



A PROGRAM OF NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS
Inspiring Young Artists for America's Future

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ILLINOIS' LEADING STUDENT ARTISTS HONORED AT THE ARTS CLUB OF CHICAGO

*youngARTS™ Illinois Shines Spotlight on Up and Comers
In the Performing, Literary and Visual Arts*

MIAMI (April 18, 2008) – The arts are alive and well in Illinois, thanks to the combined talents of 32 high school students who will be honored **Wed., May 14, 2008** by youngARTS™, the core program of National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA). The performance and recognition ceremony, hosted by Chicago arts supporters Leslie and NFAA Board Chairman Paul Zeller, will be held at The Arts Club of Chicago, 201 East Ontario Street.

The evening will begin with a cocktail reception at 6:00 p.m., followed by student performances and an awards ceremony. The event is free and open to the public; however, advance reservations are required and seating is limited.

"We are delighted to showcase and recognize these extraordinary students, hailing from our own backyard, and to outfit them with the monetary support and encouragement they need to pursue their artistic passion," Zeller said.

Although youngARTS is a national program, Illinois is one of the pilot areas where regional initiatives have been launched. More than 8,000 talented high schools seniors apply each year to be chosen – the regional programs expand the scope of winners in that specific area. In addition to Illinois, Colorado and New York City have regional programs. Each year, youngARTS celebrates and rewards exceptional 17 and 18-year-old student artists from across the U.S. in nine artistic fields: cinematic arts, dance, music, jazz, photography, theater, visual arts, voice and writing. NFAA has awarded in excess of \$6 million and facilitated nearly \$90 million in college scholarships to high school students. In addition, it is the exclusive nominating agent for Presidential Scholars in the Arts, who are recognized each June at a White House ceremony.

NFAA was established in 1981 by Carnival Cruise Lines founder, the late **Ted Arison** and his wife **Lin Arison** to identify uniquely gifted young artists and assist them both financially and educationally. Its roster of alumni includes actress and recording artist **Vanessa Williams**, dancer/choreographer **Desmond Richardson**, recording artist **Josh Groban**, New York Philharmonic guest solo violinist **Jennifer Koh**, jazz trumpet player **Roy Hargrove**, Broadway actors **Ron Eldard** and **Raul Esparza**, writer **Allegra Goodman** and visual artist **Doug Aitken**.

For information about how to register for the 2009 NFAA youngARTS program, please call 1-800-970-ARTS (2787) or visit www.youngARTS.org.

For more information about the youngARTS Illinois Regional Awards ceremony, please contact Rebecca Interian at (305) 377-1140 or email Rebecca@nfaa.org.

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Editor's Note: The full list of youngARTS Illinois Regional Award winners is available upon request.

ABOUT NFAA:

Dedicated to inspiring young artists for America's future, NFAA's mission is to identify emerging artists and assist them at critical junctures with their educational and professional development; and to raise the appreciation for, and support of, the arts in American society. NFAA's youngARTS program is sponsored, in part, by: Bank of America; Carnival Cruise Lines; The Coca-Cola Company; The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Trust; Gibson Guitar Corporation; Baldwin Piano; Gibson Baldwin Music Education; The Gibson Foundation; The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; Panasonic/Lumix and SunTrust.

youngARTS Week 2008 was sponsored, in part, by: The National Endowment for the Arts, the State of Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Arts Council; and the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs; the Cultural Affairs Council; the Tourist Development Council; and the Mayor and the Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners.