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**FIRST STAGE THEATER ACADEMY STUDENT AWARDED  
SCHOLARSHIP TO THE JUILLIARD SCHOOL**

MILWAUKEE, Wis. (May 27, 2009) - Jeremy Tardy, a student of First Stage Children's Theater Academy, is the first student from First Stage to be accepted into The Juilliard School, receiving a partial scholarship to New York City's prestigious institute for higher education in the performing arts. Tardy is 18 years old and will graduate from Wauwatosa West High School this June.

Jeremy Tardy was initially exposed to First Stage Children's Theater when he attended the performance of GREEN EGGS AND HAM with his class at Elm Creative Arts School in 1997. He had wanted to be an actor since he was five years old and this First Stage experience made him even more intent on becoming an actor. From the beginning, Tardy understood that it would require hard work and commitment, but he was determined to be on stage.

Tardy began his acting career at First Stage in sixth grade, appearing in THE MAGIC MRS. PIGGLE-WIGGLE in 2003. He has been a member of First Stage Theater Academy's Young Company - First Stage's advanced, pre-professional training program for high school students - since 2006. With the Young Company, Tardy has had the opportunity to perform works by renowned playwrights, including Shakespeare, Molière and Oscar Wilde. Lead roles with the Young Company include PETER AND THE WOLF, a collaboration with First Stage Theater Academy's Young Company, the Milwaukee Ballet School, and Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, as well as the title role in OTHELLO, both in 2008. Tardy also played the role of Byron in THE WATSONS GO TO BIRMINGHAM - 1963 during First Stage's 2007-2008 season.

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First Stage Theater Academy Student Awarded Scholarship To  
The Juilliard School *!add one*

In 2007, First Stage Children's Theater sent Tardy and members of its Young Company to compete in the Utah Shakespearean Festival / Southern Utah University Competition. That year, Tardy won the Barbara Berrett Award, which is presented to the junior with the highest individual score at the festival. Tardy also received a scholarship to the festival's 10-day intensive summer theater program in 2008.

Also in 2008, Tardy was the recipient of First Stage's Lois Lowry Award, which was developed in honor of the Newbery® award-winning author's contributions to children's literature. The award is presented to one student per year with enrollment in the First Stage Theater Academy.

Tardy attributes First Stage as playing a pivotal role in his success; one of the most influential individuals being John Maclay, First Stage associate artistic director and Theater Academy director.

"I couldn't be happier for him," says Maclay. "Jeremy is an incredibly skilled actor – but of greater significance Jeremy is an exceptional human being. He has great instincts as an actor, which are complimented by one of the strongest work ethics I have ever seen in a young actor. He is smart, kind, passionate, collaborative and fearless."

First Stage Children's Theater is Milwaukee's premier, professional family theater. Founded in 1987, the mission of the company is to provide professional theater productions for young people and their families that engage, enlighten and entertain, Theater Academy training that fosters life skills through stage skills and dynamic in-school education programs that provide learning through theater. First Stage is a member of the Theater Communications Group, YTA/USA, the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the Wisconsin Alliance for Arts Education and Americans for the Arts as well as Theatre Wisconsin and Milwaukee Arts Partners, and is a cornerstone member of the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF).

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