



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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THE LAUREL FUND SELECTS SIX NEW GRANTEES FOR A TOTAL OF TWELVE FOR 2003-2004

Washington, D.C. – THE LAUREL FUND for the performing arts begins its fourth year of awarding tuition scholarships with the announcement of six new grantees for 2003-2004. At a performance and orientation program this afternoon at the Martin Luther King Library, Laurel Fund founder and president, Elvi Moore, introduced the new and returning grantees to an audience of family, friends, instructors, Laurel Fund Board, Advisory Committee and donors. Nominated by their instructors, the new grantees are OLIVIER FLORESCU (violin), KEZIAH JOHN-PAUL (theater), ISAIAH MCLEAN (flute), ARMAND RICE (voice), WILLIAM ROBINSON (modern dance), and JAN STONEMAN (piano).

THE LAUREL FUND for the performing arts has three primary goals: to promote all the performing arts and make each accessible to all segments of the community; to encourage, nurture and financially assist deserving young artists from the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area; and to instill in these young artists the spirit of giving back to the community.

Young artists who receive financial aid from The Laurel Fund are obligated to participate in Laurel Fund arranged performances at senior citizen homes, shelters, recovery centers and other venues where the residents are unable to attend performances at a theater and where entertainment rarely comes to their location. In addition to performing, the Laurel Fund young artists learn to talk about their art form and interact with their audience. The Laurel Fund believes that these community service performances are mutually gratifying and that additionally, the young artists strengthen their performance and communication skills.

At this afternoon's program, Elvi Moore said, " With the addition of this year's new grantees, The LAUREL FUND for the performing arts is proud to have awarded 47 scholarships in its first four years. On behalf of the Board of the Laurel Fund and its Advisory Committee, I congratulate this

year's new grantees and welcome back the six continuing from last year. We hope to nurture their artistic growth as they continue their studies and perform around the Washington, D.C. community. I am confident that their performances will bring pleasure to their audiences, and that the grantees will derive a great sense of pride and accomplishment from them. In our first three years, Laurel Fund grantees have performed for 38 area venues including Calvary Women's Shelter, Beacon Community Center, Madison's Women's Shelter, Shalom/Jeremiah House, Veterans' Hospital, JB Johnson Nursing Center and New Endeavors for Women. This year's first community service outing will be Sunday November 2 at the Capitol Hill Nursing Center and the Christian Community Group House."

Continuing grantees from last year are: BUSHRA ELSAYED, 16, of Washington, D.C. who attends Woodrow Wilson High School and studies the saxophone with Fred Foss. LAUREN NIXON, 16, of Silver Spring, MD, is a junior at Albert Einstein High School and is studying dance at the Bethesda Academy of Performing Arts. HERBERT SCOTT, 17, OF Washington, D.C., attends the Duke Ellington School of the Arts and studies the saxophone at the Levine School of Music. JONATHAN SOTHERN, 17, of Ft. Washington, MD, attends Friendly High School and studies percussion at the Levine School of Music. JOSEPH SOTHERN, 17, of Ft. Washington, MD, is Jonathan's twin and is also a senior at Friendly High School. He studies the piano at the Levine School of Music in Washington, D.C.

The new grantees for 2003-2004 are: OLIVIER FLORESCU, 10, of Bethesda, MD, who is in the fifth grade at Seven Locks School. He studies the violin with Zina Gendel. KEZIAH JOHN-PAUL, 10, of Washington, D.C., is a sixth grader at Murch Elementary School. She will continue studying theater at Washington D.C.'s Studio Theatre. ISAIAH MCLEAN, 12, of Silver Spring, MD, is in the seventh grade at Francis Scott Key Middle School. He studies the flute with Fred Foss. ARMAND RICE, 15, lives in Capitol Heights, MD, and is home-schooled. He will study voice at the James Weldon Johnson Community School of the Arts in Washington, D.C. WILLIAM ROBINSON, 18, lives in Washington, D.C., and is a senior at Georgetown Day School. He studies modern dance at the The Dance Institute of Washington. JAN STONEMAN, 12, of Washington, D.C. is in the seventh grade at Alice Deal Middle School. He studies the piano at the Washington Conservatory of Music.

For more information on THE LAUREL FUND for the performing arts, please visit our website at www.thelaurelfund.org, contact Program Administrator, Kitty Heflin, by phone at (301) 215-7762, by fax at (301) 215-9818, or by e-mail at kheflin@thelaurelfund.org.