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**Theatre Communications Group Celebrates
Sixth Annual Free Night of Theater
October 1 – October 31, 2010**

New York, NY – Theatre Communication Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, is proud to announce the sixth annual *Free Night of Theater*, which will launch in more than 23 states around the country from October 1, 2010 through October 31, 2010.

Free Night of Theater is an unprecedented audience development initiative, where theaters across the country offer the public tickets to live performances absolutely free-of-charge. The goal of *Free Night of Theater*, introduced by TCG as a three-city pilot-program in 2005, is to increase public awareness of, and to attract new and non-traditional audiences to, theaters in communities across the U.S.

“Over the past five years, we have laid the foundation for a program that not only resonates locally, but also unites and galvanizes the national theatre community in celebration for the work that we do,” said Teresa Eyring, Executive Director of TCG. “Our partners around the country have refined and expanded *Free Night* in their regional markets to provide a richer and more targeted program that successfully reaches new audiences.”

Last year, 120 cities from coast to coast participated in Free Night, and 714 theatres offered over 65,000 tickets to more than 2,000 performances. Over the past five years the *Free Night of Theater* program has, introduced almost 200,000 new theatergoers to the thrill of live performance.

“Stagecrafters will offer one night of free theater to encourage new adult patrons, and one night of youth theater for families who have children with special needs, ” said Lesley Braden-Phillips, Development Director of Stagecrafters, a community theatre in Royal Oak, MI. “Now more than ever, people in the state of Michigan need to rediscover the magic of live theatre. We want to make this opportunity a celebration of performing arts.”

The patron demographics and post program theatre going habits have remained consistent throughout the five years of the program. *Free Night* continues to have a proven track record of attracting non-traditional theatre audiences including infrequent theatre attendees, young people, the less educated, non-white and those with lower household income. Specifically, in 2009, 77% of the patrons attended a theatre they had never been to before, 37% were under the age of 35, 29% had less than a college degree, 24% were non-white, and 37% had combined household incomes under \$50,000.

“The Minnesota Theater Alliance is working with theaters across the entire state in its first major initiative as a new alliance, and is targeting students and people temporarily out of work to participate in the Free Night program,” said Leah Cooper, Program Director of the Minnesota Theater Alliance.

Free Night of Theater will take place from October 1st - October 31, 2010. Tickets started going live on September 20. Tickets release dates vary by region. **For more information and to obtain tickets, visit the Free Night of Theater web site at www.freenightoftheater.net.**

Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, exists to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre. Founded in 1961, TCG’s constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to nearly 700 member theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 12,000 individuals nationwide. TCG offers its members networking and knowledge-building opportunities through conferences, events, research and communications; awards grants, approximately \$2 million per year, to theatre companies and individual artists; advocates on the federal level; and serves as the US Center of the International Theatre Institute, connecting its constituents to the global theatre community. TCG is the nation’s largest independent publisher of dramatic literature, with 11 Pulitzer Prizes for Best Play on the TCG booklist. It also publishes the award-winning AMERICAN THEATRE magazine and ARTSEARCH®, the essential source for a career in the arts. In all of its endeavors, TCG seeks to increase the organizational efficiency of its member theatres, cultivate and celebrate the artistic talent and achievements of the field and promote a larger public understanding of, and appreciation for, the theatre.

In 2005, TCG received the Tony Honors for Excellence in Theatre in recognition of its impact on the national field. TCG and its member theatres are major contributors to the American theatre sector, which employs nearly 130,000 people, produces more than 187,000 performances each year and contributes \$1.9 billion to the US economy annually. A 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, TCG is led by executive director Teresa Eyring and governed by a national board of directors representing the theatre field. www.tcg.org.

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