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Media Contact:
Ed Weirauch
302-528-8847
edweirauch@earthlink.net

**Dancer Judith Jamison to be honored by
the Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia**

Ailey II dancers to perform at awards luncheon

PHILADELPHIA, PA – April 24, 2009 Judith Jamison, the artistic director of the world-renowned Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and a Philadelphia native, will receive the newly named Anne d’Harnoncourt Award for Artistic Excellence at the Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia’s 26th Annual Awards Luncheon on Friday, May 15.

Members of Ailey II, will perform during the event to be held at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia and sponsored by TD Bank. Part of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ailey II is universally renowned for merging the spirit and energy of the country's best young dance talent with the passion and creative vision of today's most outstanding emerging choreographers

“Judith Jamison is one of our Philadelphia stars and we are thrilled to recognize and honor her talent,” says Karen B. Davis, President and CEO of the Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia (www.arts&businessphila.org). “She’s a world-renowned performer who is a source of great pride for the Philadelphia region.”

Jamison was born in Philadelphia, attended the Philadelphia Dance Academy and graduated from Germantown High School in 1961. Three years later she made her New York debut with the American Ballet Theatre. In 1965 Jamison became a member of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and was chosen by Ailey himself to succeed him in 1989.

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, has been recognized by the US Congress as a vital “American Cultural Ambassador to the World.” One of the most renowned figures in modern dance, Jamison has led the Ailey organization to new heights with the opening of a permanent home in New York City - the nation's largest building for dance. Dedicated to asserting the prominence of the arts in our culture, Jamison is an author, a recipient of a primetime Emmy Award as well as many of the nation's most prestigious honors given to artists. For more information, visit www.alvinailey.org.

This year, the Anne d'Harnoncourt Award that Jamison will receive has been named in honor of the former director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, who served in that position from 1982 until her sudden death last June.

“Anne d’Harnoncourt’s talent and work with the Art Museum has been instrumental in putting Philadelphia at the top of the list of this country’s leading art destinations,” says Davis. “She was a leading figure in our arts community for over 25 years and we are thrilled to commemorate Anne’s efforts and accomplishments with this award.”

In addition to Ms Jamison, five business people will be honored for their arts volunteerism in the Philadelphia region, one person will be recognized for his broad arts support, and two arts and business partnerships will be honored at the luncheon. The honorees are profiled at <http://makeartyourbusiness.wordpress.com>

About the Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia

An affiliate of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce since 1981, the Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia develops relationships between business and the arts for the mutual benefit of both and in support of the advancement of the Greater Philadelphia Region. For more information, please visit www.artsandbusinessphila.org or call 215.790.3620.

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