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## **CULLEN JONES LAUNCHES DIVERSITY TOUR TO PREVENT DROWNING AND ENCOURAGE SWIMMING AMONG MINORITIES**

**Irvington, NJ** – Fresh off winning an Olympic Gold Medal at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Cullen Jones is returning home to Irvington, NJ to launch the Cullen Jones Diversity Tour. An official press conference will begin at 10:00 AM on Saturday, September 20, 2008 at the Irvington, NJ Township Building Council Chambers. Cullen will be welcomed home with open arms by Mayor Wayne Smith of Irvington, NJ who will present him first with the key to the city, next he will unveil the recently renamed city pool the Cullen Jones Aquatic Center and will finish with an announcement of the new Cullen Jones Lane. Governor Corzine is scheduled to attend the event to offer his congratulations, but mainly to hear Cullen speak about his mission: to encourage minorities to get in the pool and learn to swim, and ultimately, to prevent drowning.

With the support of USA Swimming's "Make a Splash" program, Bank of America, and Johnson & Johnson, Cullen hopes that his 2008 Olympic gold medal will give him the platform to truly make a difference. Less than 2% of the registered swimmers in the United States are minorities and nearly 60% of African American and Hispanic/Latino children aren't able to swim. Cullen yearns to inspire people:

**I can only hope that by winning an Olympic gold medal and launching my Tour, we can make parents in many different communities aware of the risks of drowning while showing that being water safe and enjoying the health benefits of swimming can last a lifetime.**

After her son nearly drowned at a water park when he was five years old, Cullen's mother wanted him to learn how to swim; after just a few lessons he fell in love with the water. As he grew older and became a more accomplished swimmer, he began to understand the danger of minority swimmers' lack of swimming skills. Using his celebrity status, Cullen's dream is to make the water safer for all children and prevent the type of drowning accident that nearly took his own life.

Following the launch of the Diversity Tour, Cullen will travel to Washington DC to meet with top Government officials to discuss the need for federal funding to eradicate the danger of drowning among minorities. His next stop will be to Philadelphia, PA on Friday, October 17 where he will join Jim Ellis, inspiration for the movie "Pride," to help raise funds for a much needed new pool in Philadelphia. Three stops are planned for the tour in 2008 and between 8 and 12 stops are expected in 2009. For more information on how you can help, please visit: [www.cullenjonesdiversitytour.com](http://www.cullenjonesdiversitytour.com)

### **About Cullen Jones**

Cullen Jones burst onto the swimming scene at the 2005 World University Games. He easily won the Gold Medal in the 50 freestyle and became the first African-American Male to win a Gold Medal at the World University Games. At the 2006 Pan Pacific Games, Cullen became the first African American to break a world record in swimming in an Olympic contested event as a part of the USA's 4 X 100 Freestyle Relay Team. He also won the 50 meter freestyle swimming the fastest time in the world for 2006. Cullen proved that he is one of the swiftest swimmers on the planet in 2008 when he became the second African-American in history to win an Olympic Gold medal in swimming. An ambassador for African-American swimmers, Jones wanted to

shatter stereotypes one lap at a time, eager to spread his message that, yeah, black kids can swim, too. Jones accomplished that by helping the 4 X 100 freestyle relay team win the Gold medal in a comeback for the ages. In a race soaked with drama and subplots, the Americans shattered the world record they had set just hours earlier in the prelims, blistering through the water in 3 minutes, 8.24 seconds.

#### **About the Cullen Jones Diversity Tour**

The Cullen Jones Diversity Tour was established in 2008 out of a need for the larger swim community to have a vehicle to support a diverse population of young kids. The Cullen Jones Diversity Tour hopes to better serve participants on issues such as learning to swim, drowning prevention, swim team access, swimming as an alternate choice for athletic activities and excellence, health benefits of swimming, social environments that will foster friendships for a lifetime in swimming, increase self esteem and many other topics that are of the utmost importance to the Tour's founder, Cullen Jones.

#### **About Premier Management Group**

PMG or PMG Sports is one of the largest athlete representation agencies for Olympic athletes in the U.S. We represent Olympic athletes for endorsements, personal appearances, keynote speeches, motivational speeches, infomercials, trade show appearances, celebrity endorsements, pharmaceutical spokespeople, national spokespeople, clinics, sports events, events, corporate meetings, celebrity satellite media tours, video news releases, and much more.