

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 2, 2009

ANGELA BASSETT TO ACCEPT AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE ARTS
Event to Raise Money for The Theatre School Scholarship Fund

(Chicago, IL) For two decades, The Theatre School (TTS) at DePaul University has underscored the tremendous efforts of a long list of visionaries that have proven their dedication, talent and leadership in supporting the arts. TTS is pleased to announce that the **21st Annual Awards for Excellence in the Arts** will be held on **Tuesday, April 28, 2009**, at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago.

Highly celebrated actress **ANGELA BASSETT** (*NOTORIOUS, WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT, ER*) will accept the 2009 Award for Excellence in the Arts. Ms. Bassett has graced both the stage and screen with her powerful talents. Her work as an actress and executive producer has time and again earned the respect and acclaim from her peers and her fans. She has established herself as one of the industry's premier leading ladies. Ms. Bassett holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Yale School of Drama, making her an ideal role-model for the students of The Theatre School as they determine how to combine their talents with their training.

DENNIS DUGAN, Theatre School Alumnus and Director/Actor (*I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY, BIG DADDY*) will be accepting the 2009 Alumni Award for Excellence in the Arts. Scheduled to host the event is Theatre School alumnus **SCOTT ELLIS**, Associate Artistic Director of New York City's Roundabout Theatre Company.

Illinois Tool Works Inc. (ITW) will be the recipient of the 2009 Corporate Award for Excellence in the Arts. Chairman and CEO, **DAVID B. SPEER**, who will accept the award on their behalf, applauds The Theatre School for its sustained commitment to excellence. "With over eight decades of alumni, The Theatre School has educated, trained and inspired students to become professional leaders both on and off of the stage. ITW is honored to accept this award from such a strong cultural institution."

The Theatre School is delighted to announce that **BILL KURTIS** and **DONNA LA PIETRA**, *Kurtis Productions, Ltd.* will accept the 2009 Leadership Award for Excellence in the Arts. From philanthropic

-- MORE --

activities, to thought-provoking documentaries, investigative journalism to volunteer work and much more, this dynamic duo has graced the city of Chicago with their immeasurable passion and their fervent support of arts and culture.

The event Co-Chairs are Joseph Antunovich (President, Antunovich Associates, Architects and Planners) Frederick H. Waddell (President and CEO, Northern Trust Corporation), 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 starting at \$5000. 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 event benefits **The Theatre School's Scholarship Fund**, which provides necessary financial assistance to the young artists in training at the school.

Since its inception in 1989, the event has raised over \$2.5 million, making it the largest single source for The Theatre School's Scholarship Fund. The Theatre School relies on donors to provide 40% of the nearly \$1.3 million dispensed through scholarships each year. More than 400 guests attended in 2008, raising a record net of \$335,000 for the Scholarship Fund, a \$63,000 increase over the previous year. Major supporters of the 21st Annual Awards include **American Airlines** and **Wedgwood USA**.

Angela Bassett to Receive Award for Excellence in the Arts

Dennis Dugan to Receive Alumni Award for Excellence in the Arts

Illinois Tool Works Inc., David B. Speer, Chairman and CEO, to Receive Corporate Award

Bill Kurtis & Donna La Pietra, Kurtis Productions, Ltd., to Receive Leadership Award

Photos, biographies and interviews are available upon request and subject to honoree schedule. Additional celebrity honorees to be announced. Contact Andrea Tichy, Manager of Public Relations and Special Events, (773)325-7819, atichy@depaul.edu, for details and more information.

#

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.