



For Immediate Release:

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN HOSTS MOTIVATIONAL TOUR TO INSPIRE WOMEN TO FOCUS ON WELLNESS, SPIRITUAL AND LIFE SATISFACTION

- National campaign recasts midlife as a time of renaissance and renewal -

WASHINGTON, DC (June 27, 2005) – *Tomorrow Begins Today: African American Women As We Age* is a multi-dimensional public education campaign sponsored by The National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), with a mission to inspire personal development and empowerment for African American women. This first-of-its-kind initiative will inspire African American women to view their middle years as a time of renaissance and renewal.

“Midlife is a hectic time – with often overwhelming family and career responsibilities for women,” said Cheryl Cooper, national executive director of NCNW. “This campaign encourages women to focus on the most vital areas of our lives – financial planning, health and wellness, and life satisfaction – and to assess where we are and what kind of future we want beyond our immediate responsibilities to others,” Ms. Cooper said.

The campaign also included city-wide forums in communities across the country conducted with local sections of NCNW, and partnering organizations such as Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., The Elks, and the National Black Nurses Association to sustain the campaign locally.

“We’ve hosted forums in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New Orleans, and now Washington, DC,” continued Ms. Cooper, “In each city women have affirmed the research that supports this campaign – that women’s perceptions of what ‘middle age’ looks like are changing.” Many women are juggling caring for our children – and sometimes caring for grandchildren and aging parents – with career responsibilities. NCNW research has revealed that these factors, coupled with confusing nutritional messages and a myriad of financial planning options, often result in women neglecting to focus on their futures.

On Friday, June 24th, NCNW convened a civic meeting at the JW Marriott Hotel in Washington, DC, to determine the ongoing initiatives in the mid-Atlantic region that will extend the campaign. On Saturday, June 25th, over 500 women heard presentations given by Ms. Cooper and Dr. Dorothy Height of NCNW, Kimberly McLurkin-Harris of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Linda Gill of BET Books, Sheryl Hilliard Tucker of *Money* magazine, and several others.

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“There is clearly a need for continuing this important dialogue with African American women about planning and aging,” said Ms. McLurkin-Harris. “This is just the beginning of a civic partnership that will continue offering information on the theme of living well.”

A book signing was held following the forum for NCNW’s inspiring new publication entitled Tomorrow Begins Today: African American Women As We Age. The book will examine the issues of the campaign – finance, health/wellness, and life satisfaction – in further detail and will be available through online booksellers, and in bookstores at the end of the summer.

Contributing authors to the publication include Melody Hobson, president of Ariel Capital Management; Vivian Pinn, MD, director, Office of Research on Women’s Health at the National Institutes of Health; and Iyanla Vanzant, author and spiritual counselor. Dr. Dorothy Height, civil rights activist, national president emerita and chair of NCNW, also contributed to the publication.

About the National Council of Negro Women

The National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) is a council of national African American women’s organizations and community-based sections. Founded in 1935, the NCNW mission is to lead, develop, and advocate for women of African descent as they support their families and communities. NCNW fulfills this purpose through research, advocacy, and national and community-based services and programs on issues of health, education, and economic empowerment in the United States and Africa. With its 39 national affiliates and more than 200 sections, NCNW is a 501(c) 3 organization with an outreach to nearly four million women. For more information about NCNW, please call (202) 737 0120, or visit www.ncnw.org.

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