

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JustStories Festival - Bridging Cultures Through Stories and Entertainment

Evanston, IL – March 23, 2007 – At a time when it seems more important than ever to understand different cultures and worldviews, the 5th annual JustStories Storytelling Festival offers an easy and fun way to learn about and celebrate our differences and similarities. Presented on April 14, 2007 at the Divine World International Conference Center at Techny in Northbrook, IL from 9 am- 6:30 pm, the festival (for ages high school through adult) will cover subjects such as:

- A family's survival in the Japanese-American internment camps
- Christian and Muslim similarities and differences
- A Bosnian woman's survival and triumph during the war
- Children and their connection to the Holocaust
- Immigration and what it is like to straddle two cultures

JustStories is the only Storytelling Festival in the country that covers exclusively such social justice themes as ethnic identity, immigration, race relations and the dance between Insiders and Outsiders. This year's featured tellers are: Arif Choudhury, Antonio Rocha, Anne Shimojima, Arianna Ross and Susan O'Halloran all of whom will tell stories about or from their ancestral homes in Bangladesh, Brazil, Japan, Russia and Ireland. In addition to storytelling performances, morning workshops emphasize:

- how to pay attention to the body language of audiences and in every day interactions, especially when dealing with multiple cultures
- how to bring characters to life and explore a "zillion" sound effects to break through inhibitions, open your expression and project confidence.

- more -

As well as morning workshops and an afternoon of storytelling, there will be a BridgeBuilder Award luncheon and a re-dedication of the Techny Peace Pole. This year the Chicago Province of the Society of the Divine Word is honored to present the 2007 BridgeBuilder Award to five outstanding Northbrook public school teachers for their excellence in enlarging and enriching the boundaries of their students' minds, lives and spirits. They are Jerome Hoynes of Glenbrook North High School, Motria Melnyk of Meadowbrook Elementary School, Carol Hillsberg of Wood Oaks Junior High School (Retired), Jean Steinberger of Wood Oaks Junior High School (Retired) and Becky Recor of Wood Oaks Junior High School (Retired).

All are honored for their outstanding achievements in bringing their students into contact with people and worldviews very different from their own. These teachers have enabled their students to experience bridges of dialog, understanding and cooperation with new peoples and worlds.

People are encouraged to attend the full JustStories day, but may also attend a half-day session or the BridgeBuilder luncheon alone. Tickets can be bought on-line at www.racebridges.net/juststories or by calling 312-234-9839.

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Photos available

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