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For Immediate Release

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Los Angeles Youth Program Brings Queen Latifah and Bruce Willis film to Boyle Heights Special Premiere Screening of "Hip Hop Project" Wednesday, March 28, 2007 at 5:00 p.m.

(March 27, 2008-Los Angeles, CA)- The Los Angeles Youth Opportunity Movement (LAYOM) will host a premiere screening of the "Hip Hop Project" produced by actor/producer Bruce Willis and actress/producer/music artist Queen Latifah. The film, scheduled to debut nation-wide on May 11, 2007, focuses on a New York City teenager who triumphs over homelessness and inspires peers to use Hip-Hop as a method of positive expression.

"We are honored to screen a film produced by two top industry professionals," said Richard Benbow, General Manager of the City of Los Angeles Community Development Department. "The youth of Boyle Heights can relate to this tale of perseverance, camaraderie, and artistic expression."

The film explores the life of main character *Kazi*, a former homeless teenager who motivates other teens to tell their stories through Hip Hop music. In stark contrast to the frequent negative associations of Hip Hop, the story highlights hope and the power of dreams.

"LAYOM appreciates the "Hip Hop Project" for selecting our center as a screening site," said Jimmy Valenzuela, LAYOM Executive Director. "So many of our youth have overcome incredible obstacles and will relate to this inspiring story."

((MORE))

***Youth Program Brings Queen Latifah
and Bruce Willis film to Boyle Heights***

LAYOM recently opened a state-of-the-art technology center that houses a music recording studio and an alternative high school. The center hopes to mirror the “Hip Hop Project” by inspiring youth to use music and arts as forms of personal expression.

“The recording studio at our center attracts so many bright and ambitious youth,” said Joe Diaz, LAYOM Case Manager. “When I heard about the “Hip Hop Project”, I knew the film would have a tremendous impact on our youth. Hip Hop crosses all boundaries of socio-economic background and race.”

The Los Angeles Youth Opportunity Movement is a youth program administered by the City of Los Angeles Community Development Department. The program assists youth, ages 14-24, with reaching educational, career, and personal goals. Originally launched in the year 2000 through a United States Department of Labor grant, LAYOM enhances the employment and academic skills of youth living in the Boyle Heights, Watts, and Pacoima communities.

LAYOM opened the Boyle Heights Technology Youth Center in September 2006. The nearly 20,000 square foot facility sits on a corner that was once plagued by poverty and illegal activity. The City of Los Angeles purchased the land and developed a plan to bridge the digital divide and introduce youth to the world of technology-based and entertainment careers. To learn more about the Los Angeles Community Development Department and the Youth Opportunity Movement and the Boyle Heights Technology Youth Center, please visit www.lacity.org/cdd

For more information on the “Hip Hop Project”, visit www.hiphopproject.com .

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