



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SAN JOSE REPERTORY THEATRE RECEIVES STARBUCKS FOUNDATION
GRANT FOR ITS
AWARD-WINNING RED LADDER THEATRE COMPANY**

SAN JOSE, Calif.—August 18, 2006—San Jose Repertory Theatre is proud to announce the award-winning Red Ladder Theatre Company, the Rep’s primary educational and community outreach program, has received a grant of \$10,000 from the Starbucks Foundation’s Arts & Literacy Program. With more than 1,600 applicants, Red Ladder is one of six Bay Area organizations to receive funding and one of 82 nationally. This grant will enable Red Ladder to continue its efforts of reaching over 1,600 at-risk youth annually. The amount will underwrite direct costs of employing and training professional artists to work with Red Ladder participants throughout Santa Clara County from September 1, 2006-August 31, 2007.

“We are delighted to be acknowledged by Starbucks Foundation for the value that Red Ladder brings to the disenfranchised members of our community,” said Director of Outreach and Red Ladder Theatre Company Karen Atree Piemme. “We empower the imaginations of our participants, thereby empowering the individuals themselves – giving them the tools to create positive change in their own lives. This is why we refer to Red Ladder as ‘a rehearsal for a healthy life.’”

Over the last 14 years, Red Ladder has served thousands of at-risk participants of varying ages and ethnicities, of which 83% are considered low income (household income for a family of

four is less than \$30,895 per year) throughout Santa Clara County. Founded in 1992 on the premise that creativity and engagement are the keys to personal achievement and individual well-being, Red Ladder uses tools and techniques of improvisational theatre to empower its participants. Youth explore, test and internalize positive solutions to problems that hinder their healthy emotional, mental and social development, giving them ample opportunities to play, invent, express, learn and create in a safe and supportive environment.

By partnering with organizations who share the same mission of serving the community, such as HOPE Rehabilitation Services, Morgan Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders and The Foundry School-an alternative high school for at-risk youth, Red Ladder Theatre Company continues its proven track record for providing highly at-risk youth with the resources to effectively overcome the socioeconomic, academic and cultural barriers that seriously threaten their health and social development.

The power of the performing arts to transform people's lives has been well documented in the past several decades. Red Ladder Theatre Company's program is in keeping with the groundbreaking findings of such renowned researchers as Shirley Brice Heath, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Getty Center for Education in the Arts and the National Cultural Alliance. The Search Institute's Forty Developmental Assets for healthy development align with the core of Red Ladder's stated program objectives. These studies have indicated that the performing arts are an effective and universal tool for achieving academic excellence and overcoming cultural and socioeconomic barriers.

A decade-long study by researchers from Stanford University and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has shown that arts programs – above all athletic, academic, and community service groups studied – provide youth across all cultural and socio-economic barriers with the most comprehensive range of opportunities for positive and lasting personal development.

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About San Jose Repertory Theatre

Under the direction of Artistic Director Timothy Near and Interim Managing Director Nick Nichols, San Jose Repertory Theatre stimulates, celebrates and enhances understanding of ourselves and others through the shared experience of live theater by producing new plays and classics marked by innovative interpretations and a reflection and inclusion of our community and the world in which we live. During the nine seasons since moving into their new home in 1997, the Rep continues to strive to be a major contributor to the national body of theatre literature and to produce theater with an optimistic, humanist and enlightened aesthetic. For more information, visit us at www.SJRep.com

About the Starbucks Foundation

Since its inception in 1997, The Starbucks Foundation has awarded over \$12 million to more than 700 literacy and youth organizations throughout the United States and Canada. These grants provide organizations support in the development of innovative learning opportunities for youth in arts and literacy and environmental education. The Starbucks Foundation supports programs for youth, ages 6-18, that integrate literacy with personal and civic action in the communities where we live. Funding for the Foundation has come mostly from Starbucks Coffee Company and also from individual donations. This is one element of Starbucks continuing efforts to give back to its communities.