

Link Community School
120 Livingston Street
Newark, NJ 07103
Serving Newark for 40 Years

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LINK COMMUNITY SCHOOL CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF SERVICE
TO NEWARK YOUTH AT ANNUAL GALA**

Link Community School's 11th annual *A Taste of Newark*, one of Newark's premier social events, will be held on Wednesday, November 12, 2008 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) beginning at 5:30 pm. This annual benefit, which traditionally celebrates the school and the resurgence of Newark, has a special added dimension this year as Link celebrates a significant milestone in its history -- its 40th anniversary of service, innovation and achievement for youngsters from Newark and other surrounding communities. Prudential Financial, a great corporate citizen in Newark, will be honored at the event for their generous support of Link through many of the school's forty years and for their commitment to education in Newark.

At *A Taste of Newark*, guests will sample the cuisine of the area's restaurants and caterers while checking out a silent auction with exciting and interesting items including tickets to sports events, theaters, sports memorabilia, specialty baskets and fine jewelry. An evening program follows in the Victoria Theater featuring a presentation to Prudential Financial, an alumni speaker, student performances, and a live auction offering up wonderful items such as destination vacations, weekends in New York City and fabulous golf outings, among other items.

"We look forward to *A Taste of Newark* all year long," said Marnie G. McKoy, principal. "It's a wonderful opportunity for our friends and benefactors to sample some of Newark's unique cuisine and culture, enjoy one another's company and see the benefits of their contributions firsthand. This year is an especially exciting one as we celebrate our 40th anniversary. "

The gala raises about one quarter of the school's operating budget, helping Link fulfill its mission of providing an outstanding middle school education to the youth of Newark and the surrounding area, many of whom come from families with limited means. Event co-chair Lenore Davis states, "We are excited about the event and raising the much-needed funds to help keep the Link mission going for another 40 plus years."

Link was the vision of Sister Vivien Jennings and her religious community, the Sisters of St. Dominic, Caldwell, who established "Project Link" as a non-denominational middle school offering an exceptional educational opportunity for young people struggling academically; a bold, affirmative answer to the devastation of the riots in the late 1960's. The Sisters believed that a safe, nurturing environment with small classes and opportunities for creative expression would motivate and prepare students to succeed in high school and beyond thus transforming potential dropouts into productive and responsible citizens. The Sisters' efforts were revolutionary at that time and over the years, the formula – a rigorous academic program, a system of Core Values and opportunities to broaden experiences – has yielded much success. Link has not only endured for forty years but has also been the inspiration for the many independent, charter and magnet schools that have been launched in and around Newark.

Link is proud of its successes. Over 2000 students have graduated from the school since it began. Link students experience an average increase of 2.0 grade levels in their standardized test scores; 100% admission to private high schools; substantial scholarships of over \$7 million in the past seven years to some of the nation's top high schools; a 90% high school graduation rate; and 80% of Link's graduates enrolls in college.

Link is grateful to the many international and local corporations, businesses, foundations and individuals which sponsor the event. Additional sponsorships are still available, as are tickets to the event. Patron tickets cost \$100 and Benefactor tickets are \$250. For more information, please contact Suzanne Bellofatto, Special Events Coordinator at 973-642-5343 or sbellofatto@linkschool.org or visit our website at www.linkschool.org.

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