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**ASHLEY STEWART STORES AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN
ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP IN NATIONAL UNITY AND MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN**
*Leading specialty retailer join forces with the National Council of Negro Women
(NCNW) to make the connection between African American women and girls in
the community*

“We Are Listening”

(Secaucus, NJ) October 22, 2007 - Ashley Stewart Stores, the leading women's specialty retailer in Urban America with over 215 stores throughout the United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands, today announced a joint effort with the National Council of Negro Women - a national unity campaign entitled **“We Are Listening.”** The initiative will focus on bridging the communication gap between women and young girls in African American communities throughout the nation by expanding the base of partners committed to this important work.

“This is the time to be connected. We can accomplish more together than any of us can do alone,” words once spoken by Dr. Dorothy I. Height, Chair and President Emerita of the National Council of Negro Women, Inc. (NCNW). These words are more meaningful today than ever before.

Founded in 1935, by Mary McLeod Bethune a child of slave parents, the National Council of Negro Women's mission is to lead, develop and advocate for woman of African decent. NCNW fulfills its mission through research, advocacy and national and community-based health, education and economic empowerment services and programs in the United States and in Africa. Through its national membership of over 200 community-based sections and 38 affiliated organizations, NCNW addresses local needs in over 34 states while impacting communities worldwide. NCNW's activities are designed to promote healthy lifestyles, economic, entrepreneurship, mentoring and educational support for young people.

“By partnering with the NCNW, Ashley Stewart Stores can contribute support, uplift and encourage women in our communities. Our partnership is a special bond because together we can strengthen and unify our community through education and mentorship,” says Marla Minns, Executive Vice President and General Manager, Ashley Stewart Stores.

“I am delighted that the Ashley Stewart organization, which shares our values relating to the importance of African American family life, has joined forces with NCNW. Not only will NCNW benefit by strengthening its base of self-reliance in reaching out to new membership sources but Ashley Stewart Stores' generosity and support will undoubtedly enhance the quality of lives for women and their families across the country,” says Dr. Dorothy I. Height, Chair and President Emerita of the National Council of Negro Women.

The Unity campaign is designed to encourage and promote dialogue within African American communities around the issues facing women and girls, as well as their families, through structured programs and activities that involve mentoring and empowerment.

“Our stores have always been viewed as safe havens in the communities in which we do business. Through our collaboration with the National Council of Negro Women, we will make our stores available so women and girls can come together to discuss the many challenges facing young girls in our communities and develop strategies to address and solve them in a structured format,” says Mark Gunn, Executive Vice President & Chief Strategic Officer for Urban Brands Inc., parent company of Ashley Stewart Stores.

About Urban Brands Inc.

Urban Brands Inc. is the parent company of Ashley Stewart Stores and Marianne, leading women's specialty stores across the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.