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**NATIONAL BLACK MBA ASSOCIATION KICKS OFF 28TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
& EXPOSITION**

Day One Dedicated to Developing Leaders, Winning With Intention

ATLANTA (Sept. 28, 2006) – The Georgia World Congress Center was abuzz with excitement as the National Black MBA Association (NBMBA) commenced its 28th Annual Conference and Exposition Wednesday. From the young “**Leaders of Tomorrow**” arriving to take pictures at the exhibit entrance to the seasoned and accomplished professionals who spent the entire day at the PepsiCo-sponsored **Leadership Institute**, today’s programming was rooted in the dedication NBMBA members have to becoming more effective in every facet of their lives.

Conference attendees were first engaged at Tuesday’s Global Partnership Roundtable, which served as the kickoff of conference programming. Sponsored by IBM, the panel (entitled, “The World is Flat, Now What? Global Presence in a Shrinking World) included some of the foremost minds on international business protocols and exchanges, including **Andrew Young**, United Nations ambassador and former Atlanta mayor; **Bill Imada**, chairman and CEO, IW Group; **Oswaldo Luis Do Nascimento**, Cluster Unit Executive, IBM Brazil; and **Jannet Thoms**, president of the NBMBA Atlanta chapter.

Internationally-renowned leadership expert **John Maxwell**, author of “The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership” and “Developing the Leader Within You,” was the real draw of the day. His undeniable expertise — honed through having trained more than one million leaders worldwide — was a premium opportunity for NBMBA members to set new professional goals and turn a fresh eye to achieving personal and professional goals. Between laughing at his familial anecdotes and nodding in affirmation as he shared both the ups and downs of his own growth, the Leadership Institute participants responded strongly to Maxwell’s key characteristics of successful people.

“Successful people are those who have defined what success means to them by finding their purpose, and then they grow to the maximum potential of their purpose,” Maxwell summarized by noting that individuals should spend their time expanding their strengths rather than trying to improve their weaknesses. “If you work on your weaknesses, at best you’ll be average, and people don’t pay for average.”

Maxwell also defined a successful person as one who gives back by developing, equipping and bringing up others as he or she ascends. “I believe that success is sowing seeds that will benefit others. The only way to compound anything in life is to give to and invest in others,” he added.

Leadership Institute participants also had the opportunity to do intensive sessions with educators and leaders in a variety of fields across a range of topics. **Karen M. Dyer** of the Center of Creative Leadership encouraged participants to engage in leadership as a lifelong endeavor and **George C. Fraser** shared keys for networking effectively while maintaining a greater purpose and accomplishment. **Dr. Dennis Kimbro** discussed wealth strategies and entrepreneurial success via facts and fictions and **Charles McClendon, Jr.** with The Gallup Organization helped participants discover their strengths, to name a few of the exciting opportunities.

“Today is just the beginning of what will undoubtedly be a life-changing endeavor for our National Black MBA community,” said NMBBAA President and CEO Barbara Thomas. “Whether a 16-year-old LOT participant or a 56-year-old lifetime member, we are dedicated to ensuring that all of our conference attendees get fulfilling, relevant programming that represents the five channels which guide our organization: Education, Career, Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Lifestyle.”

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About The National Black MBA Association

Established in 1970, the National Black MBA Association is dedicated to creating partnerships that result in increased intellectual and economic wealth in the black community through education, employment and entrepreneurship. Visit www.nbmbaa.org for more information.