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## **Joel Hall Lauded with “Lifetime Achievement Award” from African American Arts Alliance**

**For Immediate Release**

(Chicago, IL) Among the highlights of the star-studded African American Arts Alliance’s 14th Annual Black Excellence Awards show at the DuSable Museum, was the presentation of the “Lifetime Achievement Award” to Chicago native son, Joel Hall. The prestigious accolade recognized Joel Hall’s enduring dedication to his artistic craft and innumerable international achievements in dance, extending more than 4 decades in the Chicago arts community.

“Joel is a pioneer,” said Jackie Taylor, president of the African American Arts Alliance board of directors. “He is nationally and internationally recognized. Who better to recognize than someone who has added to the development of the arts in our community. He is legendary.”

The award was presented on stage to Mr. Hall by Chuck Smith, associate director at the Goodman Theater, who echoed Taylor’s remarks, saying that the decision to award Hall with this accolade was a “resounding unanimous vote” and further that “Joel Hall’s name is known the world over for his excellence and his energy.”

In his gracious and moving acceptance speech, Mr. Hall chose the occasion to challenge the audience to take better care of the youth of today, as they represent the “next wave ... and without them there is no wave.”

“Dance has played a very important role in my life because I had the opportunity to receive it,” said Joel Hall. “But many young people in the streets that I see today do not have those opportunities. I want to make sure that you notice who they are when you see them ... because they are everywhere. I want you to look into their eyes and let them know that you love them and that you care about them ... because without that, there is no dance.”

A large group of Joel Hall’s current and former dancers, friends and family were on hand at the event to help celebrate his “Lifetime Achievement Award.”

### **About Joel Hall Dancers & Center:**

A Chicago-based non-profit — founded in 1974 — the mission of the Joel Hall Dancers & Center (JHDC) is to use the arts to enrich the lives of its community through dance performance & education. JHDC reaches out to our community — targeting those who may not otherwise be exposed to the arts — by providing dance classes along with local, national, & international showcase performances.

The Joel Hall Dancers express contemporary urban life through dance while educating, entertaining, and inspiring their audience. The signature dance style of JHD incorporates ballet, jazz, modern, funk, and “street dance” using contemporary jazz and house music to create an innovative and continuously evolving dance style that is appealing, relevant, and approachable for those frequently underserved by the arts.

The Joel Hall Dancers maintain a citywide, national, and international reputation, not only for their diversity and innovation, but also for their substantive sociological content and engaging aesthetic style. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Joel Hall, the Joel Hall Dancers have carried their unique yet universally accessible voice to venues that span the world.

Both JHD and its audience exhibit a rare diversified spectrum of cultural, ethnic, racial, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Additional information about Joel Hall Dancers & Center may be found at <http://joelhall.org>