

Emory Professor, Natasha Trethewey, Named Georgia Woman of the Year

Georgia Woman of the Year Committee, Inc. announced today that Natasha Trethewey, Professor of English and Phillis Wheatley Distinguished Chair at Emory University has been confirmed as 2008 Georgia Woman of the Year! Nellie Dunaway Duke, Committee Chair, said that Trethewey was chosen as the 13th honoree by the Committee on their first ballot at their annual meeting, has accepted the nomination and set the date for the annual celebratory reception and dinner for Tuesday, July 29, 2008 at 103 WEST in Atlanta.

Ms. Trethewey, a 1995 graduate of University of Georgia, (and former Captain of UGA Cheerleaders) received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry and the Lillian Smith Award for her book *Native Guard*, which chronicles the story of a black Union Regiment guarding Confederate prisoners at Ship Island, Mississippi, the South and bi-racialism. Trethewey, widely acclaimed, has published three books of poetry, and numerous poems in professional publications and anthologies. Other honors include an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Delta State University, Governor's Award for Excellence from Mississippi Arts Commission and a Humanities Research Grant at Emory University.

The daughter of noted poet Hollins University Professor Eric Trethewey, much of the inspiration for her writings came from her own experience as a bi-racial child growing up in Mississippi, and from sad experiences resulting from the death of her mother, who was murdered by her second husband after moving to Georgia.

Georgia Woman of the Year Committee was established by Georgia Commission on Women in 1996, when Rosalyn Carter was named the first Georgia Woman of the Year. Subsequent honorees were Dr. Betty Siegel, Justice Leah Ward Sears, Dr. Claire Hicks, Cathy Cox, Marie Barnes, Shirley Franklin, Judy Anderson, Monica Kaufman Pearson, Sara Blakely, Rev. Joanna Adams and Ingrid Saunders Jones. Proceeds from the event are used to award scholarships to women enrolled in Georgia colleges and universities. For more information, see www.gacommissiononwomen.org or call Georgia Commission on Women, Jessica Jones, Executive Director at 404-657-9260, or 770-832-7095.