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### THE NATIONAL BLACK MBA ASSOCIATION WRAPS UP 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION, RELEVANCE: STAYING CURRENT, CREATIVE & CREDIBLE

*With more than 10,000 participants, annual conference continues to serve as an unparalleled resource for finding, developing and connecting with top black talent*

**CHICAGO** (October 5, 2007) — Held Sept. 11–15 in Orlando, Fla., the National Black MBA Association's (NBMBA) 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and Exposition hosted more than 10,000 attendees, vendors and presenters. The conference officially opened with the ribbon-cutting of the NBMBA Annual Conference Career Fair, which connected upwards of 8,000 talented black professionals with some of the most successful and noteworthy companies from across the world (the National Black MBA Association has strategic relationships with more than 90 percent of the companies listed on the Fortune 500.)

One of the nation's largest professional expositions, the NBMBA's annual conference boasted an unparalleled lineup of enrichment programs and workshops. The professional sessions offered at this year's conference addressed the numerous issues that are making a profound impact on today's African-American businessmen and businesswomen. The NBMBA amassed several of the nation's top thought-leaders in global commodities, futurists and business leaders from diverse industries to discuss relevancy in the wake of increased globalization, growing diversity and expanding technologies.

The NBMBA Awards Ceremony, hosted by renowned actors **Phylicia Rashad** and **Clifton Powell**, elegantly closed the conference events, celebrating a slew of influential figures in the business world such as David Robinson, son of the late baseball legend Jackie Robinson and Harris Rosen, President & COO of Rosen Hotels & Resort, among others.

Other highlights of conference programming include:

- The **Global Partnership Roundtable**, sponsored by IBM, brought together experienced executives whose collective backgrounds include work in Africa, Brazil, China and Europe talked about the possibilities and protocols for black professionals who want to pursue enterprise abroad. The panelists —Trevor Hall, CBE, Race Equality Adviser to the Home Office's Permanent Secretary of State, United Kingdom; Marilyn Johnson, VP of Market Development, IBM; Osvaldo Luis Do Nascimento, Cluster Unit Executive, IBM Brazil; and Virginia P'an, Chairman and Founder of the TransCapital Group — affirmed that today's black professionals should be thinking about global impact and extension at all times,

and they encouraged collaboration and partnership as a means of building the capital and influence that's necessary to conduct business throughout the world.

- **Judge Glenda Hatchett** moderated a discussion between NMBBAA President & CEO **Barbara L. Thomas** and **Dr. Randall Pinkett**, chairman and CEO of BCT Partners and season four winner of "The Apprentice with Donald Trump," during the Wells Fargo-sponsored **Relevance — Distinction or Extinction?** panel. The discussion was followed by the presentation of the **NMBBAA/Wells Fargo Entrepreneur Excellence Award**, which went to Corey Bell, CEO and co-founder of Round Rock, Texas-based TriFusion. The growing influence and impact of entrepreneurship carried on the Friday's Bank of America-sponsored **Relevance — Staying Current, Creative and Credible** luncheon, where Brian Moynihan, President of Global Wealth and Investment Management, Chair of Global Diversity and Inclusion Council, shared that most of Bank of America's wealthiest clients have derived their wealth through entrepreneurial endeavors.
- A conversation about relationship dynamics among working professionals via the **Relationship Forum**, sponsored by Procter & Gamble. Documentary filmmaker Andrea Wiley screened a portion of her resonant film, "Soulmate," and other panelists offered insights around gauging the strength and seriousness of relationships, balancing two-career marriages and opening up to the world of online dating. "Relationships are about servitude, about giving up your right to be 'right,' about bowing to self, and the foundation for this is your relationship with God," Wiley said.
- Inspirational speakers **Kevin Carroll**, author of "Rules of the Red Rubber Ball," **Susan Taylor**, senior editorial director, *Essence Magazine*, and **Doc Rivers**, NBA veteran and head coach of the Boston Celtics, who inspired attendees with their remarkable life stories and experiences. Carroll and Rivers spoke at the FedEx-sponsored **Morning of Motivation: Exploring Relevance and Greatness**, each of them recalling personal tales of overcoming adversity and opposition to achieve goals above and beyond what others outlined for them. "Too many people think about success as results, but they don't think about the process," Rivers said. "You have to see success before you can achieve it." Carroll supported this message, adding that victory comes to those who are willing to do the "lonely work of a champion."

The Home Depot and Wachovia presented Thursday's **Relevance — Staying Current, Creative and Credible** luncheon, where Taylor's message centered on the importance of philanthropy and community connectivity within the black community, especially with regard to mentoring and nurturing youth. "A new world is on the way and black people are the ones who are going to give birth to it. You must polish your God-given gifts to help give back more to the community, like our elders," Taylor said.

- The Pepsico-sponsored **Leadership Institute**, which hosts a select group of high achievers and paradigm shifters for an intense, daylong professional and personal development submersion program that challenges, encourages growth and prepares participants for moving up in the management ranks. NMBBAA Futurist **Dr. Nat Irvin** addressed the Institute participants, stressing the

importance of courage in leadership and shared a lot of new data that shows how concepts and ideas of leadership are changing with a new generation of workers who are more globally driven and focused. “Adaptive advantage is important – what got you here will not necessarily get you *there*. Companies want individuals who are aware, sensitive, flexible, adaptive managers, capable of being molded into global executives, so this experience should be about challenging your fundamental assumptions about who’s in charge,” he said.

- The annual **Men’s and Women’s Forums: Straight Talk About Relevance**, which afford attendees the space and freedom to explore gender-specific issues as they relate to the workplace and work/life balance. Much of the women’s forum dialogue centered on how to define and articulate one’s value. “Why create a limited reality in your workplace when you can create an empowering reality? Getting to do what I really want begins with letting people know who I am. Qualify the significance of your role — you should always know how you and your work impact your company and how to articulate that in a very clear way,” panelist Tiffany Eubanks-Saunders, Senior Vice President of Debit Card Management, Bank of America.

The men’s forum explored opportunities for black men to work abroad, the obligation to mentor and how to navigate mentor/mentee relationships, and the pressure to succeed at all costs. “Managing failure is critical for black men working in corporate America,” said panelist Ben-Saba Hasan, Vice President, Corporate and Product Group Information Technology, Dell Inc. “You have to forgive yourself and move on, because otherwise, you’ll be paralyzed by other people’s perceptions of the race.”

“We invite our conference attendees to go on a ride, a journey that is designed to enhance their lives and careers via our five channels of engagement: Career, Education, Entrepreneurship, Leadership and Lifestyle,” says NMBAA President & CEO Barbara L. Thomas. “This year we focused on what it means to be relevant to ensure our members and constituents are moving and adapting at the same rapid rate of change we feel throughout our daily business lives. Knowing how and where you fit into this emerging global marketplace is the perfect foundation for next year’s conference in Washington D.C., which will look at being a catalyst for change.”

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**Media Contacts:**

Meghan Haynes, Beaman Incorporated  
312.751.9689, ext. 15