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2009 OneJax “Oneness of Humanity Celebration” Addresses “Beyond Difference: The Unifying Power of Laughter, Music & Dance”

Jacksonville, FL (August 24, 2009)—OneJax, the local nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing the diverse groups of Northeast Florida together as one unified community, will host the fourth annual “Oneness of Humanity Celebration” on Tuesday, September 15th. This year, an experiential event exploring the universal languages that transcend different faiths, races and cultures will be featured in **“Beyond Difference: The Unifying Power of Laughter, Music and Dance.”** The event will be held at the Five Points Theatre, 1022 Park Street, beginning at 6:00 PM.

Kathleen Beaudreau, a Certified Laughologist and owner of “Living Laughter,” will lead the audience in an experience of intentional laughter exercises and discuss the physical and emotional healing power of laughing and how laughter builds bridges and tears down barriers between and among people.

Musical pieces will be performed by the Ritz Chamber Players and a guest choral group. Then it’s our turn! We will be led in a unifying group sing—our very own spin on “Playing for Change”!

Braided Light Dance Project, an innovative new modern dance company, will perform an inspired dance piece. The evening will conclude as everyone participates in a rousing traditional, cultural dance, led by Jo-Ellen Unger, Director of Education and Youth at The Temple (Congregation Ahavath Chesed).

Charlotte Mabrey, Professor of Music at UNF and Principal Percussionist with the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, will serve as Emcee for the evening and will connect each segment in a way that will enhance the experience and unite people of different faiths, races, cultures and beliefs.

“The ‘Oneness of Humanity Celebration’ was created to honor one of our founders, Duane Dumbleton, who passed away in 2006,” said Bobbie O’Connor, Executive Director of OneJax. “Duane was a member of the Baha’i faith and strongly believed we have more in common than we have differences. I think he would be very pleased by our program this year, as his vision and goal was to have our community find a common language in order to come together as one human family.”

The event is free and open to the public, although a \$15 donation is suggested. For more information about the Oneness of Humanity celebration or OneJax, contact them at (904) 354-1JAX (1529) or www.onejax.org. RSVP's are not required, but will be appreciated.

Through education, community building and advocacy, OneJax hopes to make Northeast Florida a better place for everyone by celebrating differences and identifying all we have in common. Its core programs include **Metrotown**, an intensive, week-long teen diversity program; **LOUD** (Leaders of United Diversity), where Metrotown graduates bring the message of respect and appreciation for religious, racial and cultural differences into their schools; **Interfaith and Community Forums**, periodic forums for public dialogue on diversity and tolerance issues; and **Advocacy**, working to promote issues of importance to the **OneJax** mission. In addition, OneJax is a partner, with the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission and the Community Foundation in Jacksonville, in **Project Breakthrough**, an initiative to change the story of race in Jacksonville.

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