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Howard University Students Win 2007 Microsoft® Windows® Media Player Skins Challenge: *Howard University, National Society of Black Engineers, and Microsoft Partner Together to Sponsor College-Level IT Competition*

Washington, D.C., May 9, 2007 — Edwin Andrews, Kharim Ames, and Headley Murray from Howard University were selected as the winning team of the Sixth Annual Microsoft Windows Media Player Skins Challenge, a unique college-level competition to create original user interfaces for the Windows Media Player, held at Howard University on May 4, 2007.

The program, a collaborative effort between Howard University, the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and Microsoft Corporation, was created to expose African American college students to opportunities in computer science and engineering, provide students with hands-on experience in technology, and to increase the number of African Americans who enter the IT and other related fields.

“There is a deficit in the number of African Americans who enter careers in math and the sciences,” said James H. Johnson Jr., Ph.D., dean of the College of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Sciences at Howard University. “By allowing enterprising students to demonstrate their creativity in developing state-of-the-art digital media products, the Howard University Windows Media Player Skins Challenge is a program that is encouraging students to pursue careers in the IT field.”

The Howard University Windows Media Challenge is a collegiate student competition to customize the appearance and features of the Microsoft Windows Media Player. This challenge allows students from various disciplines to explore their IT skills and potentially redefine their future.

- Graphic arts students can creatively express themselves with colors, themes, and striking images.
- Engineering students can use their programming skills to produce exciting functionality and new interactivity modes. Skins offer users a customized interface for use with digital media such as CDs, DVDs, MP3s, and Windows media audio and video.

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Judges from academia, government, the IT industry and the media selected skins based on their representation of a theme from culture, entertainment or education in a manner consistently reinforced by appearance, audio effects and operation. Emphasis was placed on the skin's utility as a media player interface and its innovation using Windows Media Player 11 features.

Members of this year's college-level winning team each won an Xbox 360 for their submission that offers users the ability to change their Windows Media Player "skin" to a Ying-Yang symbol.

"Microsoft continues to be excited about the level of engagement and passion of this year's participants," said Cedric T. Coco, general manager of Engineering Excellence at Microsoft. "The skills and capabilities demonstrated by these High School and College level students affirm their ability to have successful careers in science and engineering fields, and Microsoft is proud to partner with Howard University on programs that focus on growing a diverse talent pool of science and engineering professionals."

More information can be found at <http://www.howard.edu/skinschallenge>.

About Howard University

Howard University is one of 48 U.S. private, Doctoral/Research-Extensive universities and comprises 12 schools and colleges. Founded in 1867, students pursue studies in more than 120 areas leading to undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees. Since 1998, the University has produced two Rhodes Scholars, a Truman Scholar, a Marshall Scholar, 13 Fulbright Scholars and nine Pickering Fellows. Howard also produces more on-campus African-American Ph.D.s than any other university in the world. For more information on Howard University, call 202-238-2330, or visit the University's Web site at www.Howard.edu.

About the National Society of Black Engineers

The National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) with more than 18,000 members, is the largest student-managed organization in the country. NSBE's mission is to increase the number of culturally responsible Black engineers who excel academically, succeed professionally and positively impact the community.

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

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