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N e w s R e l e a s e

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Childsplay Awarded Generous Grant by Thunderbirds Charities

Tempe, Arizona Childsplay, Arizona's premier theatre for young audiences, has been awarded \$100,000 from Thunderbirds Charities in support of its 2006/07 School Touring Program. Serving more than 1 out of 5 Arizona schoolchildren annually, this longstanding performance and arts education program meets the Thunderbirds Charities' core goal of improving the quality of life of Arizona's children.

Childsplay's School Touring Program is Arizona's most comprehensive effort to bring professional theatre and arts education programming to underserved children. In 2006/07 alone, the program will reach 130,000 students in 250 schools in 40 communities throughout the state. Each school visit includes performances for the entire student body, a "talk-back" session with the actors, and educational materials that tie the play to a wide range of cross-curricular topics and meet mandated Arizona Education Standards. This season's plays address such critical issues as teen depression and suicide, homelessness, illiteracy, family crisis, and protecting the environment. They also reinforce positive messages about family, friendship, and community. Of the 130,000 K-12 students who will see a touring production this season, approximately 51% qualify for free or reduced lunch programs and 53% represent ethnic minorities. This season's touring plays include "Tomás and the Library Lady," "River Rat & Cat," "Eric & Elliot" and "Danny, King of the Basement."

Thunderbirds Charities is a non-profit organization formed in 1986 to distribute monies raised through the FBR Open golf tournament. The Thunderbirds Charities Board consists of 15 members from varying professional backgrounds. The mission of Thunderbirds Charities is to assist children and families, help people in need and improve the quality of life in our communities. The organization's giving is directed toward organizations based or with a significant presence in Arizona.

The Thunderbirds were founded in 1937 with the mission of

promoting the Valley of the Sun through sports. The Thunderbirds consist of 55 "active" members and more than 250 "life" members. The FBR Open is the best-attended golf tournament in the world and in 2006 drew more than half a million exuberant golf fans to the TPC Scottsdale.

For more information on the Thunderbirds, Thunderbirds Charities or the 2007 FBR Open, call the Thunderbirds office at (602) 870-0163 or visit www.fbropen.com. For more information on Childsplay visit www.childsplayaz.org.

Childsplay, Inc. is a nonprofit theatre company of professional, adult artists who perform for and teach young audiences and their families. The mission of Childsplay is "to create theatre so strikingly original in form, content or both, that it instills in young people an enduring awe, love and respect for the medium, thus preserving imagination and wonder, the hallmarks of childhood which are keys to the future." For information on Childsplay performances, classes or educational presentations please call 480.350.8101 or visit www.childsplayaz.org.
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