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The Google Lunar X PRIZE JURBAN Team A Diverse Journey into Space

Baltimore, MD, June 1, 2009 — In 2008, the space industry was estimated to exceed **\$250 billion** annually. The Personal Space Flight Industry invested **\$1.2 billion** last year with a focus on space tourism. According to the FAA, this trend will continue and could generate more than **\$1 trillion** (USD) in annual revenue by 2021.

Moving light speed ahead, recent movies like *Star Trek* and *Transformers* reflect the future technical advancements imagined for space exploration and robotics. Therefore, opportunities are now preset for people around the world to secure a market in space entrepreneurship.

However, the question seldom posed is *How many underserved or disadvantaged research and commercial groups around the world are participating in this new **space entrepreneurship** craze?* The answer is very few.

To date, there is one minority group in the personal space flight industry that merits attention - the JURBAN team, directed by Dr. Jayfus T. Doswell. Recently, the JURBAN team entered the Google Lunar X PRIZE (GLXP) competition in May 2008 to take on a space entrepreneurship challenge www.googlelunarprize.org/lunar/teams/jurban.

For this challenge, the **Juxtapia® Urban Robotics Brilliant Application Network (JURBAN)** team will compete with 17 teams from around the world for a total prize of **\$30 million dollars**. The main competition involves:

- Flying a robot to the moon before 2012.
- Navigating 500 meters across the lunar surface.
- Transmitting images back to earth.

Additionally, the JURBAN team will place a flag on the moon listing all partners and sponsors who have contributed their support for JURBAN's lunar mission.

The JURBAN Team is from Baltimore, Maryland and comprised of African American high school and college students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) as well as professional engineers.

Together, this team of students and professional engineers are building an autonomous navigating lunar robot that mimics a centipede. The JURBAN robot is designed as a **robot swarm** (i.e., team of robots) that can automatically transform from one connected robot to a single robot link with a full set of visual and navigating sensors in order to work with each other on separate lunar tasks.

The Google Lunar X PRIZE challenge JURBAN team's focus is to serve as a conduit for motivating underrepresented students to enter fields of study in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) as it applies to space entrepreneurship.

Some would say that a student-based team from HBCUs and MSIs stands little chance against more well-known institutes. However, if President Obama's successful progression through various challenges to win the U.S. Presidency is any indication of underdog success, the JURBAN Team stands a good chance to successfully challenge competitive teams from China, the Netherlands, and United States based universities with strong space science and robotic programs.

To help them on their journey, the team has partnered with JAKA Consulting Group, one of the only African-American firms involved in the private space industry. JAKA Consulting Group's "Space Sportlization," approach will help integrate sports coaching techniques for providing a competitive advantage to the students while they learn principles of teamwork, discipline and tenacity during this historic lunar mission.

JAKA Consulting Group developed 'Space Sportlization' as an opportunity to advance private space industries such as space tourism, fitness, sports, entertainment and robotic collaboration with humans, on space missions. Founded by former NFL standout Ken Harvey, a four-time Pro Bowl player with the Washington Redskins and Arizona Cardinals, the company is looking forward to working with the JURBAN Team. "As a former high school dropout who overcame obstacles to attend the University of California at Berkeley and later succeed in not only the NFL but the business world, I believe in the power of achieving dreams," says Harvey.

Allen Herbert, Vice President of JAKA Consulting Group, says "The GLXP is like the Super Bowl of space competition. It is great to be working with the JURBAN team because we not only want to win the competition, but afford students the opportunity to become educated about space entrepreneurship now and in the future. I hope others in the business, education and volunteers sector will see a great opportunity to participate in a mission that could make history."

About JURBAN

JURBAN The JURBAN challenge is a program developed by the Juxtopia Group, www.juxtopia.org, a non-profit research organization. The JURBAN Challenge Program trains underserved and disadvantaged students to build autonomous service robotic systems that have significant impact in their community.

About JAKA Consulting Group

JAKA Consulting Group is a minority-owned company offering a trademarked process of incorporating sports to accomplish business goals for its partners. JAKA Consulting Group engages each client and their constituencies through integrating athletes, events and other sports platforms into comprehensive strategic and development plans to achieve their business goals. This process is called Sportlization. Visit www.jakaconsulting.com to learn more.

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