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# FIDELITY FUTURESTAGE®

## NYC STUDENTS MAKE OFF-BROADWAY DEBUT IN FIDELITY FUTURESTAGE® FINALE HOSTED BY PETER GALLAGHER

### *Samuel French Publishes Fidelity FutureStage Playwrights*

NEW YORK, June 2, 2008 – **FIDELITY INVESTMENTS®**, in partnership with **THE VIERTEL/FRANKEL/BARUCH/ROUTH GROUP** and **LEAP (Learning through an Expanded Arts Program)**, proudly presents the Fidelity FutureStage finale performances on June 2 and 3 at New World Stages. After seven months of intensive playwriting and production development, 10 student-written plays will debut over the two nights, showcasing the work of more than 600 participating New York City students. Special guest **Peter Gallagher** (*The Country Girl*, “The O.C.”) will host Opening Night, Monday, June 2.

In addition to making their off-Broadway debut, the **Fidelity FutureStage** student playwrights will receive an additional surprise. Fidelity will announce Monday evening that **Samuel French** will be publishing and copywriting the 10 plays being performed over the two night event. Founded in 1830, Samuel French is the premier play and musical publishing and licensing company serving the Broadway community. These young students will be among impressive company, as published playwrights whose work has been performed onstage in New York’s famed Theater District.

Now in its second full year, Fidelity FutureStage is a comprehensive arts education initiative that provides a unique playwriting and production curriculum for students at 10 underserved inner-city schools. The year-long program affords these students the opportunity to learn from some of the theater community’s leading playwrights, directors, designers and actors and ultimately experience the thrill of bringing their own creativity to life on a professional stage.

Students, ages 12-19, have participated in over 1,000 hours of classroom workshops and theater visits. Instruction has covered disciplines including play writing, acting, production and design led by Leap teaching artists and special guests such as: **Kathleen Marshall** (*GREASE!*), **Lin-Manuel Miranda** (*In the Heights*), **Charles Dutton** (*The Piano Lesson*), **Chazz Palminteri** (*A Bronx Tale*), **S. Epatha Merkerson** (*Come Back Little Sheba*, “Law & Order”), **Jerry Zaks** (*Caine Mutiny Court-Martial*, *Little Shop of Horrors*), **Roger Bart** (*Young Frankenstein*, “Desperate Housewives”), **Laura Osnes** (*GREASE!*), **Quiara Alegria Hudes** (*In the Heights*) and **Judine Somerville** (*Hairspray*). Additional supporters include **Liev Schreiber**, **Vanessa Williams**, **John Lithgow**, **Frankie Faison** and **William Ivey Long**.

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This inspiring celebrity support, along with field trips to see Broadway shows including *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein*, *A Bronx Tale*, *In the Heights*, *GREASE* and *Come Back, Little Sheba*, has complemented the ongoing curriculum that is the foundation of the Fidelity FutureStage program. Leap professional teaching artists have worked closely with classroom teachers at each school, leading classes that started last fall in playwriting and character development, with each participating student writing their own original play. Additional classes focusing on casting, acting, set construction, costume design and technical elements such as lighting and sound, aided in developing the student-written plays. This spring, one play from each of the ten Fidelity FutureStage schools was selected to move to full production. Students then worked together to cast, rehearse, direct, design and produce the plays for the final event at New World Stages.

The ten plays selected for this year's finale cover a range of topics including broken family relationships, overcoming personal tragedy, involvement in illegal drugs, the impact of Alzheimer's disease, life-changing choices and the importance of friend-ship and loyalty.

### **FIDELITY FUTURESTAGE PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS, PLAYS AND PLAYWRIGHTS**

- Adlai E. Stevenson High School (Bronx)  
*Man on a Mission*, Juan Rivera (age 16, 11<sup>th</sup> grade) and Kymoni Prescott (age 18, 12<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Millennium Art Academy and School for Community Research and Learning (Bronx)  
*In Search of Euphoria*, Trisha Alam (age 19, 12<sup>th</sup> grade) and Hector Lopez (age 17, 12<sup>th</sup> grade)
- JHS 22X, Jordan L. Mott (Bronx)  
*Rollin' in Gold*, Stephen Bolling (age 14, 7<sup>th</sup> grade)
- JHS 383K, Phillippa Schuyler (Brooklyn)  
*Just B Urself, I Can B That 2*, Erica Gayle (age 14, 8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- The High School for Enterprise, Business and Technology (Brooklyn)  
*Street Walker*, Nicholas Muniz (age 18, 12<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Hillcrest High School (Queens)  
*Relationships*, Sukhjot Kaur (age 17, 11<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Long Island City High School (Queens)  
*What's His Name?*, Claudia Irusta (age 16, 11<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Forest Hills High School (Queens)  
*In Your Head*, Sarah Schlesinger (age 15, 9<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Manhattan East School for Arts and Academics (MS 224) (Manhattan)  
*Through Each Line of Pain and Glory*, Torin Barnes (age 13, 8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- High School of the Arts and Technology at MLK Campus (Manhattan)  
*Sacrifices for Life*, Carissa Handiman and Stephany Santana (both age 16, 10<sup>th</sup> grade)

As the presenting sponsor of the current Broadway production of *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein*, and recent productions of *Company* (2006-07), *The Fantasticks* (2006-07, Off-Broadway) and *Sweeney Todd* (2005-06), Fidelity first collaborated with The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group in developing Fidelity FutureStage in 2006.

Leap, with more than 30 years of experience and expertise in bringing the arts into city classrooms, worked closely with Fidelity and The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group to select the 10 schools participating in Fidelity FutureStage this year, and has acted as liaison with school administrators throughout the program.

***For more information about Fidelity FutureStage, visit [WWW.FUTURESTAGE.COM](http://WWW.FUTURESTAGE.COM).***

### **About Fidelity Investments**

Fidelity Investments is one of the world's largest providers of financial services, with custodied assets of more than \$3.3 trillion, including managed assets of more than \$1.5 trillion as of April 30, 2008. Fidelity offers investment management, retirement planning, brokerage, and human resources and benefits outsourcing services to 24 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](http://www.fidelity.com).

### **About The Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group**

Tom Viertel, Richard Frankel, Steven Baruch and Marc Routh are among the most prolific commercial theatrical producers in the world, with multiple productions currently in New York, on tour in North America, in London, in Las Vegas and in Asia. Over the past 23 years they have provided integrated production, management, booking, and marketing services for more than 60 theatrical productions. Their current shows include The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein, *Gypsy and Hairspray* on Broadway, *Stomp* off-Broadway, a North American tour of *Sweeney Todd, Hairspray* in London, *Stomp* in Las Vegas, and *42nd Street* in English on tour in Asia. Previous productions include *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. For 2009 their projects include *Leap of Faith* with music and lyrics by Alan Menken and Glenn Slater, a musical based upon *The Hudsucker Proxy* and *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* on Broadway; *SpongeBob SquarePants: The Musical* in the United Kingdom and Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* in Asia.

### **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.

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