



THE VIERTEL/FRANKEL/BARUCH/ROUTH GROUP



For Immediate Release

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FIDELITY INVESTMENTS PARTNERS WITH THE VIERTEL/FRANKEL/BARUCH/ROUTH GROUP AND LEAP TO LAUNCH

FIDELITY FUTURESTAGEsm

*Landmark Theater Program Brings Arts Education and
Broadway Artists into New York City Schools*

New York, November 17, 2006 – **FIDELITY INVESTMENTS**, in partnership with **THE VIERTEL/FRANKEL/BARUCH/ROUTH GROUP** and **Leap** (Learning through an Expanded Arts Program), today unveiled **Fidelity FutureStagesm**, a comprehensive arts education initiative designed to provide New York City students with an unprecedented opportunity to learn from some of professional theater’s leading playwrights, directors, designers and actors.

As the presenting sponsor of this season’s productions of *Company* and *The Fantasticks*, Fidelity joined The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group in developing this exceptional education outreach initiative. The seven-month program will give more than 800 area students, representing 10 inner-city schools, a unique opportunity to learn from members of the professional theater community and experience the thrill of bringing their creativity and ideas to life on a Broadway stage. Leap, with more than 30 years of experience and expertise in bringing the arts into city classrooms, will take a lead role as liaison with the participating schools.

Program activities will involve playwriting and production workshops, learning set and costume design, working with professional actors to develop acting and audition skills, and attending rehearsals and live performances. All students participating in **Fidelity FutureStagesm** will write and produce their own original plays, 10 of which will be performed at New World Stages on May 21 and 23, 2007.

The goal of **Fidelity FutureStagesm** – to give New York City kids a unique opportunity to develop their passion for the theater arts – draws from the themes of Fidelity’s *Inspire the Future* program, a grassroots outreach initiative dedicated to inspiring future generations of athletes, musicians and artists.

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“**Fidelity FutureStage**sm will give these students extraordinary access and experience working with some of the finest creative talent in professional theater,” said Steve Akin, president of Fidelity Personal Investments. “Utilizing the resources and guidance of our partners at The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group and Leap, we believe this program will grow each year and bring arts education to many kids throughout the city.”

“We are proud and delighted to be associated with **Fidelity FutureStage**sm. We all believe that teaching communication through theater will have a profoundly positive effect on the capabilities and character of every one of the students who participate and will let them see the potential that further involvement in theater might bring,” said Tom Viertel, partner of The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group.

The 10 schools involved in the inaugural **Fidelity FutureStage**sm program were identified with the help of Leap, a non-profit organization committed to improving the quality of public education through a hands-on, arts-based approach to learning. While the participating schools range in location, size, age group and educational focus, they are all dedicated to fostering well-rounded students with an appreciation of the fine arts. **Fidelity FutureStage**sm will provide these students and their teachers with unique learning tools and experiences as they explore their creative talents and interests through the course of the program.

“Leap is thrilled to be providing a program for under-served New York City public school students to write and produce their own original plays,” said Leap Associate Executive Director Alice Krieger. “Through the generosity of Fidelity, students will experience the passion of professional theater artists and participate first-hand in the creative process, becoming motivated in school and actively investing in their own futures.”

Paul King, Director of Theater Programs, New York City Board of Education added, “The **Fidelity FutureStage**sm theater program is a truly innovative initiative that allows New York City middle and high school students access to professional Broadway and off-Broadway theater performances while it also provides significant opportunities for students to create, produce and perform original theater in their own schools. The range of student learning that this project enables is substantial bringing together resources from the professional theater community represented by Richard Frankel Productions and the skill and expertise from a prominent arts partner, Leap. We are grateful for the significant and authentic theater experiences that this project will provide to New York City students.”

Each year 220,000 students from over 300 schools participate in Leap programs, making it one of the largest arts education organizations in New York. Leap will be involved in **Fidelity FutureStage**sm throughout the year, acting as a liaison between the schools and Leap professionals at each partner school as well as the theater professionals coordinated with The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group.

Fidelity FutureStagesm workshops and guest lectures begin immediately, with instructional elements continuing through the 2006-07 school year. The inaugural program concludes in May 2007, culminating in a gala performance of 10 student-written, produced and acted original plays on a Broadway stage, selected by the participating students to represent all 10 **Fidelity FutureStage**sm schools.

Fidelity FutureStagesm Participating Schools

Hillcrest High School (Grades 9-12; located in Queens)
Long Island City High School (9-12; Queens)
Adlai E. Stevenson High School (9-12; Bronx)
JHS 022 Jordan L. Mott (5-8; Bronx)
Enterprise, Business & Technology High School (9-12; Brooklyn)
JHS 050 John D. Wells (5-8; Brooklyn)
JHS 383 Phillippa Schuyler (5-8; Brooklyn)
Louis D. Brandeis High School (9-12; Manhattan)
Baruch College Campus High School (9-12; Manhattan)
A. Philip Randolph Campus High School (9-12; Manhattan)

About Fidelity Investments

Fidelity Investments is one of the world's largest providers of financial services, with custodied assets of more than \$2.7 trillion, including managed assets of \$1.3 trillion as of September 30, 2006. Fidelity offers investment management, retirement planning, brokerage, and human resources and benefits outsourcing services to more than 22 million individuals and institutions as well as through 5,500 financial intermediary firms. The firm is the largest mutual fund company in the United States, the No. 1 provider of workplace retirement savings plans, the largest mutual fund supermarket and a leading online brokerage firm. For more information about Fidelity Investments, visit www.fidelity.com.

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 30 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 Directors Ila Lane Gross and 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.

About The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group

Tom Viertel, Richard Frankel, Steven Baruch and Marc Routh may be the most prolific commercial theatrical producers in the world, with multiple productions currently in New York, London, Las Vegas and Shanghai. Over the past 21 years they have provided integrated production, management, booking, and marketing services for more than 60 theatrical productions. In 2005, shows produced and managed by The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group played 3,943 performances in 179 cities in 44 states and in 18 countries on 5 continents. Their current shows include *The Producers*, *Hairspray* and *Company* on Broadway, *Stomp* and *The Fantasticks* off- Broadway, *Porgy and Bess* and *The Producers* in London, the upcoming productions of *The Producers* and *Stomp* in Las Vegas, *I Love You You're Perfect Now Change* in Mandarin in Shanghai and *The Sound of Music* on tour in China. Previous productions include *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*, *Love Letters*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune* and others. For 2007 their projects include *Leap of Faith* with music and lyrics by Alan Menken and Glenn Slater and a musical based upon *The Hudsucker Proxy* for Broadway, *SpongeBob SquarePants*, *The Musical* in Singapore, *42nd Street* in Beijing and *The King and I* Asian tour beginning in Shenzhen, China.

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