

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **First African American in Space to Inspire Educators With Keynote at MetaMetrics Conference**

***Guion S. “Guy” Bluford, Jr., Ph.D., Joins Distinguished Speakers  
for 2008 Lexile National Conference & Quantile Symposium, June 16–19***

**DURHAM, N.C. – April 8, 2008** – Retired astronaut Guion S. “Guy” Bluford, Jr., Ph.D., will inspire educators to help their students build the foundation in mathematics necessary to explore new horizons – as a keynote speaker at MetaMetrics® Inc.’s 2008 Lexile® National Conference & Quantile® Symposium, June 16-19, at the San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter Hotel. Bluford, the first African American to fly in space, spent 15 years with NASA as one of its elite astronauts. His featured presentation will kick off the Thursday, June 19, inaugural Quantile Symposium, where educators will learn about strategies for using The Quantile Framework® for Mathematics to help students build critical mathematics skills.

The Quantile Framework for Mathematics uses a common, developmental scale to measure student mathematics achievement, the difficulty of mathematical skills and concepts and the materials for teaching mathematics. By placing the curriculum, teaching materials and students on the same scale, Quantile measures enable educators to predict which mathematical skills and concepts a student is ready to learn and those that will require additional instruction.

Bluford will share his personal experiences in the space program and the business world and how the education he received prepared him for his distinguished, history-making career. Upon his retirement from NASA in 1993, Bluford had logged more than 688 hours in space and was inducted into the International Space Hall of Fame in 1997. Today he is the founder and president of the Aerospace Technology Group, an aerospace technology and business consulting organization specializing in aviation and space-related technology development, analysis and marketing-related activities.

“When students develop critical thinking skills and strong mathematics abilities, they have the foundation they need for learning and exploring,” said Bluford. “By investing in high-quality education, today’s students can take us to frontiers that we may not have even begun to imagine exist.”

The theme for this year's conference is "Successful Teachers, Successful Students." Sessions will explore successful strategies for raising student achievement in reading, writing and mathematics and ways to ensure that students are prepared for success in postsecondary education, the workplace and life. The conference is designed for classroom teachers, administrators, curriculum and instruction specialists, school and public librarians, and researchers.

"Dr. Bluford is an exciting addition to our stellar roster of keynote speakers for our fifth annual conference," said Malbert Smith III, Ph.D., president, MetaMetrics. "We look forward to hearing about his experiences in the space program and his insights into the ways we should prepare today's students to pursue successful careers like his."

Other keynote presenters slated to participate in the 2008 Lexile National Conference & Quantile Symposium include author and international literacy expert Quality Quinn; Willard R. "Bill" Daggett, Ed.D., president, International Center for Leadership in Education; education consultant Tom Welch; Angela Shelf Medearis, award-winning author and founder of Diva Productions Inc. and Book Boosters Inc; Ruth Culham, president, The Culham Writing Company; and MetaMetrics' co-founders Smith and A. Jackson Stenner, Ph.D.

Discounted early bird registration for the conference is available until May 16, 2008. Attendees who register now will save \$100 off the regular registration rate for the entire four-day Lexile National Conference & Quantile Symposium. Registration includes access to all keynote, concurrent and pre-conference sessions, conference exhibits and presentation materials. A special conference room rate of \$199 per night is available at the San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter Hotel through May 23. For more information, to register and to reserve a hotel room, visit [www.lexile.com/conference2008](http://www.lexile.com/conference2008).

### **About MetaMetrics Inc.**

MetaMetrics Inc., a privately held educational measurement company, develops scientifically based measures of student achievement that link assessment with instruction, foster better educational practices and improve learning by matching students with materials that meet and challenge their abilities. The company's team of psychometricians developed the widely adopted Lexile Framework for Reading ([www.Lexile.com](http://www.Lexile.com)); El Sistema Lexile para Leer, the Spanish-language version of the Lexile Framework; The Quantile Framework for Mathematics ([www.Quantiles.com](http://www.Quantiles.com)); and The Lexile Framework for Writing. In addition to licensing Lexile and Quantile measures to state departments of education, testing and instructional companies and publishers, MetaMetrics delivers professional development, resource measurement and customized consulting services. For more information, visit [www.MetaMetricsInc.com](http://www.MetaMetricsInc.com).

### ***For more information, press only:***

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