



Last month, Lowcountry Speaker Series, in partnership with the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce, successfully kicked off its inaugural season by hosting the 66th Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (2005-2009). Nearly 1,000 community members attended the lecture, which was hosted in a live, face-to-face forum at the Marriott Hilton Head Resort & Spa.

In addition to subscribers and individual ticket holders, the audience also included deserving individuals from community groups such as the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce Junior Leadership Program, Bluffton Boys & Girls Club, and PEARLS Girls of Hampton County. Tickets for individuals in these community groups were made possible through donations to Lowcountry Speaker Series' Our Doors Are Always Open Charitable Fund, presented in conjunction with Community Foundation of the Lowcountry. This initiative has raised over \$35,000 to help fund program participation opportunities for qualified community members, including educators, students, veterans, first responders, and volunteers.

"Secretary Condoleezza Rice was just as I expected; the best role model for our girls, parents and for our volunteer Task Force members. I watched the girls and not one even whispered to a friend nor even thought about a cell phone ... They watched her intently and listened to each word, which is pretty amazing," said Peggy Parker of PEARLS' Girls, a young female mentorship organization. "Secretary Condoleezza Rice is a near-perfect professional. She was as confident and smooth as can be. What a model for all of us."

Reflecting on the kickoff of the inaugural season, Lowcountry Speaker Series founder and host James Lamar stated, “Our vision of creating a forum for community conversation, to discuss today's most important topics, is coming into focus. I am most proud of the fact that the Lowcountry Speaker Series program is supporting broader community participation through the Our Doors Are Always Open foundation. The success of the Lowcountry Speaker Series is dependent on the community's support, so I encourage residents and businesses to invest alongside me to make it part of our community's fabric.”

Lowcountry Speaker Series will host Dr. Sanjay Gupta as the next speaker of their inaugural season on February 11, 2020 at the Marriott Hilton Head Resort & Spa. Dr. Gupta is the multiple Emmy award winning Chief Medical Correspondent for CNN. He is also a practicing neurosurgeon at the Emory Clinic and the Associate Chief of Neurosurgery at Grady Memorial Hospital.

Following Dr. Gupta's presentation, the inaugural Lowcountry Speaker Series season will also include presentations by *National Geographic* photographer and marine biologist Paul Nicklen on March 10, and Robert O'Neill, Former SEAL Team Six Leader and Author of the New York Times best-selling memoir *The Operator: Firing the Shots that Killed Osama bin Laden* on April 7.

Season subscriptions and individual lecture tickets for the remaining events in the series are still available. For more information on the series and to purchase tickets, visit

LowcountrySpeakerSeries.com.