

2011 Symposium on Sustainability at Iowa State University

Energizing our Sustainable Commitment: Our Collective and Collaborative Roles

February 22: Keynote Speaker



Jerome Ringo

Senior Executive for Global Strategies with Green Port and Pioneering Environmentalist

Jerome Ringo became national president of the Apollo Alliance in 2005, working diligently as a dedicated champion of environmental justice and a vocal advocate of clean energy. His firsthand knowledge of the challenges faced came from working for more than 20 years in Louisiana's petrochemical industry. His career include years in drilling and offshore production in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as process operations in the refining industry. Over ten years was spent as an active union member working with fellow members to secure a safe work environment and quality jobs for employees.

Louisiana's petrochemical industry focuses on the production of gasoline, jet fuel, and plastics—many of which contain cancer causing chemicals. As Ringo began observing the negative impacts of the industry's pollution on local communities; primarily poor, minority communities, he began organizing community environmental justice groups. His experience in organizing environmental and labor communities, and his drive to further diversify the environmental movement encouraged many of Apollo's partners to create a broad based coalition to provide real solutions for our energy crisis.

In 1996, Ringo was elected to serve on the National Wildlife Federation board of directors. In 2005, Ringo became the chair of the board, making him the first African American to head a major conservation organization. Ringo was a delegate to the United States' 1998 Global Warming Treaty Negotiations in Kyoto, Japan, and represented the National Wildlife Federation at the COP 15 talks in Copenhagen, Denmark. Ringo also served as a representative at the United Nations' Conference on Sustainable Development in 1999.

Ringo inspires audiences around the world to create a new clean energy economy. Some of his most notable speaking appearances include:

- > The Montreal Climate Summit in 2006
- > The United Nations African Climate Conference in Nairobi, Kenya in 2006
- > The Kyoto Plus Conference in Berlin, Germany in 2007
- > The 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colorado.

In 2006, Ringo was a McCloskey Fellow and Associate Research Scholar at Yale University's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. In 2008, he was a Visiting Lecturer at the University of California, Santa Barbara's Bren School of the Environment. Ringo appeared in the Academy Award-winning documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. He has also co-authored *Diversity and the Future of the U.S. Environmental Movement* (published 2007), and *The Green Festival Reader* (published 2008.) Ringo is married to the Reverend Mary Guidry-Ringo. They reside in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and they have four children.