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THE DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS RECEIVES MAJOR FUNDING
Eugene B. Casey Foundation Establishes \$17.2 million Endowment

Washington, DC (August 1, 2011) The Ellington Fund announces today the establishment of the Casey Endowment Fund to benefit the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. The \$17.2mm endowment has been dedicated to the furtherance of the Duke Ellington School's artistic and educational initiatives, specifically, its Instrumental and Vocal Music programs.

The Duke Ellington School of the Arts was founded in 1974 and is the only DC public high school that provides pre-professional arts training and college preparation to more than 500 talented area students. With a mission to nurture and inspire passion for arts and learning in talented students who might not otherwise have an opportunity to develop their artistic skills, the Duke Ellington School of the Arts is committed to excellence.

Due to District wide budget cuts **since 2006**, the Duke Ellington School lost critical revenue that supports its staffing and programming. Institutions like The Duke Ellington School that have dual arts and academic programs cannot **solely** depend on traditional public school funding to address all needs. The establishment of the Casey Endowment Fund will allow the school to maintain its personnel and existing programming while further enhancing the offerings available to the students.

"The Duke Ellington Fund is grateful to the Casey Foundation for giving so generously to establish a permanent endowment fund," said Rory Pullens, Head of School. "This milestone comes at a critical moment as we reflect on the progress we have made over the last 37 years while recommitting ourselves to achieving excellence in arts education."

The Music department is **an artistic anchor** at The Duke Ellington School. Of the eight pathways, 45 percent of the students are pursuing a music course of study. The Casey Endowment Fund will directly impact the Instrumental and Vocal Music programs while freeing up valuable funds to support and enhance other academic and arts initiatives at the school.

"This generous gift of endowment from the Casey Foundation will allow the Duke Ellington School to maintain key personnel and to enhance the superior musical arts education it provides to the deserving students of the District of Columbia," said Robert Horvath, President of the Board of Directors for the Ellington Fund.

The standard funding provided by the District of Columbia will never cover the basic educational needs of the dual arts and academic programs at Duke Ellington. Public funding will remain a vital and integral part of Duke Ellington's ability to service its students. The Casey Endowment Fund investment opens opportunities for other organizations to consider similar endowment gifts to Duke Ellington in support of its unique mission and programs.

“We will work hard to match this generous gift from the Casey Foundation in order to give the District of Columbia the world-class arts and academic high school that it deserves.” said Peggy Cooper Cafritz, Founder of the Duke Ellington School.

For media inquiries, please contact The Aba Agency at 202-625-8370 or aba@theabaagency.com.

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