

N E W S R E L E A S E

Contact: Andrea Tichy
Manager of Public Relations and Special Events
(773) 325-7819, atichy@depaul.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 17, 2008

The Theatre School at DePaul University's
Annual Awards For Excellence In The Arts

Celebrating Stellar Contributions to the Performing Arts for 20 Years

Bank of America to Receive Corporate Award

Lois Weisberg, Commissioner, Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, to Receive Leadership Award

For the past twenty years, the Theatre School at DePaul University has underscored the tremendous efforts of a long list of visionaries who have proven their dedication, talents, and leadership in supporting the arts. The Theatre School at DePaul University is pleased to announce that the **20th Annual Awards for Excellence in the Arts** will be held on **Tuesday, April 22, 2008**, at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago. By fusing film, television and theatre personalities with a celebration of the arts - and topping that off with a one-of-a-kind auction and live entertainment - the 20th Annual Awards for Excellence in the Arts is bound to be an unforgettable event! Joining the celebration will be some of the nation's most dedicated leaders of culture and fervent supporters of the arts.

The Theatre School is proud to honor *Bank of America* for its outstanding contributions to the arts on a national basis.

Bank of America Illinois State President David Rudis praised The Theatre School at DePaul University for its commitment to excellence. "For more than 80 years, The Theatre School has prepared students from all walks of life for careers in the arts. Bank of America is honored to be recognized by this fine institution for its ongoing support of art and culture."

-- MORE --

The Theatre School is honored to announce that **Lois Weisberg**, *Commissioner for the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs*, will accept the 2008 Leadership Award for Excellence in the Arts. In 1999, Malcolm Gladwell published an article entitled “Six Degrees of Lois Weisberg” in *The New Yorker*, celebrating impact and inspiring career of Lois Weisberg. Undoubtedly, Ms. Weisberg has graced the city of Chicago with her intensity and passion for establishing Chicago’s continued presence as a cultural capital of the nation. Additional **celebrity honorees** will be announced shortly.

The Theatre School Board co-chairs are Joseph Antunovich, President, Antunovich Associates, Architects and Planners; Trisha Rooney-Alden, President, R4 Services; Sondra A. Healy, Chairman, Turtle Wax, Inc.; and Monsignor Kenneth Velo, Senior Executive for Catholic Collaboration, DePaul University.

The ticket price for the benefit is \$500 per person, with tables for 10 available for \$5,000; \$10,000 or \$25,000. The evening begins at 6 p.m. and concludes at 9 p.m. For tickets or more information, call PJH & Associates, Inc., at (312) 553-2000. The Annual Awards for Excellence in the Arts benefits The Theatre School’s Scholarship Fund, which provides necessary financial assistance to students from an international talent pool that choose to train at one of the leading conservatories in the nation.

Each year this event recognizes distinguished artists who have made significant contributions to the arts and celebrates exceptional professional accomplishments. In addition to the Awards for Excellence in the Arts presented to the select inspiring artists, a Corporate Award was established in 1998 to honor exemplary corporate philanthropy to the arts. Since its inception in 1989, the Awards benefit has raised over \$2.5 million, making it the largest single source for The Theatre School’s Scholarship Fund. All monies raised during the event go directly to this fund, which dispenses more than \$600,000 in financial aid each year, giving talented students the resources needed to continue their training. More than 400 guests attended in 2007, raising a record net of \$266,450 for the Scholarship Fund, a \$53,267 increase over the previous year.

The award itself is a beautiful Wedgwood bowl or vase, a gift to The Theatre School for this purpose from Lord Piers Wedgwood of the legendary Wedgwood firm. Lord and Lady Wedgwood have served as honorary chairpersons and often attend the event. Major supporters of the 20th Annual Awards include American Airlines and Wedgwood USA.

The Theatre School at DePaul University, founded as the Goodman School of Drama in 1925, educates, trains and inspires students of theatre in a conservatory setting that is rigorous, disciplined and culturally diverse. The school and its students strive for the highest level of professional skill and artistry. A commitment to diversity and equality in education is central to its mission. As an integral part of the training, The Theatre School produces public programs and performances from a wide repertoire of classic, contemporary and original plays that challenge, entertain and stimulate the imagination. The school seeks to enhance the intellectual and cultural life of the university community, the city and the profession.

For more information visit <http://theatreschool.depaul.edu>. Photo and interview opportunities are available. Please contact Andrea Tichy, Manager of Public Relations and Special Events for details.

Honoree Biography Follows

Lois Weisberg

Lois Weisberg was appointed Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) by Mayor Richard M. Daley in 1989. Under her leadership, the department has earned a reputation for innovation in cultural programming and become widely regarded as a national model for municipal support of the arts.

Comm. Weisberg's accomplishments include transforming the Chicago Cultural Center, formerly the Central Public Library, into a showcase for more than 700 exhibitions and performances each year, developing a diverse range of concerts, children's activities and other free programs at Chicago's newest cultural landmark, Millennium Park, creating the Summer Dance and World Music Festivals, anchoring the downtown theater district with three DCA-operated theaters, sponsoring exciting public art exhibitions such as the phenomenally popular Cows on Parade and Suite Home Chicago, nurturing Gallery 37 from a small summer job training program for teen-aged artists to an expansive, citywide network of year-round programs, leading the national trend toward cultural tourism through programming offered by the Chicago Office of Tourism, a division of DCA, supporting local artists through initiatives such as Chicago Artists' Month and the Chicago Artists' Resource website, and overseeing the expansion of Chicago's international family of Sister Cities to 27.

Ardently devoted to her family, Comm. Weisberg has four children, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Bank of America

Bank of America is one of the world's largest financial institutions, serving individual consumers, small and middle market businesses and large corporations with a full range of banking, investing, asset management and other financial and risk-management products and services. The company provides unmatched convenience in the United States, serving more than 59 million consumer and small business relationships with more than 6,100 retail banking offices, nearly 19,000 ATMs and award-winning online banking with nearly 24 million active users. Bank of America is the No. 1 overall Small Business Administration (SBA) lender in the United States and the No. 1 SBA lender to minority-owned small businesses. The company serves clients in 175 countries and has relationships with 99 percent of the U.S. Fortune 500 companies and 83 percent of the Global Fortune 500. Bank of America Corporation stock (NYSE: BAC) is listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

###