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Press Release

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Tickets Are Still Available For All Performances! Casting Announced for Disney's HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL, A New Stage Musical, Based on the Smash Hit Disney Channel Original Movie San Jose's Limited Engagement Begins Tuesday, June 10 at the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts

"The best thing about the show is the nonstop energy....'**HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL**' is professional, Broadway-level theater that kids will get and enjoy."

– *San Francisco Chronicle*

San Jose, CA; May 5, 2008 – Casting has been announced for the American Musical Theatre of San Jose engagement of **DISNEY'S HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL**. Presented by Disney Theatrical Productions, the division responsible for such smash Broadway hits as *The Lion King*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Mary Poppins*, **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** is based on the 2006 Emmy Award-winning Disney Channel Original Movie. The touring company, which is scheduled to play 42 cities over 60 weeks in the United States and Canada, includes a live orchestra and a cast of 34 talented theatrical performers. The press opening night in San Jose is Tuesday, June 10 at 7:30pm.

The basketball team captain, "Troy Bolton," will be played by **John Jeffrey Martin**, whose Broadway credits include *Rocky Horror Show*, *Hairspray* and *Good Vibrations*. He is a graduate of Syracuse University with a BFA in Musical Theater. Starring opposite Martin as the shy, academic student "Gabriella Montez" will be **Arielle Jacobs**. Jacobs' theatre credits include *Crazy for You*, *A Chorus Line* and *Cinderella*, and her film credits include *The Stepford Wives* and *Water Lilies*.

Veteran actor, **Ron Bohmer**, will portray Troy's father and Wildcat's basketball coach, "Coach Bolton." Bohmer is known for his Broadway and National tour credits including *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Woman in White*, *Aspects of Love*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Sunset Boulevard*. Troy's best friend, "Chad Danforth," will be played by **Shakiem Evans** who most recently appeared as "Eddie" in Broadway's *Mamma Mia!* Evans Off-Broadway credits include *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Fame*, and he is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University. **Ellen Harvey** is the drama teacher

“Ms. Darbus.” Harvey’s Broadway credits include *Thou Shalt Not* and *The Music Man*, and her touring credits include *Mamma Mia!* and *Doctor Dolittle*. “Taylor McKessie,” the leader of the “brainiacs” at East High School, will be played by **Shaullanda LaCombe**, who was “Shenzi” in *Disney’s The Lion King* and “Charlane” in *Ain’t Misbehavin*.

Bobby List will play Drama Club enthusiast and brother of Sharpay, “Ryan Evans.” List, a recent graduate of the University of Cincinnati – Conservatory of Music, played opposite Debby Boone in *The Human Comedy* at Barrington Stage and in *The 60’s Project* at the Goodspeed Opera House. **Michael Mahany** will introduce audiences to a new character written specifically for the stage production, “Jack Scott,” the crooning voice of East High School. Mahany’s credits include the Off-Broadway production of *Spring Awakening*, a reading of *Ella Minnow Pea*, a workshop of Bill Russell’s *Mister Fabulous* and regional productions of *Into the Woods* and *Annie Get Your Gun*. The Young composer “Kelsi Neilson” will be portrayed by **Olivia Oguma** who has appeared on Broadway in *Mamma Mia!* and *Les Miserables* and Off-Broadway in *Sarah, Plain and Tall*, *La Dispute* and *The Scarlet Letter*. Oguma’s film credits include Hallmark Hall of Fame’s *The Flamingo Rising* and *Strangers with Candy: the movie*.

“Zeke Baylor,” the basketball player who loves to bake will be portrayed by **Jelani Remy**, who is making his National Tour debut and was last seen in regional productions of *Cabaret* and *Parade*. **Lizzie Weiss** will play the hip-hop brainiac “Martha Cox.” Weiss earned her BA in Theater from the University of California at Irvine, and was an original cast member of the Atlanta Theatre of the Stars production of *High School Musical*. The scheming Drama Club president, “Sharpay Evans,” will be played by **Heléne Yorke**, who received a BFA in Musical Theatre from The University of Michigan and appeared in the Off-Broadway production of *Walmartopia*.

This new touring stage adaptation of Disney’s **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** is directed by Jeff Calhoun (*Big River*). **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** features a book by David Simpatico (adapted from the original movie script by Peter Barsocchini), and a score including all the songs from the original soundtrack plus two new songs written especially for the stage.

Commenting on the touring production, Thomas Schumacher, President and Producer of Disney Theatrical Productions, said, "Our stage version of this great property has been mounted as a direct response to overwhelming demand. As someone who has been passionate about theatre since I was a kid, I am thrilled that we are touring this remarkably popular title as a fully realized stage production, and most certainly introducing countless young people to the world of theatre for the very first time. You can't ask for more than that." Schumacher adds, "It is a great joy and privilege for us to be able to produce and present the Disney Channel's enormously popular property on stage."

Disney's **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** is a contemporary musical comedy about a popular high school basketball star and a shy, academically gifted newcomer who discover they share a secret passion for singing. When they sign up together to audition for the lead roles in the school musical, it threatens East High's rigid social order and sends their peers into an uproar. In a desperate effort to maintain the status quo, the "jocks," the "brainiacs" and even the drama club regulars are soon hatching convoluted plots to separate the pair and keep them offstage. By defying expectations and taking a chance on their dreams, however, the couple inspires other students to go public with some surprising hidden talents of their own.

The creative team for this new touring stage production of **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL**, in addition to aforementioned director Calhoun, are choreographer Lisa Stevens, scenic designer Kenneth Foy, costume designer Wade Laboissonniere, lighting designer Kenneth Billington, sound designer Duncan Robert Edwards and music supervisor Bryan Louiselle.

DISNEY'S "HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL" premiered on Disney Channel U.S. on January 20, 2006, and posted the highest ratings for a Disney Channel Original Movie up until that time. It went on to become a smash hit internationally, airing on 27 Disney Channels and free-to-air broadcasters worldwide, thus far reaching over 250 million viewers in over 100 countries including China. It was also the first TV movie to be offered on the iTunes Music Store. **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** delivered the #1 album of

2006, the year's #1 TV movie on DVD, licensed amateur and professional touring stage productions, a best-selling junior novel, a popular consumer products franchise at mass retailers, a themed show at Disneyland Parks and Resorts in Anaheim, Orlando and Paris, a sold-out 42 date arena concert tour in North America and Latin America and a popular touring ice show around the world. Adding to its success, it won two Emmy Awards, a DGA Award, Television Critics Association Award, an Imagen Award, a Director's Guild of America Award and a Humanitas Prize nomination among other honors. Its soundtrack received a Billboard Music Award (Soundtrack of the Year) and was nominated for an American Music Award in the Favorite Album (Pop/Rock) category. Its critically acclaimed sequel, HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 2, ranks as the #1 basic cable telecast of all time (18.6 million viewers for its August 17, 2007 premiere) and has thus far been seen by 179 million total viewers around the world. Its soundtrack is quadruple Platinum in the U.S., triple Platinum in the UK and many more countries. It recently won an American Music Award. Walt Disney Studios will begin production on a feature film based on the movie; Kenny Ortega will direct and choreograph and the cast will reunite for the film titled *High School Musical 3: Senior Year*, scheduled for a 2008 release in theatres around the world.

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL will play the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts, 255 Almaden Blvd., San Jose June 10 through June 15, 2008. The performance schedule is as follows: Tuesday-Saturday evenings at 7:30pm, Saturday at 2pm and Sunday at 1pm and 6:30pm.

Tickets for **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** range in price from \$19-\$74. Great seats are still available and can be purchased at the American Musical Theatre of San Jose Box Office, 1717 Technology Drive, San Jose Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, by calling 1.888.455.SHOW (7469) (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm), or via the Internet at www.amtsj.org. Orders for groups of twenty (20) or more may be placed by calling **408.453.1523** or **408.453.1574** or by e-mail: groupsales@amtsj.org. **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** is part of an add-on attraction of AMTSJ's 2007/2008 Season.

Subscriptions are now on sale for 2008/2009 season. The season opens with the AMTSJ premiere of the side-splitting musical comedy ***The Full Monty***, followed by the Bay Area premiere of the revised Rodgers & Hammerstein's romantic musical ***Flower Drum Song***, the West Coast premiere of the spectacular family musical adventure ***TARZAN***,[®] The Stage Musical, Based on the Disney Film, and the Tony Award[®]-winning, tap-dancing sensation ***42nd Street***. Subscribers are not only first in line for priority seating, but are able to purchase tickets to our special engagement of national tours before the public which includes the hilarious and irreverent special engagement of the Tony Award[®] winner ***Avenue Q*** in March 2009. To subscribe, please call the box office at **1.888.455.SHOW** (Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm) or visit the website at **www.amtsj.org**.

As of this release AMTSJ's 2007/2008 Season Sponsors include JetBlue Airways, the official airline of AMTSJ; Larkspur Landing, the official hotel of AMTSJ casts and crew; Equity Offices; Hallmark Construction, Comerica Bank, Citti's Florist, Coyote Housing Group, Eulipia Bar and Restaurant, Marriott, Metro Newspapers, Moreno and Associates, Paolo's Restaurant, Silicon Valley Community Newspapers, Star One Credit Union, SummerHill Homes, Wells Fargo Bank and Wyndham Hotel.

AMTSJ is proud to be a national leader in Accessibility Services and welcomes the opportunity to entertain Accessibility patrons with sign-interpreted, audio-described and open captioning performances. Contact D.J. Zwicker-Sobrepeña, Director of Education & Outreach, at 408.453.1533 or email education-outreach@amtsj.org for additional information and performance schedules.

For additional information contact: Michael French, Public Relations Manager, American Musical Theatre of San Jose, 1717 Technology Drive, San Jose, CA 95110, 408.453.1543, fax 408.453.7123, mfrench@amtsj.org, www.amtsj.org.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: Disney's **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** follows the much-loved story of the movie, featuring all your favorite characters and songs,

together with two brand new numbers performed by a new cast of talented theatrical performers and an electrifying live band. So “get'cha head in the game!” And go totally wild for what the *Daily Herald* calls “great family entertainment” - Disney’s **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL!**

WHEN: Opens: Tues. June 10 (press night)/Closes: Sun. June 15

TIMES: Tues-Sat @ 7:30pm/Sat @ 2pm/Sun @ 1pm & 6:30pm

WHERE: San Jose Center for the Performing Arts

255 Almaden Blvd. San Jose

TICKETS/INFO: Phone: 1.888.455.SHOW (7469) web: www.amtsj.org

Group Sales (10 or more): 408.453.1523 or 408.453.1574

e-mail: groupsales@amtsj.org

PRICES: \$19.00-\$74.00

For production photos, please use the link below and scroll downward for uploadable images.

<http://www.amtsj.org/stage/hsm.html>