



For Immediate Release

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## **The Marcus Graham Project Kicks-Off Summer Boot Camp *Challenges Advertising and Marketing Industry to MetaTHINQ***

DALLAS - June 22, 2010 - Employees of TracyLocke, an integrated marketing agency in Dallas, gathered in one of their large conference rooms for an introduction to the newest group of participants in the Marcus Graham Project (MGP) iCR8 summer boot camp and future leaders in the field of advertising. The highly anticipated iCR8 boot camp is one of several programs under the MGP umbrella. In its second year, the boot camp promotes diversity and inclusion by giving aspirants in the field of advertising and marketing the exposure and experience necessary to solidify careers within the industry.

“It is amazing what this group has already accomplished. Prior to the start of the program, I challenged the 11 participants who have traveled from around the country to connect with one another and establish the framework of a real-world advertising agency,” said Lincoln Stephens, MGP founder. “This agency will be staffed by the group throughout the 10-week program. Combining the visual graphics of video and the new-age presentation formatting of *Prezi.com*, they revealed their six-week virtual project with the announcement of their agency brand, MetaTHINQ.”

MGP is a Dallas-based non-profit organization, concentrated on developing the next generation of diverse thought leadership within the advertising, marketing, and media industry. MetaTHINQ will function as an extension of MGP and operate as a full service advertising and marketing agency. Created for learning and designed to provide real world solutions for its clients, MetaTHINQ’s mission is to evoke the thoughts of progressive, diverse, and viral consumers through their approach to research and intimate knowledge of social media. What makes the ad agency unique is the collaboration of the research and creative teams that draw connections to the consumer market through social media.

“We devote a lot of time and energy into the research by going into communities and markets that are overlooked and many times disregarded.” said Chike Onuorah, the team’s engagement strategist. MetaTHINQ functions as an extension of MGP.

“It takes a village to raise a child,” is an adage that yields true for the MetaTHINQ team as it has secured a village of sponsors to support their efforts. Sponsors include: TracyLocke, Wieden & Kennedy, MDC Partners, American Association of Advertising Agencies, Butter, Shine Stern and Partners, Interpublic Group, Sanders/Wingo, The Buchanan Group, The Richards Group, South Side on Lamar, Jon Genius and Demond Meek Photography. One of the boot camp program’s key supporters includes its client AT&T, Inc. The MetaTHINQ team’s assignment from AT&T includes a national research study to better understand technology usage, the importance of connectivity and existing barriers to using technology in diverse communities across the U.S. The results of this research study will be shared with other industry

professionals and communities, and be used as a resource to better understand technology usage across the country.

Another primary client of the MetaTHINQ team is GlobeAware, a non-profit organization that promotes cultural awareness and sustainability by implementing community projects in international host communities. The team will create an awareness campaign centered on mainstreaming international service experiences for youth, through a recently created scholarship program.

On Friday, June 11 MetaTHINQ and MGP officially kicked off the iCR8 boot camp with a celebration entitled "The Lemonade Stand" - a social mixer hosted at MGP headquarters in the South Side on Lamar building. The mixer which will be held each Friday throughout the summer is catered to advertising and media professionals in the local Dallas area, with the purpose of developing a network connection for the boot camp team members, as well as supporters of MGP and its mission. The event takes place from 3:00pm to 8:00pm with light refreshments and food compliments of Texas Caribbean Foods.

For more information on MetaTHINQ and to keep up with the team's progress, please log onto [www.MetaTHINQ.com](http://www.MetaTHINQ.com). There you will find team member bios, weekly blog posts, photos, and a webisode series titled "Man Behind the Brand." The webisodes are meant to highlight many of the professionals who have volunteered their time to mentor and develop the young men who are MetaTHINQ.

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About Us:

### **Marcus Graham Project**

The Marcus Graham Project is a national network of diverse professionals that have purposed themselves in developing the next generation of though leadership within the advertising, media and marketing industry.

Our mission is to identify, expose, mentor, and train ethnically diverse men between the ages of 16 and 34 in all aspects of the media industry, including advertising, entertainment and marketing.

The vision of The Marcus Graham Project (MGP) is to provide long term access to information, technology, financial and people resources that will strategically develop a viable pool of talen and leadership within the industry.

### **AT&T Inc.**

AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T) is a premier communications holding company. Its subsidiaries and affiliates – AT&T operating companies – are the providers of AT&T services in the United States and around the world.

With a powerful array of network resources that includes the nation's fastest 3G network, AT&T is a leading provider of wireless, Wi-Fi, high speed Internet and voice services. A leader in mobile broadband, AT&T also offers the best wireless coverage worldwide, offering the most wireless phones that work in the most countries. It also offers advanced TV services under the AT&T U-verse® and AT&T | DIRECTV brands. The company's suite of IP-based business communications services is one of the most advanced in the world. In domestic markets, AT&T Advertising Solutions and AT&T Interactive are known for their leadership in local search and advertising. In 2010, AT&T again ranked among the 50 Most Admired Companies by FORTUNE® magazine.

Additional information about AT&T Inc. and the products and services provided by AT&T subsidiaries and affiliates is available at <http://www.att.com>. This AT&T news release and other announcements are available at <http://www.att.com/newsroom> and as part of an RSS feed at [www.att.com/rss](http://www.att.com/rss). Or follow our news on Twitter at @ATTNews. Find us on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/ATT](http://www.Facebook.com/ATT) to discover more about

our consumer and wireless services or at [www.Facebook.com/ATTSmallBiz](http://www.Facebook.com/ATTSmallBiz) to discover more about our small business services.

### **GlobeAware(R)**

Globe Aware(R) is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit charity that mobilizes short term volunteer programs around the world. These adventures in service focus on promoting cultural awareness and sustainability and are often compared to a mini "peace corps" experience. All volunteers are accompanied by a bilingual volunteer coordinator to assist the volunteer throughout their program. The program fee and the airfare to get there are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Globe Aware is a member of International Volunteer Programs Association, Volunteers for Prosperity, the Building Bridges Coalition, maintains United Nations Consultative Status for the Social and Economic Council, and administers the President's Volunteer Service Awards. Additionally, Globe Aware offsets its carbon emissions with Carbonfund.org, the country's leading carbon offset organization. Our carbon footprint is estimated at less than 70 tons annually, and we have chosen to support carbon-reducing projects in renewable energy to offset the CO2 that is produced in running our offices worldwide, from powering our offices to the transportation used to get to and from our work sites. This commitment places Globe Aware as an environmental leader in the volunteer abroad community and demonstrates proactive steps being taken in the fight against global climate change.