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**UNION SQUARE AWARDS GRANTS \$350,000 TO NEW YORK CITY ARTS ORGANIZATIONS
TEN GROUPS RECOGNIZED FOR GROUNDBREAKING CONTRIBUTIONS
June 2007**

The Union Square Awards is pleased to announce the 2007 recipients of the Union Square Arts Award in recognition of innovative work with youth and families in low-income communities across New York City. Ten organizations specializing in dance, theater, music, performing and visual arts, film, poetry and creative writing will each receive a \$35,000 grant for general operating support. Through the generosity of an anonymous donor, the program was launched last year to support community arts organizations that have not received either substantial funding or public accolade.

"In the spirit of the Union Square Awards, the arts award recognizes the important and leadership role played by arts organizations in creating educational opportunities, building community and promoting progressive social change," says Iris Morales, Executive Director of the Union Square Awards.

Established in 1998, the Union Square Awards has granted more than \$10 million to support grassroots projects and organizations working on pressing social justice issues across the City. The program is named after the park on 14th Street where New Yorkers have organized and raised awareness about contemporary social issues since the nineteenth century. Known as a forum for the poor and disenfranchised, Union Square is identified with strong commitments and highlights the essential qualities embodied in the award.

The 2007 Union Square Arts Awards will be presented at a reception on June 22nd to the following organizations:

Alwan for the Arts promotes the diverse cultures of the Arab community in New York City. Its wide-ranging programming showcases musical and theatrical performances, film festivals and screenings, book signings, language and literature classes. www.alwanforthearts.org

Calpulli Mexican Dance Company is dedicated to presenting and promoting the rich heritage of Mexican culture. Programs for both adults and children incorporate music and theatre to showcase the diversity of Mexico's regional dances. www.calpullidance.org

Children's PressLine is dedicated to ensuring that young people grow up as active participants in civic society and that they reflect their experiences on public policy issues. Through journalism, CPL brings a youth perspective to the forefront of local and national issues. www.cplmedia.org

City at Peace – NY uses the performing arts to empower teenagers to create safe, healthy, peaceful lives and communities, developing the next generation of community leaders. Youth create an original musical and community action projects. www.cpnational.org/ny

Ghetto Film School provides community-based cinema arts education, production training, career development and distribution services to aspiring filmmakers ages 14 to 21 years old. www.ghettofilm.org

Groove with Me offers free dance classes and performance opportunities to girls and young women, ages 4 to 18 years old, to build leadership skills, pride, self-confidence, creativity, joy, and the discipline needed to grow into strong and successful women. www.groovewithme.org

Hip-Hop Association builds community and fosters social change utilizing the positive values of hip-hop at its genesis. Through education, film, performing arts, technology, and leadership development programs, it engages young people, educators, parents and community members. www.hiphopassociation.org

Hip-Hop Theater Festival is dedicated to creating innovative work using the hip-hop aesthetic; producing and presenting artists whose work addresses socio-political issues; and serving young, urban communities through outreach and education. www.hiphoptheaterfest.org

louderARTS Project develops constructive and challenging spaces for artists to create, critique, and teach poetry by sponsoring literary arts programming in underserved communities and by encouraging artistic experimentation. www.louderarts.com

Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA) is a unique museum devoted to utilizing the visual arts as a medium to address contemporary social, political and economic issues that disproportionately affect people of the African Diaspora. www.mocada.org

The Union Square Awards is a project of the Tides Center whose mission is to actively promote change toward a healthy society -one founded on principles of social justice, equal economic opportunity, a robust democratic process and environmental sustainability.

Find out more about the Union Square Awards at www.unionsquareawards.org.