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Academy Award® Nominated Actor Terrence Howard and Ralph Gilles, Lead Designer of the Chrysler 300, Will Customize a 2006 Jeep® Commander as Part of 37th Annual NAACP Image Awards

Minority Student Automotive Design Scholarship in the Name of the NAACP and DaimlerChrysler

January 31, 2006, Los Angeles -

Academy Award® nominated actor Terrence Howard collaborates with Chrysler Group designer Ralph Gilles in a "My Custom Style" DaimlerChrysler vehicle project pairing the two creative talents. Howard's partnership with Gilles to build a bumper-to-bumper accessorized Jeep® Commander will be revealed at the 37th NAACP Image Awards in Los Angeles on Feb. 25 before being auctioned off to charity.

The proceeds will create a scholarship fund benefiting a minority student in their study of automotive design.

Jeep Commander, the first Jeep vehicle with three rows of seats, is the only vehicle in its class to offer two V-8 engines, including an optional 5.7-liter HEMI® engine. The vehicle has classic Jeep styling cues: a seven-slot grille, an upright windshield, backlite and rear end, and vertical body side and side glass. In addition to the legendary off-road capability that Jeep vehicles are known for, Jeep Commander is engineered to have refined on-road driving manners.

Howard and Gilles will customize features that easily allow buyers to accessorize their car the same way.

"This is a bit like living out a dream while helping someone conceive their vision" said Howard. "As much as you love your car, there's always something you'd want to add to it. So it is going to be fun to do this for a great cause under with the direction of a key DaimlerChrysler designer."

Howard and Gilles will present the final design at the 37th NAACP Image Awards on Feb. 25, 2006, at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

"Designing cars has always been my passion, ever since I was a teenager," said Gilles. "To partner with Terrence, a creative talent from a different arena and taking him through the process of enhancing a vehicle to help a young person achieve their dream, is a wonderful opportunity."

Each year, DaimlerChrysler also presents "Behind the Lens," an award honoring those who have created images on screen that have stood the test of time. Previous honorees include Reuben Cannon, Gordon Parks, Melvin Van Peebles and John Singleton. This year is the fifth anniversary of the Behind the Lens Award.

About Terrence Howard

Following his performance in the Oscar-winning "Ray," Howard starred in 2005's Sundance Film Festival hit "Hustle & Flow," and received Academy Award®, Golden Globe and NAACP Image Awards Best Actor nominations, the National Board of Review Breakthrough Actor Award and the Independent Spirit Awards nods. He was recently seen in the Academy Award nominated "Crash" and the television movie "Their Eyes Were Watching God" alongside Halle Berry. Howard will soon appear in the HBO/Outkast project "Idlewild."

About Ralph V. Gilles

Gilles, Director – Truck Exterior and Interior Design Studio, Chrysler Group, made his name as the lead designer of the Chrysler 300, the most award-winning car in history. In addition to his work on the 300, Gilles was the lead designer of the Dodge Magnum and Dodge Charger, director of the M80 concept vehicle, and primary interior designer for the Dodge Viper GTS/R, Dodge ESX2 and Jeep Jeepster concept vehicles.

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