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Dallas Theater Center Celebrates Project Discovery's National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award Recognition

DALLAS (January 28, 2014) – Yesterday Dallas Theater Center hosted a celebration in honor of Project Discovery's recent recognition by The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. DTC invited 200 current Project Discovery [PD] participants, teachers, past participants, teaching artists, board, staff and program donors to an hour-long event that featured stories from PD students and a full, experiential PD activity on the main stage of the Wylie Theatre.

"Yesterday, the North Texas community had the chance to celebrate Project Discovery's NAHYP Award. The recent ceremony at the White House and subsequent national recognition are only part of what receiving this award is about," said Mara Richards, DTC's Manager of Education Programs. "This event gave the entire DTC community, including Project Discovery students past and present, the opportunity to come together to learn about this program and its impact, and experience first-hand what our students do before every performance they attend."

On November 22, 2013, Dallas Theater Center's Project Discovery program received the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award from First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama. The award recognizes exemplary after-school and out-of-school time programs from across the country and is the highest national honor awarded to such programs. Project Discovery is one of 12 programs that received the award in 2013.

"We learn a lot of things collaborating with other people. You learn how to put your own ideas [out there] and you learn how to accept other people's ideas," said Emily Sanchez, a Project Discovery participant and senior at W. H. Adamson High School in Oak Cliff. "It will change anyone. I believe if you really have an open mind, it will change anyone."

Since 1986, Project Discovery has helped over 265,000 students and teachers experience and study the finest in live, professional theater. The program makes theater more accessible to students, regardless of their ability to pay and increases engagement of students in experiences that explore issues using theater as a catalyst. Roughly half of Project Discovery participants will see a professional theater production for the first time while in the program and more than 90% of participants indicate an increased level of confidence in attending theater and sharing opinions about their experience.

"Welcoming high schools students to Dallas Theater Center for an entire season of attending plays, working with the professionals from our stage, sitting next to subscribers and longtime patrons and engaging in our post show conversations provides a frame work that will not only change the lives of the individual students, but will impact the broader community for years to come," said DTC Artistic Director Kevin Moriarty. "Project Discovery represents the best of Dallas Theater Center. The National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award gives us another reason to applaud the program and all of those who make it possible."

Schools interested in becoming a part of Project Discovery can visit DallasTheaterCenter.org for more details on the program and how to apply for next season. Those interested in making a donation to the program can also do so online at DallasTheaterCenter.org or by calling (214) 252-3914.

ABOUT DALLAS THEATER CENTER:

One of the leading regional theaters in the country, Dallas Theater Center (DTC) performs to an audience of more than 120,000 North Texas residents annually. Founded in 1959, DTC is now a resident company of the AT&T Performing Arts Center and presents its Mainstage season at the Dee and Charles Wylie Theatre, designed by REX/OMA, Joshua Prince-Ramus and Rem Koolhaas and at its original home, the Kalita Humphreys Theater, the only freestanding theater designed and built by Frank Lloyd Wright. Under the

leadership of Artistic Director Kevin Moriarty and Managing Director Heather M. Kitchen, DTC produces a seven-play subscription series of classics, musicals and new plays and an annual production of *A Christmas Carol*; extensive education programs, including the National Arts and Youth Program Award-winning Project Discovery, SummerStage and partnerships with Southern Methodist University's Meadows School of the Arts and Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts; and community outreach efforts including leading the DFW Foote Festival and recent collaborations with the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas Public Library, Dallas Holocaust Museum, North Texas Food Bank, Dallas Opera, and Dallas Black Dance Theater. Throughout its history, DTC has produced many new works, including *The Texas Trilogy* by Preston Jones in 1978, Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*, adapted by Adrian Hall, in 1986, and recent premieres of *FLY* by Rajiv Joseph, Bill Sherman and Kirstin Childs; *Fly by Night* by Kim Rosenstock, Michael Mitnick and Will Connolly; *Giant* by Michael John LaChiusa and Sybille Pearson; *The Trinity River Plays* by Regina Taylor; the revised *It's a Bird... It's a Plane... It's Superman* by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, Charles Strouse and Lee Adams; *Give It Up!* (now titled *Lysistrata Jones* and recently on Broadway) by Douglas Carter Beane and Lewis Flinn; *Sarah, Plain and Tall* by Julia Jordan, Laurence O'Keefe and Nell Benjamin; and *The Good Negro* by Tracey Scott Wilson.

Dallas Theater Center gratefully acknowledges the support of Pioneer Natural Resources, the Title Sponsor of Project Discovery, and The Moody Foundation, the lead foundation supporter of the program. Other sponsors include: National Corporate Theatre Fund/Impact Creativity, Pier 1 Imports, The Chiles Foundation, The Theodore and Beulah Beasley Foundation, Ernst & Young, and ExxonMobil.

ABOUT PROJECT DISCOVERY

Project Discovery is a recipient of the 2013 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. Project Discovery is a catalyst for young people to explore their place in the world. Built around performances at Dallas Theater Center, this yearlong afterschool program brings together diverse teens from at-risk high schools across North Texas and cultivates them as patrons, artists and thinkers. Through on-your-feet activities, students improve their creativity, engage in teamwork, and build their confidence. Through curriculum-related content, students explore literary themes and historic aspects of wide-ranging dramatic works. As they experience plays among an adult audience, participating students learn to be engaged arts patrons, with the self-assurance to discuss ideas with peers and adults alike.