mignon Clyburn to become the first woman chair and first African-American woman commissioner of the FCC; and for Hon. Ajit Pai to become the first Indian-American chairman of the agency. On July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018, during the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Access to Capital and Telecom Policy Conference, MMTC will honor Clyburn for her work and contributions as commissioner and chair, particularly to advance diversity in entrepreneurship and access to broadband and equal opportunity in media and telecom. During the conference, Congressman James Clyburn will bestow MMTC's Everett C. Parker Lifetime Achievement Award upon her.

The FCC's decision in *Nondiscrimination Employment Practices of Broadcast Licensees* (13 FCC2d 766, issued July 3, 1968) granted a petition by the United Church of Christ's Dr. Everett Parker and its attorney, Earle K. Moore. Dr. Parker went on to co-found MMTC and serve for three decades as an MMTC Director and Officer. Dr. Parker passed away in 2016 at the age of 102. Mr. Moore brought several landmark cases *pro bono* for the UCC's Office of Communication, including the 1966 D.C. Circuit case that established citizen standing in broadcast licensing cases (359 F.2d 994). In Mr. Moore's honor, MMTC created the Earle K. Moore Fellowship Program to train law students to practice before the FCC.

The FCC's 1968 decision was laudable and game-changing; but fifty years later, there remains much to do. Minority broadcast ownership did not exceed 1% of the number of stations until 1982, and 50 years later, broadcast ownership is less than 1% of industry asset value – and is in decline. Today, minorities are underrepresented in tech ownership, employment diversity, and broadband adoption even as evolving technology becomes increasingly enmeshed in our everyday lives. We are better than this.

As we continue the fight for justice and equality in social, economic, and digital treatment, **we urge the FCC take a leadership role the way it did in 1968 when it began to desegregate the broadcasting industry.** A good start would be for the FCC to evaluate each of its actions through the lens of **compassion, equality, and equal opportunity** in the industries it regulates:

***Regulate by Compassion*** — *Rethink positions on Inmate Calling, Lifeline, and Katrina Multilingual Emergency Broadcasting to protect the incarcerated, the poor, and the dispossessed.*

***Ensure Equality*** — *Consider each action it takes as another step toward guaranteeing equality and diversity in the dissemination of licenses and diverse voices. The FCC can use its voice to close the digital divide by ensuring that lower-income, multicultural, and rural neighborhoods get equal access to broadband. The FCC can also use its expertise with its EEO, procurement, and foreign ownership rules to guide the tech industries in the establishment of diversity and equal opportunity. The FCC can strengthen its EEO authority by moving EEO enforcement from its Media Bureau to the Enforcement Bureau.*

***Champion Opportunity*** — *Establish new policies, and revitalize dormant policies that promote diverse ownership of media, infrastructure, and the dissemination of spectrum licenses. The FCC can also use its voice to promote supplier diversity and ensure a skilled 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce through initiatives such as apprenticeships in the wired and wireless industries.*

#### **About MMTC:**

The Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC) is a non-partisan, national nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and preserving equal opportunity and civil rights in the mass media, telecom and broadband industries, and closing the digital divide. MMTC is generally recognized as the nation's leading advocate for minority advancement in communications.