



Contacts: Traci Johnson
Taylor Communications Group
traci@taylorcommunicationsgroup.com
info@taylorcommunicationsgroup.com

Catherine Claeys
National Marrow Donor Program
612.455.1719
cclaeys@psbpr.com

AFRICAN ANCESTRY, INC. AND THE NATIONAL MARROW DONOR PROGRAM REVEAL HOW KNOWING YOUR PAST CAN SAVE A FUTURE

Partnership to help increase ethnic and minority marrow donors on national Registry

WASHINGTON, DC (Nov. 12, 2008) – A simple, painless swab of the cheek gathers enough DNA to reveal insight into a person’s origin and can provide critical information that can save lives. African Ancestry, Inc., the pioneer of DNA-driven ancestry tracing for African Americans, and the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP), a nonprofit organization that facilitates unrelated marrow and cord blood transplants, are sharing their expertise in DNA testing to help increase ethnic and minority marrow donors on the NMDP Registry. The partnership is a testament to how heightened awareness of DNA testing can deliver life-changing results, which could be life-saving for African Americans.

Patients in need of a marrow transplant from an unrelated donor are most likely to match someone of their own race and ethnicity. However, minorities are underrepresented on the NMDP Registry, primarily because of a lack of awareness and misperceptions about marrow donation. In particular, African American patients have the lowest likelihood of finding a matched marrow donor, 60 percent compared to 88 percent for Caucasians.

“There is a great need to expand the number of African Americans on the NMDP Registry to provide all patients a second chance at life,” said Jeffrey Chell, M.D., CEO of the NMDP. “We are excited about this partnership with African Ancestry because it creates a two-way dialogue with African Americans who are already familiar with the simplicity of DNA testing and its impact on enhancing lives. It’s our hope that people across the nation will see how discovering their past can sustain a future for someone else.”

Both organizations have a process that involves a simple, painless swabbing of the cheek that can be done at home, yet each yields very different, life-changing results. African Ancestry’s testing system reveals where in Africa a person’s bloodlines originated; the organization has conclusively identified more than 99 percent of all samples tested. The NMDP’s results are stored in its national Registry of potential marrow donors, which is accessed by doctors around the world who are searching for a life-saving match for patients with leukemia, lymphoma, sickle cell and other diseases that can be treated with a bone marrow transplant from an unrelated donor.

For every ancestry revealed through African Ancestry, facts on marrow donation will be shared as part of the results package. And the NMDP is offering tissue typing at no cost to those who are referred through African Ancestry, as well as ethnic and racial minorities nationwide. The tissue-typing fee typically is about \$52.

“We were at the forefront of helping people of African descent accurately uncover their roots through genetics-based ancestry tracing nearly six years ago. Efforts like ours have created a heightened sense of literacy among African Americans surrounding the once unapproachable topic of DNA,” said Gina Paige, president and co-founder of African Ancestry. “Our focus now is to extend and deepen our influence in utilizing DNA literacy to deliver life-enhancing results. Initiatives such as our partnership with the NMDP are a natural fit and positive avenue to affect that type of change in lives.”

For more information on ancestry tracing and marrow donation, visit www.africanancestry.com. For additional information on the NMDP, visit www.marrows.org. For press inquiries and interviews, contact Traci Johnson at traci@taylorcommunicationsgroup.com or Catherine Claeys at cclaeys@psbpr.com.

ABOUT AFRICAN ANCESTRY

Founded in 2003 on years of research, African Ancestry, Inc. is the ancestry tracing company that pioneered African lineage matching in the United States utilizing its proprietary DNA-database of more than **25,000 African DNA lineages** to more accurately assess present-day country of origin for people of African descent. Since its inception, African Ancestry’s lineage reveals have impacted the lives of more than **100,000** people in the U.S. from communities at large to global leaders such as **Oprah Winfrey, Tom Joyner** and the **Reverend Jesse Jackson**. African Ancestry has been featured across the globe in outlets such as **CNN’s *Black in America*** series, **60 Minutes** and **Essence Magazine**; and was the centerpiece to the ground-breaking **PBS special “African American Lives 1 & 2”** with Skip Gates. African Ancestry is African-American-owned and operated and headquartered in Washington, DC. **For press inquiries, contact Taylor Communications Group at info@taylorcommunicationsgroup.com.**

ABOUT THE NATIONAL MARROW DONOR PROGRAM

The NMDP facilitates unrelated marrow and cord blood transplants as a single point of access for a long-standing collaborative network of national and international leading medical facilities in marrow and cord blood transplantation. The NMDP connects patients, doctors, donors and researchers to the resources they need to help more people live longer and healthier lives. For more information call 1 (800) MARROW-2 or visit www.marrows.org.

WWW.AFRICANANCESTRY.COM
WWW.MARROW.ORG

###