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**CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST MYRLIE EVERS-WILLIAMS TO HEADLINE
18TH ANNUAL "CELEBRATE THE DREAM" TRIBUTE TO DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
7:00 P.M. TUESDAY, JANUARY 15**

**Presented by Minneapolis Community and Technical College
Exclusively Sponsored by Target**

Minneapolis, December 15, 2007 – Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) will present "Celebrate the Dream," its 18th annual birthday tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 15, 2008 at the Basilica of St. Mary, 16th & Hennepin, Minneapolis. (Doors open at 6:00 p.m.) This year's theme is "The Next Generation of Leadership." The keynote speaker will be Myrlie Evers-Williams, civil rights activist and former chairperson of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1995-1998. Music will be performed by GearCo Music's James Gear & Company and Nu Friends Community Choir and also The Minneapolis Youth Chorus. Roxane Battle will emcee the event, which is free and open to the public. Free parking is available in MCTC's ramp. More than 1,500 people are expected to attend.

"MCTC faculty and staff have been committed to this annual birthday tribute for almost two decades," explains MCTC President Phil Davis "because Dr. King's vision inspires what we do each and every day. His dream of equality is at the root of our commitment to making higher education accessible to all the people in the community."

Myrlie Evers-Williams was the first female to lead the NAACP, the nation's oldest civil rights organization. She is also the widow of Medgar Evers who was shot and killed in Mississippi in 1963. His murder brought national attention to the evils of racism in the South. The two met at Alcorn Agricultural & Mechanical College (now Alcorn State University) and married in 1951. They began

working for the NAACP in the mid 1950s to challenge racial segregation and discrimination. Although devastated by the death of her husband, Ms. Evers-Williams became a symbol of courage as well as tragedy in the civil rights movement. In 1999, she published her memoirs *Watch Me Fly: What I Learned on the Way to Becoming the Woman I was Meant to Be*, which details her journey from being the wife of an activist to becoming a community leader in her own right.

“Celebrate the Dream” features musical performances by GrearCo Music’s James Grear & Company, a nine-member vocal ensemble. The group’s debut project, *Don’t Give Up* (1998), spent more than 30 weeks on both the Billboard R&B/Gospel Charts. They have recorded three other albums and have received four Stellar Award nominations, two Excellence nominations and a Soul Train Award nomination. The group recently completed its first live recording in the Twin Cities, which will be released in 2008. The Nu Friends Community Choir, whose first album debuted in 2004, will also be performing. The choir was nominated for a Stellar Award and was featured on the soundtrack to *Preaching to the Choir* along with Patti LaBelle. Nu Friends Community Choir will begin their second live recording on March 1st, 2008.

The Minneapolis Youth Chorus, a partnership between the Minnesota Chorale and the Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS), was invited to perform at the event to bring to life this year’s theme: The Next Generation of Leadership. The Chorus draws its membership from MPS students in grades four through seven. The aim of the group is to enable participants to develop their musical gifts in a setting dedicated to celebrating diversity and pursuing artistic excellence.

“This is the 14th year that Target has supported MCTC’s ‘Celebrate the Dream’ birthday tribute,” said Laysha Ward, vice president, community relations, Target. “As a company, we are dedicated to celebrating individuality and practicing Dr. King’s values of equality, respect and commitment to community responsibility. We continue to honor his legacy through volunteerism and community giving.”

For more info about the “Celebrate the Dream” event, visit www.minneapolis.edu or call 612-659-6200.

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About MCTC:

MCTC is the most ethnically diverse college in Minnesota. A member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System, MCTC offers students a comprehensive liberal arts curriculum and more than 60 career and occupational programs designed to prepare people for good jobs in high demand professions. Located in downtown Minneapolis, MCTC enrolls more than 11,000 students annually and is an active partner in initiatives to strengthen the social, economic and cultural vitality of the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

About Target

Target believes in the power of partnerships with leading cultural institutions to foster creativity, promote learning and build stronger communities. When Target opened its first store in 1962, it was with a strong commitment to support and empower the communities its stores serve. Today, that tradition is reflected in the Target grant-making program, through which Target gives back more than \$3 million each week to communities across the country with a focus on the arts, education and safe families and communities. Target is proud to continue its partnership with MCTC for the 18th annual “Celebrate the Dream” birthday tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As a company, Target is dedicated to supporting and practicing Dr. King’s values of equality, respect, and commitment to community responsibility and continues to honor his Legacy through volunteerism and community giving. Minneapolis-based Target serves guests at 1,591 stores in 47 states nationwide.

Note to media: If you would like to interview Ms. Evers-Williams or MCTC President Phil Davis, please contact Jean Heyer at 612-659-6222 or Jean.Heyer@minneapolis.edu.

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