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Skylight receives \$250,000 in challenge funds

Milwaukee, WI (Feb. 1, 2010) – The Skylight Opera Theatre is pleased to announce that it has received gifts from nine generous donors to create a challenge fund of \$250,000. The challenge fund will match dollar-for-dollar new money from first-time or increased gifts to its 50th anniversary campaign. To date the Skylight has raised \$120,000 toward matching the \$250,000.

“We are so excited that these generous donors have the confidence in the Skylight to create this challenge fund,” said Amy Jensen, the Skylight’s managing director. “The combination of the challenge fund and the matching new or increased gifts is already enabling us to make great strides in stabilizing our financial situation. Our goal is to get the Skylight back on solid financial footing so we can honor this generous support by continuing to offer the high quality music theatre productions and free arts education programming the community has come to expect.”

In addition to this challenge fund, the Skylight received a generous gift of \$60,000 from the Richard and Ethel Herzfeld Foundation to support general operations and the Skylight’s arts-in-education program *Enlighten*.

“The extraordinary support we are receiving from the community confirms that the Skylight is a valued asset,” said John Stollenwerk, the Skylight’s Board President. “We still have a lot of work to do, but we are definitely making significant progress. The generosity of these challenge fund donors and the Richard and Ethel Herzfeld Foundation is crucial to the turnaround of the Skylight. We are grateful for their support and leadership.”

The Skylight Opera Theatre owns and operates the Broadway Theatre Center at 158 N. Broadway in the Historic Third Ward. The Broadway Theatre Center also provides performance and/or offices space for the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Milwaukee Children’s Choir, Bel Canto Chorus and Present Music.

The Skylight recently announced it received a \$160,000 grant from The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation for much needed repairs to the building.

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Skylight Opera Theatre is a nationally recognized producer of the full-spectrum of Music Theatre.

The Skylight is proud to be a cornerstone member of the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF), which provides major annual financial support. Through community support of the United Performing Arts Fund, UPAF Member and Affiliate Groups are able to provide education and outreach to over 400,000 children, provide over 2,000 live performances and reach over 1,000,000 people every year. When everyone supports the arts through UPAF, they help our local economy, improving education and strengthening outreach programs to the disabled and elderly - all while adding culture to their own life. Support of UPAF is critical to UPAF Member Groups' ability to continue to offer exceptional live performances, award-winning education and outreach programming and substantial economic impact to our region. To learn more about UPAF or to donate, go to www.upaf.org.

The Skylight is supported in part by grants from the NEA, Wisconsin Arts Board, the City of Milwaukee Arts Board, and CAMPAC. The Skylight is a member of OPERA America; Visit Milwaukee; Historic Third Ward Association; Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin; Theatre Wisconsin; Cultural Alliance and a cultural partner of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra's Arts in Community Education (ACE) Program. This theater is an equal opportunity employer. Except in plays where race itself is an issue, casting is decided based on ability, not race.