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Press Contact: John Longenbaugh
(206) 625-1418, jlongenbaugh@5thavenue.org

Contact Info for Publication:
206-625-1900 / 888-5TH-4TIX (584-4849) or www.5thavenue.org

The 5th Avenue Award Goes To...

Washington's high school musical theater programs honored in Tony Award-Style event, sponsored by Wells Fargo

SEATTLE - Tonight, 2,200 high school students, teachers and parents from across Washington State packed The 5th Avenue Theatre for the Eighth Annual 5th Avenue High School Musical Theatre Awards, sponsored by Wells Fargo. A highly enthusiastic crowd filled the Theatre and cheered as the award recipients were announced in 22 different categories, ranging from Outstanding Overall Musical Production to Outstanding Program Design.

The nominees, some dressed in their production costumes and the rest in their best party clothes, shook the walls of the Theatre with their cheering and applause, celebrating a variety of exceptional musical theater productions presented during the 2009-2010 school year. Nominees in select categories presented numbers from their shows and performed song medleys. Teachers and students alike were thrilled to receive recognition for their hard work and dedication, just as accomplished high school athletes have received for decades.

Since its inception the program has grown in size and scope, from 31 productions and 3,100 students in 2003 to 93 productions and 9,300 students participating this year. 183 nominations were given to 64 schools in various categories and 89 students received honorable mentions. Schools from as far as Spokane, Lynden, Sequim and Vancouver are reporting back to The 5th Avenue that their involvement in this awards program has significantly helped their individual efforts to secure funding, improve curriculum and increase student participation.

Kamiak High School received the Outstanding Overall Musical Production Award, while **University High School** took home the most awards of the evening, three. **Hanford High School, Roosevelt High School, Liberty High School** and **Lake Stevens High School** all received two awards each.

Tori Gresham at **Eisenhower High School** received the award for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role, and **Dalin Tipton** at **North Central High School** for Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role. **Hanford High School** took home Outstanding

Direction, **University High School** received the award for Outstanding Music Direction, and **Roosevelt High School** was the recipient for Outstanding Choreography.

For a full list of our nominees and recipients, visit our 2010 High School Musical Theatre Awards Nominees & Recipients page at 5thavenue.org/education/highschoolawards-2010.aspx.

TVW did a live webcast of the event (hosted on the 5th Avenue website) and will repeat a broadcast tomorrow night, Tuesday June 8, at 7:00 p.m., as well as the following Saturday June 12 at 7:00 pm and Sunday June 13 at 1:00 pm. After June 13, the event may be viewed as streaming video at www.tvw.org.

The 5th Avenue Theatre is Seattle's premier musical theater. In 1980, the non-profit 5th Avenue Theatre began producing and presenting top-quality live musical theater for the cultural enrichment of the Northwest community. The 5th Avenue Theatre maintains a subscription audience of over 25,000 and an annual attendance of more than 287,000. It ranks among the nation's largest and most respected musical theater companies. The Theatre is committed to encouraging the next generation of theatergoers through its Educational Outreach Program which includes: The Adventure Musical Theatre Touring Company, The 5th Avenue High School Musical Theatre Awards, and the Student Matinee Program and Spotlight Nights. Unique in its Chinese-inspired design, the exquisite theater opened in 1926 as a venue for vaudeville and film. Today, under the leadership of Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong, Managing Director Bernadine C. Griffin and Producing Director Bill Berry, The 5th Avenue Theatre continues to achieve the highest standards in all aspects of artistic endeavors and facility operations, while preserving its artistic, architectural and historic legacy. Visit www.5thavenue.org.

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Please contact John Longenbaugh, Public Relations Manager at (206) 625-1418 with questions or to schedule individual interviews. Photos available upon request.