



BLACK
ENSEMBLE
THEATER

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BLACK ENSEMBLE THEATER RECEIVES \$75,000 GRANT FROM THE JOYCE FOUNDATION TO SUPPORT LEADERSHIP HIRE FOR NEW CULTURAL CENTER

Funds Allocated to Support the Salary of the New General Manager Position

CHICAGO – May 10, 2011 – Jackie Taylor, Founder and Executive Director of **Black Ensemble Theater**, is thrilled to announce that the Theater has received a one-time grant of \$75,000 from Chicago's **The Joyce Foundation**, which works to encourage cultural organizations to serve and represent Chicago's diverse population and foster the development of new works in dance, music, theater and visual arts by artists of color. This one-time grant will provide salary support for the newly-created General Manager position at the new Black Ensemble Theater Cultural Center, scheduled to open at 4450 North Clark Street November 18.

"We are extremely fortunate that The Joyce Foundation continues to be a supporter of Black Ensemble Theater," says Taylor. "The Cultural Center is an enormous endeavor which requires, among other things, a larger staff. This generous grant allows us to incorporate the integral General Manager position to our staff."

The new state-of-the-art, \$19 million Black Ensemble Theater Cultural Center, which broke ground in September of 2010, will expand its staff to include a General Manager who will be responsible for oversight of the day to day operations at the Black Ensemble Theater Cultural Center including finance and accounting, human resources, information technology, risk management, legal, box office, facilities, security and parking.

"The Joyce Foundation has supported Black Ensemble Theater for more than 25 years and invested nearly \$2 million to support a range of capacity-building strategies. We recognize the tremendous role this theater has played to nurture African American talent – onstage and off," states **President of The Joyce Foundation, Ellen S. Alberding**. "Having competent, experienced staff in place to manage operations and support the amazing artistic vision of founder Jackie Taylor is critical to Black Ensemble's future success. As a key member of the senior leadership team, we hope the general manager can help solidify the theater's place as one of our nation's most dynamic cultural centers."

Other recent Black Ensemble Theater grant awards include \$25,000 from Cubs Care, a fund of the McCormick Foundation; plus monies from People's Gas and The Irving B. Harris Foundation.

About The Joyce Foundation

The Joyce Foundation supports efforts to protect the natural environment of the Great Lakes, to reduce poverty and violence in the region, and to ensure that its people have access to good schools, decent jobs, and a diverse and thriving culture. We are especially interested in improving public policies, because public systems such as education and welfare directly affect the lives of so many people, and because public policies help shape private sector decisions about jobs, the environment, and the health of our communities. To ensure that public policies truly reflect public rather than private interests, we support efforts to reform the system of financing election campaigns.

About The Black Ensemble Theater

The Black Ensemble Theater Company was founded in 1976 by Jackie Taylor, who has written and directed more than 100 productions for the company. In addition to its main stage productions, the Black Ensemble Theater Company produces 'Plays with a Purpose,' a series of original youth-oriented musicals, designed to teach students positive life lessons and values, as well as several community-based programs that use theater arts to enhance and enrich the lives of countless youth, students and families.

Black Ensemble Theater is in the final stages of its capital campaign to build a new home for the company, the Black Ensemble Theater Cultural Center. Of the \$19 million needed for the project \$16 million has been raised to date. The 50,000-square-foot facility will house a 300-seat main stage, a 150-seat secondary stage, a 34-space indoor parking garage and more.

The mission of the Black Ensemble Theater Company is to eradicate racism and its devastating effects upon society through the theater arts. For more information on the Black Ensemble Theater Company, please visit www.BlackEnsembleTheater.org or call 773-769-4451.

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