

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Valley Youth Theatre to Honor Community Leaders at
the Most VYTal Event of the Season
Carole and Bob Machiz and American Express to receive VYTALITY Awards

PHOENIX- Valley Youth Theatre (VYT) will honor Bob and Carole Machiz and American Express with the *Valley Youth Theatre Applauds Leadership Impacting Today's Youth* (VYTALITY) awards at its ninth annual "Most VYTal Event of the Season" gala to be held on June 14 at the Herberger Theater Center.

Each year, the VYTALITY award is presented to individuals or organizations that have shown an extraordinary commitment to sustaining and growing arts exposure for young people in the Valley. The award has previously been presented to Katherine "Kax" Herberger, Cox Communications, Phoenix Suns/Diamondback Charities, the Andrew Family Foundation and Jerry Colangelo.

Valley philanthropists Carole and Bob Machiz will receive the individual VYTALITY award for their legacy of support for arts programs for children. This dynamic couple has generously supported arts programs in Phoenix. "We are looking forward to this special evening with VYT says Carole. "We are very involved in the community supporting the arts and children's programs which makes this a great honor."

In recognition of ongoing support of VYT through its Culture Club program, American Express will receive the Corporate VYTALITY award. "American Express is honored to be the recipient of the Corporate VYTALITY award," says JoEllen Lynn, community affairs manager, American Express. "Our company recognizes that arts and culture are the main things that make a community great and all of our lives more fulfilling -- especially our children. By supporting VYT and other arts organizations serving children, we create a better Arizona for our youth -- our future employees. American Express and its employees thank VYT for inspiring young people and finding the actor/artist in every child. Investing in VYT is investing in our future."

Now in its ninth year, VYTal is Valley Youth Theatre's largest single annual fundraiser. The evening will include an entertaining production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* and a live silent auction. Last year's event netted over \$200,000 for the nonprofit theatre. Funds raised at the event will support the 2008-2009 Valley Youth Theatre 20th Anniversary season of professional-quality family entertainment, which provides exceptional performing arts experiences for thousands of Valley children and features hundreds of local young talent.

Guests will enjoy cocktails and hors d'oeuvres courtesy of several of Phoenix's top restaurants and caterers including-Kincaid's and Coupe de Tartes .

Tickets and corporate sponsorships are still available by calling (602) 253-8188 x 304.

Valley Youth Theatre is located 525 North First Street in Phoenix. For more information , please visit www.vyt.com or call (602) 253-8188 x 304.

About Valley Youth Theatre

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Valley Youth Theatre is a world-class, nationally recognized non-profit organization that targets young people age 7 – 19 for participation in and attendance at quality live theatre productions. VYT's mission is to inspire young people to be the best that they can be by providing them with lifelong lessons through a wide range of performing arts opportunities. VYT is an award-winning theatre, and was recently selected as the Best Arizona Children's Performing Arts and received the 2008 Governor's Arts Award for Arts in Education. Alum include American Idol, Jordin Sparks, Disney Channel's Chelsea Staub and Broadway Star, Max Crumm. Valley Youth Theatre is supported in part by the Arizona Commission on the Arts with funding from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts. Partial funding also is provided by the Phoenix Arts Commission through appropriations from the Phoenix City Council. Valley Youth Theatre is a member of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American Theatre. For more information, visit www.VYT.com.

About American Express

American Express Company is a leading global payments, network and travel company founded in 1850.. American Express was the recipient of the 2007 Corporate Volunteerism Award for large companies. The company was recognized for making volunteer efforts a central part of their culture. To find out more about American Express, please go to www.americanexpress.com.

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