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## ***THE ALLIANCE OF BLACK STUDENT PROFESSIONALS***

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

ALLIANCE STUDENTS WILL MARCH ON WASHINGTON  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2003  
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### **Black Student Professionals Announce Plan to March on Washington in Support of Affirmative Action and Substantive Reform to U.S. Public Education**

Washington, DC – The Alliance of Black Student Professionals (The Alliance) announces its participation in a March on Washington planned for April 1, 2003, the day the U.S. Supreme Court is scheduled to hear arguments in the University of Michigan case. The Alliance will mobilize students to participate in demonstrations in Washington, DC and throughout the United States in support of affirmative action programs and true reform to the U.S. public education system.

Education and educational disparities are the focus of The Alliance's flagship advocacy project. "The Alliance will march in Washington, DC and all around the country because affirmative action is necessary to achieve true equity in access to higher education, but it must be accompanied by substantive efforts to improve access to high quality K-12 public education for minority children," says National Society of Black Engineers Chairperson, Delano M. White.

While people of African, Native American, and Latino descent together represent more than 25% of the U.S. population, they account for less than 10% of the professionals in these fields. Yet, professionals of African and Latino descent – from physicians and podiatrists to lawyers and social workers – are more likely to practice in underserved and minority communities than their White counterparts. With the staggeringly low numbers of underrepresented minorities in these professions relative to their numbers in the population, it is clear that well-crafted affirmative action policies must be upheld.

"It is unjust that many inner-city and rural school districts, whose students are predominantly minority, have inadequate resources," says National Black Law Students Association Chairperson, Mishonda Baldwin. "If this country believes that education is the key to create equal opportunity, then we have an obligation to ensure that access to advanced education is a compelling interest for all Americans."

"Members of The Alliance member organizations cannot afford to remain silent on this issue. Our students' voices will be heard loud and clear in the coming months and we will march on April 1, 2003," says Alliance Chairperson, Rachel L. Johnson.

Founded in 2001, The Alliance is a partnership of nine organizations collectively representing over 30,000 student professionals of African descent nationwide pursuing careers in disciplines including engineering, law and the health professions. The Alliance philosophy is to speak with one voice on issues that universally impact the Black student professional population, advocate for societal change toward the benefit of its communities, and develop a network of future professionals in various fields.

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### **OFFICERS**

*Rachel L. Johnson*  
Chairperson

*Katari Campbell*  
Secretary

### **MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

*National Association of Black Social Workers*



*National Black Graduate Student Association*



*National Black Law Students Association*



*National Optometric Student Association*



*National Society of Black Engineers*



*Student National Dental Association*



*Student National Medical Association*



*Student National Pharmaceutical Association*



*Student National Podiatric Medical Association*

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