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## **Chrysler Group Hosts Legendary Poet Nikki Giovanni at National Association of Black Journalists' 31st Annual Convention**

- Chrysler Group celebrates its 12th anniversary of "Spirit in the Word" poetry program
- More than 500 African-American journalists from across the country attend
- Giovanni signs more than 300 books following the event

August 16, 2006, Indianapolis - The 31st Annual National Association of Black Journalists' (NABJ) Convention kicked off on Wednesday, Aug. 16 in Indianapolis with Chrysler Group hosting its "Spirit in the Word" poetry program featuring world-renowned writer and poet, Nikki Giovanni. In its 12th year, Chrysler Group's "Spirit in the Word" program attracted over 500 NABJ journalists from across the nation.

The evening included Giovanni speaking about issues important to the black community and reciting one of her most famous works, "Ego Tripping." She also shared the history behind her latest children's book "Rosa," which has won honors as a special tribute to the late civil rights leader Rosa Parks. Giovanni ended the evening by personalizing and signing more than 300 of her books for a group of inspired journalists.

The "Spirit in the Word" event has been a poetry contest at minority journalism conferences throughout the U.S. (Native American, Hispanic, Asian and African American) by the Chrysler Group. The program previously invited participants to read and perform their works, in an effort to further the art of poetry. The poetry program began in Detroit in 1994. At that time, 47 journalists and poets attended the event. This year, Chrysler Group decided to share a poetry legend with the NABJ members instead in lieu of hosting a contest.

"Since its inception in 1994, Chrysler Group's 'Spirit in the Word' poetry program has provided opportunities for aspiring poets to tell their story, share their passions and celebrate their culture," said Frank Fountain, DaimlerChrysler Senior Vice President of External Affairs and Public Policy (Auburn Hills). "This year, Chrysler Group and NABJ members had the chance to enjoy and celebrate Nikki Giovanni, a spoken-word legend who has inspired generations of people and cultures through her written work.

Giovanni's honors include the NAACP Image Award for literature in 1998 and the Langston Hughes Award for Distinguished Contributions to Arts and letters in 1996. Several magazines have named Giovanni Woman of the Year, including Essence, Mademoiselle, and Ladies Home Journal.

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