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APPLICANTS SOUGHT FOR 2010 RISING STAR EMERGING PERFORMING ARTIST AWARD OF \$5,000!

Ellicott City, MD – The Howard County Arts Council is a private, non-profit organization that serves Howard County by fostering the arts, artists, and arts organizations. HCAC is accepting applications for the 2010 Rising Star Performing Artist Professional Development Award. Applications can be requested from the Arts Council by calling 410-313-2787 or info@hocoarts.org. Applications are also available for downloading on www.hocoarts.org. The early no-fee application deadline is October 31, 2009. Applications submitted between November 1st and the final deadline of December 1st require the payment of a \$10 application fee.

The Rising Star Award competition is open to individual performers, ages 18-35, who live, train, work, or perform regularly in Howard County or have done so in the past. Review criteria include artistic expression, technical ability, and stage presence. Up to ten selected finalists will perform at the Arts Council's annual benefit gala, *Celebration of the Arts in Howard County*, on the evening of April 24, 2010. The event audience of over 700 artists, arts patrons, business and political representatives, and other community members will then vote for their favorite performer. The winner of the popular vote will receive the \$5,000 Rising Star Emerging Performing Artist Award on stage that night.

The Rising Star Award was established by the Arts Council in 2003 to provide opportunities for emerging performing artists with roots in Howard County and to assist them in the development and practice of their art. The goals of the Rising Star Award are: to encourage professional development in all performing arts disciplines, to recognize individual achievement in the performing arts, to support performing artists with strong ties to Howard County, and to provide a venue for artists through a performance of award finalists.

Past Winners: 2009 winner, DeWanda Wise, a Maryland Distinguished Scholar of the Arts, attended Altholton High School and received her BFA at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Upon graduation she received a Tisch Scholar award, the Atlantic Studio Award, and served as the BFA Representative of her graduating class. Presently she works in film, theatre, and television. Favorite roles include Abigail of the acclaimed play *In the Continuum* and Julianna of NBC's *One Life to Live*. DeWanda is also committed to community, working with many NYC area organizations on issues of human rights. Dancer Alicia Graf, the 2003 Rising Star Award winner, grew up in Columbia and received her dance training under Donna Pidel at the Ballet Royale Academy. At the age of seventeen she moved to New York City. Graf toured with the Dance Theatre of Harlem, graduated from Columbia University and, in 2005, joined the prestigious Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. 2004 Rising Star winner, actress/singer Carly Hughes, graduated from Wilde Lake High School, received her BFA in Musical Theatre from Penn State University. She is the recipient of a 2003 Princess Grace Scholarship and Grace Le Vine Theatre Award, to honor outstanding achievement in dramatic arts. Clarinetist Mark Dubac won the award in 2005. The Atholton High School and Julliard School graduate recently received his Master's degree at the University of Wisconsin's Peck School of the Arts and is working toward a professional orchestral career. 2006 marked the first year that three winners were selected: singer Korey Jackson, cellist Caleb Jones, and pianist Alex Brown. Violinist Tao Chang Yu, actress/singer Caroline Bowman and actor/singer Phil Olejack were 2007's winners. In 2008, pianist Alexander Francis, singer Colleen Daly and monologist Courtney Bell received awards.

For more information and eligibility requirements, call 410-313-ARTS (2787) or visit www.hocoarts.org.

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The Howard County Arts Council is a non-profit organization whose mission is to serve the citizens of Howard County by fostering the arts, artists and arts organizations. The Howard County Arts Council receives major grants from the Howard County Government and the Maryland State Arts Council and sustaining annual support from corporate, foundation and individual sponsors. Howard County Arts Council offices are located at the Howard County Center for the Arts, 8510 High Ridge Road, Ellicott City, MD 21043. The Howard County Center for the Arts is an accessible facility encouraging the full participation of individuals with disabilities. For information, call 410.313.ARTS (2787), fax 410.313.2790, or email info@hocoarts.org. TDD: 711