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## BREAKING ICE WINS AWARD FOR ANTI-RACISM EFFORTS

**Minneapolis, MN - Pillsbury House Theatre's Breaking Ice** has received the 2008 Nonprofit Mission Award for Anti-Racism Initiative from the MN Council of Nonprofits (MNCN) and MAP for Nonprofits. The award recognizes a MN nonprofit organization that actively engages audiences in anti-racism activities by working to eliminate prejudice and racism in society, demonstrating a commitment to pluralism and inclusivity, and developing unique and thought-provoking strategies to combat racism.

The Nonprofit Mission Award for Anti-Racism Initiative is one of four Excellence Awards that emphasize the importance of nonprofits to the quality of life in Minnesota. Other awards honor Innovation, Advocacy, and Responsive Philanthropy. **Pillsbury House Theatre** was one of three MN nonprofit finalists for the award. Members of MNCN were then allowed to vote for the organization that they believed best fit the award criteria.

"It's so incredible to be recognized by the hundreds of nonprofit peers that cast their votes," states **Breaking Ice** Director **Heidi Hunter Batz**. "**Breaking Ice** works hard to help organizations and corporations educate and eradicate racism through theatre and dialogue. Whether it's a major institution like Best Buy or a community center in hurricane ravaged Biloxi, people are eager to come together and work out differences. The Anti-Racism Initiative Award will assist **Breaking Ice** in opening new doors and helping more organizations across the country begin the tough conversations necessary to address issues of racism."

As the recipient of the Nonprofit Mission Award for Anti-Racism Initiative, **Pillsbury House Theatre** will receive:

- The honor and distinction of being recognized as a leader among Minnesota's nonprofits
- A video production capturing the work of **Breaking Ice**
- A one-of-a-kind art engraved glass award
- A feature profile of **Pillsbury House Theatre** and **Breaking Ice** in MNCN's *Nonprofit News* reaching 10,000 nonprofit managers
- A cash award

**Pillsbury House Theatre** staff will accept the award at the MNCN Annual Conference on October 3, 2008.

### About Breaking Ice

**Breaking Ice** was formed in 1992 as program of **Pillsbury House Theatre**. **Breaking Ice** was developed to find new and engaging ways to address numerous issues that workplaces and organizations face daily. Topics include racism, sexism, gender issues, cultural differences, and many more. Each performance is a customized professional theatre experience created for that particular organization. The performance is followed by an open discussion lead by trained **Breaking Ice** facilitators. By creating, encouraging, and maintaining dialogue, organizations and their employees gain the tools needed to address these issues and strengthen organizational health and productivity. **Breaking Ice** travels nationwide and has worked with more than 200 businesses and organizations including Best Buy, Hennepin County, African American Men Project, NeighborWorks America, Wilder Foundation, University of MN, Xcel Energy, and more.

**Breaking Ice** was awarded a Leading Lights Diversity Award by the National Multicultural Institute in 2007.

### About Pillsbury House Theatre

A professional theatre uniquely housed within an inner-city neighborhood center, **Pillsbury House Theatre** is a multi-cultural company of artists, whose purpose is to engage a broad community in the art of theatre with programs and productions that provoke examination of the world around us. Through its work, **Pillsbury House Theatre** illuminates the differences that make each person unique and the similarities that bring people together, within an artistically engaging context that promotes understanding and leads to positive action.

*The mission of Pillsbury House Theatre is to create challenging theatre to inspire choice, change and connection.*

For further information and **Breaking Ice** images, please contact Neal Spinler at 612-787-3622 or [spinlern@pillsburyhousetheatre.org](mailto:spinlern@pillsburyhousetheatre.org). Visit **Pillsbury House Theatre** and **Breaking Ice** online at [www.pillsburyhousetheatre.org](http://www.pillsburyhousetheatre.org).

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