

ROLL CALL

MLK Memorial Gets \$2 Million Boost

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The Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation has moved closer to its goal of “building the dream” with a \$2 million contribution from Toyota’s North American companies, the foundation announced Friday at the Congressional Black Caucus luncheon.

The donation comes on the heels of a surprise million-dollar contribution from BET co-founder Sheila Johnson in addition to \$10 million in matching funds appropriated by Congress in August. The foundation needs to raise a total of \$100 million to cover building and future maintenance costs and has raised \$39.5 million to date.

“This donation illustrates a good corporate citizen stepping up to the plate to help build and make the dream of this memorial a reality not only for America, but for the world,” said Harry Johnson Sr., president and CEO of the MLK Memorial Foundation. “This memorial is designed to educate and inspire all visitors to share in Dr. King’s visions of and for America, and we’re thrilled to have Toyota’s support.”²

Toyota isn’t new to charitable projects such as this one. Last year alone, it invested nearly \$31 million in programs across the country.

“Toyota values the beliefs of Dr. King about diversity and the American dream,” said Mira Sleilati, a spokeswoman for Toyota Motor North America. “Toyota has made this a focus as long as we have been incorporated in the United States. We wanted to be a part of this ground-breaking project.”

Sleilati added that Toyota’s involvement wouldn’t end with the donation. It plans on exploring other ways throughout its various affiliates to raise awareness about the memorial and encourage its employees to join in the cause.

The memorial is scheduled for groundbreaking by November 2006 and dedication in 2008. The planned site for the monument honoring King is on the National Mall adjacent to the FDR Memorial.

Other major donors include General Motors, Tommy Hilfiger Corporate Foundation, Procter & Gamble and the NBA.