



For Immediate Release
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Ferris School For Boys Honored as Co-Recipient of Theatre Award for New Approaches to Collaboration

WILMINGTON – A collaborative partnership between the Delaware Children’s Department’s Ferris School for Boys and the Delaware Theatre Company was recently recognized when they were presented with an award for *New Approaches to Collaboration* at the 2009 Barrymore Awards for Excellence in Theatre in Philadelphia.

“For over a decade, the Delaware Children’s Department has collaborated with the Delaware Theatre Company (DTC) to provide Theatre Arts experiences for the young men at Ferris School,” explained Vivian Rapposelli, Cabinet Secretary. “The *Art Across the Curriculum* Program, funded by the Division of the Arts, involves the sharing and learning of the academic content area using art strategy, which allows our students to become more aware and appreciative of the arts.”

One successful project was the “No Child...” play, about a teacher struggling to draw out the talents of her resistant students. Teaching artist and actor Kevin Ramsey spent time helping the young men at Ferris express themselves by focusing on the themes of the play. Students were encouraged to tell their stories – how they got to Ferris, their dreams and aspirations for their lives; all through whatever language-based artistic medium spoke to them (spoken word, rap and song). The end result was a “verbal graffiti” that became an integral part of the soundtrack for the final production seen by more than 5,000 community members.

“Although the students were not able to attend the performance at the theatre, DTC overcame this unusual challenge by bringing the production to the students,” said Dolores Allen-McIntyre, Ferris School Principal. “They literally transformed the Ferris gymnasium into a theatre and had a truly captivated audience.”

The theatre production of *No Child...* received a total of six nominations from the Barrymore Awards for Excellence in Theatre, including a nomination for “New Approaches to Collaboration” for their work with Ferris. The award ceremony was held on Monday, October 5th at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, where it was announced that DTC and Ferris were the recipients of the Collaboration award.

Named in honor of the famed Philadelphia-based first family of theatre, the Barrymore Awards are the regions’ only comprehensive theatre awards. They celebrate the tenets that a cohesive arts community is a vital arts community; that the individual artist is the backbone of every vibrant theatre organization; and that theatergoers need to know more about the diversity and quality of the Philadelphia theatre community.

On any given day, the Delaware Children’s Department provides services to children who have been abused, neglected, abandoned, dependent, or have mental health or substance abuse problems, and/or have been adjudicated delinquent by the Courts. Our Office of Child Care Licensing gives licenses to over 1,700 child care providers. For more information, please visit <http://www.kids.delaware.gov> or www.thinkofthechildfirst.com.

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