

sandra feinstein-



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### COMMUNITY INVESTMENT KEY TO GAMM'S FINANCIAL SUCCESS Theater Closes Fiscal Year in Black

PAWTUCKET, RI (August 7, 2008) — **Artistic Director Tony Estrella** is pleased to announce that The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre (The Gamm) has closed its **sixth consecutive fiscal year in the black**, crediting **community investment** with the organization's success. The professional non-profit theater's **\$1,233,624** in support from ticket sales, grants and gifts exceeded its expenses during the fiscal year that ended June 30 for a net of **\$30,370**. The figure represents an almost 14% increase compared to \$1,082,700 in support at the end of the previous fiscal year. Additionally, **Gamm Board President Coline Covington** announced that **Estrella** and **Gamm Managing Director Yvonne Seggerman** recently signed **new 3-year contracts** with the organization.

"In serving the City of Pawtucket, the Blackstone Valley and the larger Southeastern New England region, **The Gamm has built relationships based on a mutual desire to foster a community of engaged citizens, rather than passive audiences,**" Estrella said.

Seggerman, who also serves as president of Rhode Island Citizens for the Arts, noted that "investment in the community is central to The Gamm's mission and key to our successful operation," adding "The arts are **integral to the intellectual, emotional and economic health of any community.**"

Last season alone, The Gamm was privileged to partner with such non-profit organizations as **VSA arts RI, Leadership Rhode Island, Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, Brown University, URI, Trinity Rep, WBRU, WRNI (NPR), Rhode Island PBS, RI Citizens for the Arts, Arts & Business Council of Rhode Island, Pawtucket Arts Festival, Pawtucket Armory Association, ECAS Theater** and **New England GreenStart** (People's Power & Light).

The Gamm also experienced increased demand and diversified financial support for its two-year-old **Pawtucket Literacy and Arts for Youth (PLAY) program**, cementing its vital role in its home community. **PLAY** includes in-school residencies, artist-teacher partnerships and after-school drama programs under the direction of **Gamm Education Director and Resident Actor Steve Kidd**, winner of a prestigious **2008 National Child Labor Committee's Lewis Hine Award**.

The supplementary arts and literacy programming was offered **free of charge** to the city's middle and high schools through support from a variety of local and national foundations, as well as corporate sources including: **Carter Family Charitable Trust** (\$25,000); **National Endowment for the Arts, MetLife Foundation** (\$10,000 each); **Horton Charity Fund** (\$8,500); **Amica Companies Foundation** (\$7,500); **McAdams Charitable Foundation, June Rockwell Levy Foundation, Verizon Foundation** (\$5,000 each); **Ocean State Charities Trust** (\$4,500); **City of Pawtucket Planning and Redevelopment Department/Community Development Block Grant** (\$4,290); **Rhode Island Council for the Humanities** (\$4,200); **Rhode Island State Council on the Arts** (\$4,000); **Hassenfeld Foundation** (\$2,500) and **Pawtucket Credit Union** (\$2,000).

**PLAY's** after-school **WORD!** project comprising students from adjacent **Tolman High School** and **Jacqueline M. Walsh School for the Performing and Visual Arts** produced **Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet** in December and a student adaptation of **Antoine de Saint Exupéry's "The Little Prince"** in May. The two shows were attended by over 700 students, teachers, family members and community supporters.

Additionally, ongoing **student matinee performances supplemented by curriculum-based study guides** allowed **PLAY** participants as well as middle- and high-school students across the region to experience live professional theater **free of charge or at significantly reduced prices.**

**Other highlights of the past season include:**

- Significant ongoing operating and artistic programming support came from **The Rhode Island Foundation, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, City of Pawtucket, Danielle and Michael Haxton Family Fund, Citizens Bank Foundation, Shubert Foundation, Alice I. Sullivan Foundation of Collette Vacations and Bank of America Foundation.**
- **The Boston Theatre Critics Association** honored The Gamm with its **first Elliot Norton Award. Paul Grellong's *Radio Free Emerson***, The Gamm's first-ever commission, won in the category of "**Outstanding New Script**," a year after its world premiere in May 2007. The award followed The Gamm's first Norton Award nomination.
- Individual donors **surpassed by almost \$10,000** a year-end challenge issued by a coalition of supporters who pledged to match up to \$25,000 "dollar for dollar." This remarkable show of support enabled The Gamm to finish the fiscal year with a balanced budget.
- Subscriptions to Season 23 (2007-08) reached 1,853, or **12% over seating goal and 9% over dollar goal.**
- Every production of The Gamm's 5-play season exceeded its sales goal and played to houses filled to an **average 96% capacity.**

**About The Gamm Theatre**

Founded in 1984 as Alias Stage, the nonprofit **Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre** performs great works of the classic and modern theater in an intimate setting that fosters the vital relationship between author, actor and audience. The Gamm seeks to engage and enrich the community through affordable entertainment and educational programming. The Gamm is a member of **New England Area Theatre (NEAT)**, a bargaining unit of the Actors Equity Association.