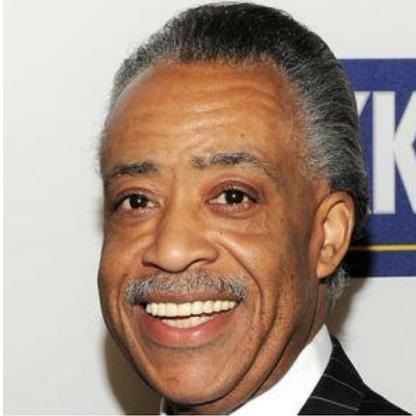


## Rev. Al Sharpton



**Rev. Al Sharpton** is the founder and President of the National Action Network (NAN), a not-for-profit civil rights organization headquartered in Harlem, New York, with over seventy chapters nationwide including a Washington, DC Bureau and regional offices from coast to coast.

Rev. Al Sharpton has been praised by President Barack Obama as “the voice of the voiceless and a champion for the downtrodden,” and by former President George W. Bush who said that “Al cares just as much as I care about making sure every child learns to read, write, add and subtract.”

Rev. Al Sharpton is currently the host of a daily television show on MSNBC that analyzes the top political and social news and features the country’s leading newsmakers. Rev. Sharpton also hosts a nationally syndicated radio show “Keepin it Real” that is heard daily all over the country as well as two weekend radio shows that air in markets within the U.S.

Reverend Al Sharpton, is the author of *The Rejected Stone: Al Sharpton and the Path to American Leadership*. “From the Central Park Five to gay & lesbian rights to the immigration debates, I have prided myself on taking the side of the rejected people,” says Reverend Al Sharpton, “and so I decided to call this book *The Rejected Stone*,” from a passage of scripture which refers to a stone which was rejected by builders that, in the end, became the chief cornerstone. “In the end, that sums up my life’s journey and so many of my people,” says Reverend Al.

Recent NAN activism has focused on crucial national cases as the organization continues campaigns around voter engagement, national gun violence intervention, jobs, corporate responsibility, immigration reform, health care reform, and seeking justice in cases including Trayvon Martin, Ramarley Graham, and Kendrick Johnson, to name a few. NAN’s efforts also include calling for reform in states that practice “Stand Your Ground laws.”

In 2012, honorary doctorates were presented to Rev. Sharpton from Virginia Union University and Bethune Cookman College. Rev. Sharpton also received the BET Humanitarian Award at the network’s annual awards show.

In the October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 issue of New York Magazine, Rev. Sharpton was featured as the only African-American listed among the “Top 12 Most Powerful People in New York City. A USA Today/Gallup Poll conducted in July 2008 called Rev. Sharpton the leader in the country that Blacks turn to speak for them on the issue of race, second only to then Senator Barack Obama. In February 2007, Rev. Sharpton

was called “the most prominent civil rights activist in the nation” by the New York Daily News.

Whether it was his noteworthy Presidential run as a candidate for the Democratic Party in 2004, or his compelling speech at the Democratic National Convention in Boston, Massachusetts, Reverend Sharpton has had an irrefutable impact on national politics and civil rights because of his strong commitment to equality and progressive politics

Born on October 3, 1954 in Brooklyn, New York, Al Sharpton began his ministry at the tender age of four, preaching his first sermon at Washington Temple Church of God & Christ in Brooklyn. Just five years later, the Washington Temple church’s legendary Bishop F.D. Washington licensed Al Sharpton, his protégé, to be a Pentecostal minister.

Rev. Sharpton’s civil rights career began almost as early as his ministry. At thirteen, Revs. Jesse Jackson and William Jones appointed Sharpton youth director of New York’s SCLC Operation Breadbasket, an organization founded by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1971.

At the age of sixteen, Sharpton founded the National Youth Movement, Inc. which organized young people around the country to push for increased voter registration, cultural awareness, and job training programs.

Early in his career, Rev. Sharpton set out to stoke the fire of the civil rights movement as “the voice of the downtrodden,” leading marches and rallies to call the public and the media’s attention to racial injustice. Rev. Sharpton’s direct action movements have been credited with inspiring laws on racial profiling and he has influenced police department reform across the nation while working to end police misconduct. Recent cases that Rev. Sharpton has been at the forefront of include the Jena Six case, the Sean Bell case, the Omar Edwards case, and the Troy Davis case. Past cases include the cases of Amadou Diallo, Abner Louima and Patrick Dorismond, to name a few

Rev. Sharpton is a champion for human rights and is passionate about the key issues that involve confronting human rights violations. One of his career highlights has been contributing to the end of the United States Navy exercises in Vieques, Puerto Rico, which proved to be poisoning the environment on the island.

Rev. Sharpton says his religious convictions are the basis for his life and on most Sundays he preaches to congregations across the nation. Rev. Sharpton has two daughters from his marriage to Kathy Jordan Sharpton, Dominique and Ashley. Dominique works as National Membership Director of National Action Network and Board President of Education for a Better America and produces NAN’s weekly live radio broadcast.

Rev. Sharpton was educated in New York public schools and attended Brooklyn College. He has an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Bethune-Cookman University, Virginia Union University, and an honorary degree from A.P. Bible College.

