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Raleigh Resident Named Outstanding Alumna During Strayer University Commencement

*Antoinette (Toni) Taylor Recognized for Community Service Initiatives,
Successful Business Startup*

RALEIGH, N.C., Aug. 24, 2009 – When Antoinette (Toni) Taylor decided to return to college for a Master of Business Administration, she saw it as another item the business world recommended, but, one she thought was not truly necessary. She changed her mind after attending her first day of class at Strayer University.

“I realized from the first class that I was going to be able to apply what I learned to what I do at work every day,” she said. “I took concepts from lectures and textbook readings that I was able to use and experienced immediate success from that.”

The end result was starting her own business, JASZ Technology Inc., with several fellow classmates and her husband. The company, which started as a side business run out of a spare bedroom in Taylor’s home, now has 16 employees, a half dozen subcontractors and the contract to develop and maintain training and certification tracking software for the Department of Defense.

Taylor, 41, of Raleigh, accepted Strayer University’s Outstanding Alumna Award during the school’s Aug. 22 commencement ceremony in Charlotte. The award recognizes significant achievement by alumni. Strayer University will award degrees to 10,000 adult students – a record for the 117-year-old University – at six regional ceremonies in 2009.

Taylor is driven to make the world a better place, whether it is working on new technology software, volunteering at a soup kitchen, or practicing more sustainable business and living solutions. In 2008, her home earned the Certified Wildlife Habitat

designation from the Wildlife Habitat Council. “I’m interested in green living and in addition to composting and recycling, I added rain barrels, bird feeders, birth baths and non-toxics for pest control,” she said. “Plus, as a technology supplier, I don’t use a lot of paper.”

Outside of work Taylor started a back-to-school outreach program at her church to provide school supplies to needy children and a winter coat and blanket drive. She also coordinates an annual one-day outdoor soup kitchen in downtown Raleigh.

“When you’re standing outside in the cold serving soup, you really feel the impact of what homeless people are going through,” she said.

Taylor served in the Army for 11 years, and as a disabled veteran – she injured her back during a rappelling accident in South Korea – she knows what it means to overcome obstacles.

“People should remember that we all have challenges whether it’s time constraints, learning disabilities or physical disabilities,” she said. “When I was in school, I had a family, a full-time job and I was starting a business. If you set your intentions to finish something, you will find a way even if you have to give up some things. In the end it’s worth it.”

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About Strayer University

Strayer University is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and has been in operation since 1892. The University offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs in business administration, accounting, information technology, education and public administration. With more than 46,000 students, Strayer University operates 71 campuses in 15 states and Washington, D.C., as well as worldwide via the Internet. For more information, visit www.strayer.edu or call 1-888-4-STRAYER (888-478-7293).