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National Black MBA Assn. CEO courts support

TOP BUSINESS GROUP'S PRESIDENT BRINGS MESSAGE OF INCLUSION TO PORTLAND'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY

PORTLAND, OR. (Nov. 5, 2006) – Doing business globally means getting used to diversity – and that's a great reason to support the National Black MBA Association (NMBBAA), one of the world's top organizations for minority business professionals, according to President and CEO Barbara L. Thomas.

Thomas visits Portland Wednesday, Nov. 8, to meet with members and corporate supporters of the group's Seattle/Portland Chapter at a pre-game reception followed by the Trail Blazers-Lakers game at the Rose Garden in Portland.

“Our Portland presence is a vital one, because we see tremendous potential for growth and prosperity in the Pacific Northwest,” said Thomas from the organization's Chicago headquarters. “It's critically relevant that we expand our presence here, both by increasing membership in our Chapter and by building our bridges throughout the corporate and entrepreneurial communities.”

“We are so pleased to welcome Barbara Thomas,” said Portland attorney Joshua Williams, president of the Seattle/Portland Chapter. “We look forward to hearing her thoughts on building our profile and on the issues of inclusion and diversity, here in Portland and throughout the global business world.”

Williams said the event is intended to celebrate existing friends and make new ones for the local National Black MBA Association Chapter. It's also a kickoff for the NMBBAA's major new 2007 initiative: a membership drive that will increase its numbers to 50,000 next year.

Thomas, who was named this spring to Ebony magazine's list of 100 Most Influential Black Americans, has received numerous awards for her work on behalf of African Americans as students and in business. She heads an organization numbering more than

6,000 members and representing some 100,000 black MBA graduates in America. An additional 10,000 African American MBAs graduate annually from U.S. schools.

Founded by students at the University of Chicago in 1970, the Chicago-based National Black MBA Association exists to create opportunities and partnerships resulting in increased intellectual wealth and economic vitality in the black community. Focusing on education, employment and entrepreneurship, the National Black MBA Association, now in its 36th year, continues to form strategic partnerships with leading Fortune 500 companies, business corporations, organizations, colleges and universities.

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To learn more about the National Black MBA Association, please visit its website at www.nbmbaa.org, or contact the organization at 312-236-26222. To schedule an interview with Barbara Thomas, please contact Jerry Thomas at Jerry Thomas Public Relations, 773-677-6378.