



FIDELITY
FUTURESTAGE®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Rogers & Cowan
Lorraine Osmundsen, 212-445-8420
losmundsen@rogersandcowan.com

**TWO-TIME ACADEMY AWARD® WINNER HILARY SWANK TO HOST
THE 2010 FIDELITY FUTURESTAGE® FINALE ON JUNE 14**

*New York City Public School Students Make Broadway Debut at Imperial Theatre,
Home to Tony Award® Winner BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL*

*11-Year Old Luis Ramirez, 6th Grader at Brooklyn's JHS 383,
Soon to be Broadway's Youngest Playwright*

BOSTON, May 28, 2010 – Fidelity Investments®, in partnership with *Billy Elliot the Musical*, the Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group and LeAp (Learning through an Expanded Arts Program) today announced that two-time Academy Award® Winner Hilary Swank will host the 2010 Fidelity FutureStage® Finale on Monday, June 14. The gala event will be held at Broadway's Imperial Theatre, home of the Tony Award winning hit production of *Billy Elliot the Musical*.

After months of intensive playwriting and production development, the Fidelity FutureStage Finale marks the Broadway debut of six student-written plays, showcasing the work of over 1,000 NYC area students who participated in the 2010 Fidelity FutureStage theater education program.

“Fidelity FutureStage is giving these students a once in a lifetime opportunity to become Broadway's youngest playwrights,” said Hilary Swank, special guest host of the Finale event. “I am thrilled to help them celebrate a night they'll always remember.”

Five of the six plays to be featured on June 14 were selected from among the 10 New York City middle and high schools participating in the year-long Fidelity FutureStage school program. These five plays are cast with students from their respective schools. The sixth play included in the Finale is the winner of second annual Fidelity FutureStage Playwriting Contest, a joint city-wide initiative of Fidelity and *Billy Elliot the Musical* to encourage young people throughout the NYC metro area to express their creativity through playwriting. All of the student plays – both from the FutureStage 10-school program and the city-wide FutureStage Playwriting Contest – represent themes found within *Billy Elliot the Musical* including pursuing a dream, discovering a special talent or overcoming an obstacle.

- more -

While all six of these student playwrights will soon get to list ‘Broadway Playwright’ on their resumes, one student in particular stands out. Luis Ramirez – just 11 years old, and a sixth grader at Philippa Schuyler JHS 383 in Brooklyn – will soon to get to call himself the youngest playwright on Broadway.

2010 FIDELITY FUTURESTAGE STUDENT PLAYWRIGHTS AND FINALE PLAYS:

- Luis Ramirez – Age 11, Grade 6 – Philippa Schuyler JHS 383 (Brooklyn)
The Basketball Team is a play about friendship, teamwork and learning that sometimes the sum of parts is bigger than the parts alone. Five friends come together to form their school’s first official basketball team, learning the meaning of “team’ along the way.
- Krystal Thomas – Age 17, Grade 11 - Fordham High School for the Arts (Bronx)
For the Love of Art is the story about a young girl who uses her own body as a canvas to express her passion for art, with tattoos all over her body. This is a powerful play about the nature of art and how it functions in the life of an isolated person.
- Nathalie Torrenegra – Age 18, Grade 12 – Gramercy Arts High School (Manhattan)
Weapons of Mass Distraction stars Brooke, a smart young girl who is continuously distracted by drama and conflict with her boyfriend, her recently remarried mom and especially new stepsister Donna. Sharing a bedroom puts the girls at major odds.
- Nasaun Lineszy – Age 18, Grade 12 - Hillcrest High School (Queens)
Beautiful Karma is a story reminiscent of “A Christmas Carol.” Felix, a grumpy millionaire, dismisses a homeless paper boy seeking shelter during a blizzard. When Felix falls asleep that night, he is sent back to the Great Depression where he experiences poverty, hardship and kindness. He returns to the present a changed man.
- Kathleen Rogers – Age 17, Grade 12 - Frank Sinatra School of the Arts (Queens)
Lunch – The contents of Billy’s lunchbox come to life, sharing tales with young apple ‘Little Red’ about how they came to be Billy’s mid-day fare. Anticipating mealtime, the animated food-stuffs teach each other to live for the moment... and then Billy shows up...
- Katarzyna (Kathy) Roszczeda** – Age 17, Grade 12 - Frank Sinatra School of the Arts (Queens)
Navy Blue Tiles is a story about lost love – and efforts to regain it. Veteran Vincent returns home to find his ex-love Sophie, now the owner of a bakery where they first fell in love. She’s remodeled the whole place, save for a single navy blue tile which reminds her of Vincent – and her hurt feelings that he left her years ago. She tells him she’s moved on... but has she?
** Winner of the 2010 Fidelity FutureStage Playwriting Contest

“The creativity and talent of the Fidelity FutureStage students is inspiring,” added Ms. Swank. Many of the playwrights are tackling complicated, emotional topics with insight beyond their years – that in itself is impressive and speaks to the impact of the FutureStage program.”

Earlier this month, the 10 New York City schools participating in the year-long Fidelity FutureStage program took part in a special Broadway Audition Day. The day included a series of educational workshops led by Take it from the Top and cast members and creative team of *Billy Elliot the Musical*, covering disciplines including getting into character and scene study. Those workshops readied the students from each school for a special audition performance before a judging panel of theater industry insiders.

Following all 10 auditions, the panel, which included David Auburn (Pulitzer Prize, Tony Award and New York Drama Critics Award- winning playwright for *Proof*), Peter Avery (Director of Theater, New York City Department of Education, Office of Arts and Special Projects), Nora Brennan (Youth Casting Director of *Billy Elliot the Musical*), Penny Fuller (Award-winning stage and screen actress, most recently seen in *Dividing the Estate* at Lincoln Center Theatre on Broadway), Terry Berliner (Fidelity FutureStage Artistic Associate) and Michael Bush (Fidelity FutureStage Artistic Director and Finale Director) selected five plays and their casts to move on to the Broadway finale

The winner of the 2010 Fidelity FutureStage Playwriting Contest – *Navy Blue Tiles* by 17-year old Ridgewood, NY (Queens) resident Kathy Roszczeda – is the sixth play to be included in the June 14 finale event. Students across the NYC metro area were invited to write a 10-minute one-act play reflecting the themes of *Billy Elliot*. More than 550 plays were submitted to the Fidelity FutureStage Playwriting Contest from students from across the region, representing NYC, Westchester, Rockland and Orange counties outside of the city, Nassau and Suffolk counties on Long Island, as well as Bergen, Essex, Middlesex, Monmouth and Union counties in New Jersey, and Fairfield county in Connecticut.

The winning play was selected by a judging panel including actors Michael Urie (*The Temperamentals*, “Ugly Betty”), Anthony Mackie (*A Behanding in Spokane*, “The Hurt Locker”) and Constantine Margolis (*Rock of Ages*, “American Idol”). Rounding out the judges was the General Manager of *Billy Elliot the Musical* and Past Chair of The Broadway League Nina Lannan, as well as Fidelity FutureStage Artistic Director Michael Bush, who will also direct the June 14th finale event.

All of the plays featured in the June 14 finale will be published by Samuel French, the premier play and musical publishing and licensing company serving the Broadway community since 1830.

About Fidelity FutureStage

Fidelity FutureStage, now in its fourth year, is designed to bring theater to life for 600+ NYC students, representing 10 inner-city schools. The year-long theater education curriculum affords students the opportunity to learn from leading playwrights, directors, designers and actors, and ultimately experience the thrill of bringing their own creativity to life on a professional stage.

More than 1,000 hours of classroom work over the course of the school year includes instruction in theater arts disciplines ranging from playwriting and editing to casting, auditioning, set and costume design, directing and final stage production, coordinated by LeAp teaching artists in the classrooms. Some of the Broadway artists lending their time and support to the Fidelity FutureStage program have included: Kathleen Marshall (*GREASE!*), William Ivey Long (*Grey Gardens*, *Hairspray*), David Hyde Pierce (*Accent on Youth*, *Curtains*), Charles Strouse (*Annie*, *Bye Bye Birdie*), Alan Menken (*Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Little Mermaid*), Jerry Zaks (*Caine Mutiny Court-Martial*, *Little Shop of Horrors*), Raúl Esparza (*Company*, *Speed the Plow*), Lin-Manuel Miranda (*In the Heights*), Charles Dutton (*The Piano Lesson*) David Strathairn (“Goodnight and Good Luck”), Frankie Faison (“The Wire,” *Fences*) and Chazz Palminteri (*A Bronx Tale*). Students in the Fidelity FutureStage classes also have the opportunity to attend Broadway shows throughout the school year. The guest artist school visits and Broadway field trips are coordinated with the help of the Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group.

The **Fidelity FutureStage Playwriting Contest** is an extension of the program, created to give additional students throughout the NYC metro area encouragement and opportunity to participate in the theater arts. The contest was open to all high school students attending school in NYC and surrounding counties in NY, NJ and CT. Students were invited to write a 10-minute, one-act play reflecting one of the themes from the story of *Billy Elliot*: pursuing a dream, discovering a special talent or overcoming an obstacle. Fidelity and *Billy Elliot the Musical* worked with education partner Thru The Stage Door to manage the Fidelity FutureStage Playwriting Contest.

For more information, visit www.FutureStage.com.

About Fidelity Investments

Fidelity Investments is one of the world's largest providers of financial services, with assets under administration of \$3.4 trillion, including managed assets of \$1.5 trillion, as of April 30, 2010. Founded in 1946, the firm is a leading provider of investment management, retirement planning, portfolio guidance, brokerage, benefits outsourcing and many other financial products and services to more than 20 million individuals and institutions, as well as through 5,000 financial intermediary firms. For more information about Fidelity Investments, visit www.fidelity.com.

About *Billy Elliot the Musical*

Billy Elliot the Musical, 2009 Tony Award-winning Best Musical and the show *Time Magazine* called “The Best Musical of the Decade,” opened to rave reviews at Broadway's Imperial Theater in November 2008. Based on the critically acclaimed film of 2000, *Billy Elliot* is the joyous celebration of one boy's journey to make his dreams come true. Set in a small town, the story follows Billy as he stumbles out of the boxing ring and into a ballet class, discovering a passion that takes him by surprise, and takes his whole family on an incredibly uplifting adventure. *Billy Elliot*, winner of ten 2009 Tony Awards, is brought to life by the film's original creative team including director Stephen Daldry, choreographer Peter Darling, and writer Lee Hall - joined by music legend Elton John who wrote the score. The show has played to over five million people worldwide since its London premiere in 2005. *Billy Elliot the Musical* is presented by Universal Pictures Stage productions, Working Title Films and Old Vic Productions in association with Weinstein Live Entertainment, based on the Universal Pictures/Studio Canal film. In support of the Fidelity FutureStage Playwriting Contest, *Billy Elliot the Musical* is offering a special ticket rate for students, starting at \$40. Group rates for classes are also available. For more information, visit www.billyelliottbroadway.com

About The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group

Tom Viertel, Richard Frankel, Steven Baruch and Marc Routh over the past 25 years have provided integrated production, management, booking, and marketing services for more than 90 theatrical productions. Their current shows include *A Little Night Music* on Broadway, *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein* on tour, *Stomp* off-Broadway and *Hairspray* on tour in the UK. Previous productions include *The Norman Conquests*, *Gypsy*, *The Producers*, *Company*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Smokey Joe's Café*, *The Weir*, *Angels in America*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Penn and Teller*, *Love Letters*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune* and many others. Upcoming projects include *Leap of Faith* with music and lyrics by Alan Menken and Glenn Slater.

About LeAp

Leap (Learning through an Expanded Arts Program), serving over 200,000 students a year, is a non-profit educational service organization committed to improving the quality of public education through a hands-on, arts-based approach to learning. For the past 31 years, Leap has brought professional artists and educational experts to under-served students in the New York metropolitan area and continues to develop and deliver customized programs to schools, cultural institutions and community based organizations. By training teachers and working with students, Leap's goal is to improve academic performance, cultivate creativity and empower all students to reach their full potential. Leap Executive Director Ila Lane Gross and Associate Executive Director Alice Krieger founded Leap in 1977, after working as educators in NYC, and have expanded Leap from a small, volunteer program in four Manhattan schools to a trusted, quality arts-in-education organization that currently reaches over 300 schools.

###

*Fidelity FutureStage is a community arts education initiative of Fidelity Investments.
Fidelity Investments and Fidelity FutureStage are registered service marks of FMR LLC.
All third party marks appearing herein are the property of their respective owners.*

552615

© 2010 FMR LLC. All rights reserved.