



Contact: Alisa Mosley
202-347-1895

**National Medical Association Installs 110th President at Las Vegas Convention
-New NMA President to Address Health Care Reform and Health Disparities -**

July 28, 2009 (Las Vegas, NV) - Delivering her inaugural address as the 110th president of the National Medical Association (NMA), Willarda V. Edwards, MD, MBA. Edwards shared her plans to focus on health care reform and health disparities during her administration. The NMA is the nation's premier organization for African American physicians.

Edwards is the managing partner and an internist in a partnership in Baltimore, Maryland, and has been in private practice since 1984. Dr. Edwards received her medical degree from the University of Maryland School of Medicine and holds a Masters in Business Administration from Loyola College of Baltimore.

Her medical experience began with a 4-year tour with the US Navy at Annapolis and the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland. She was promoted to chief of the Internal Medicine Department while in Annapolis. Dr. Edwards has also served as assistant dean of Student and Faculty Development at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

With nearly 20 years of service in the National Medical Association, Dr. Edwards has served on the Board of Trustees in numerous capacities, including Chair of the Board and Treasurer. As President-elect, she chaired the Board's Health Policy Committee which oversees the development and the implementation of the Association's health policy agenda.

"I pledge my total commitment to fervently represent the concerns of our organization, as we embark on this next phase of the journey toward attaining a high quality healthcare system for our nation that is efficient, accessible and affordable for all." said Dr. Edwards. "We will also build on the momentum created by the work of our immediate past president, Dr. Britton, in the areas of eliminating healthcare disparities, increasing the pipeline for minority physicians, and promoting cultural competence." stated Dr. Edwards.

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More than 3,000 physicians representing 25 specialties attended the weeklong convention that featured presentations by numerous medical experts, policy makers and industry leaders.

For more information, contact Reggie Burton 702-604-4283, or Alisa Mosley 240-350-7531

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About the National Medical Association

Founded in 1895, the NMA is a nonprofit organization that is the nation's oldest and largest medical association representing the interests of more 30,000 African American physicians and their patients. The NMA advocates health care for policies that would assure equitable and quality health care for all.