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**Author and Star of CSI NY Hill Harper
To Talk About Being The Architect For Your Life
At 2009 YMCA Salute Gala**

May 19, 2009 -- One of Hollywood's most promising actors and star of CSI NY, Hill Harper, will be coming to Cincinnati November 20 to help the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati honor local professionals of color selected for personal and career achievements. He will be the featured speaker at the 2009 YMCA Salute Gala to be held at the Duke Energy Center.

The YMCA Salute Gala is unique in that African and Hispanic American professionals who are recognized as YMCA Achievers demonstrate their commitment to giving back by volunteering through the YMCA Teen Achievers Program to inspire youth toward paths of success.

The event's theme, 'Empowering Teens To Be the Architect Of Their Lives', fits perfectly with Harper's message. What he shares with those supporting, being recognized and being impacted by the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati is his sense of responsibility to encourage and guide younger generations as they build their own destiny. In his books, *Letters to a Young Brother: DeFINE Your Destiny* and *Letters to a Young Sister: DeFINE Your Destiny*, he shares his own humbling life lessons on his journey to an Ivy League education and beyond. Revolutionary in how Harper deals with adolescent issues, he won both NAACP Image Awards and, in 2007, was nominated for Outstanding Literary Work by a debut author and Outstanding Literary Work for teens. He is a volunteer of Big Brother Big Sisters in Los Angeles and participates in other organizations helping to mentor youth.

Harper's first breakthrough occurred on *Married with Children* and in his film debut *Confessions of a Dog*. In Spike Lee's *Get on the Bus*, he performed his first substantial role as a college student riding a bus during the Million Man March. On television, he starred in *City of Angels* which earned him an Image Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor from the NAACP. He recently appeared on recurring episodes of Showtime's *Soul Food* and guest starred on *The Sopranos*. He has also appeared on *ER*, *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, *NYPD Blue* and *Murder One*.

Nomination sponsorships are still being accepted for YMCA Achiever honorees. For more information, the public can contact Toni Miles, YMCA Black Achievers executive director at 513-362-YMCA; email tmiles@cincinnatiymca.org or visit www.myy.org.

Since its beginning, the YMCA Teen Achievers Program has awarded more than \$150,000 in scholarships, and engaged more than 4,000 adult volunteers through a network of corporate and community partners. The Program includes college prep and leadership development activities focusing on study skills/time management, interviewing techniques, financial management, team-building field trips, community service-learning projects, college tours and more. It strongly incorporates the Abundant Assets – 40 critical factors for the successful growth and development of young people – and centers around the relationships of adult

professional mentors and teens. The 2009 to 2010 goal is to serve over 500 students in the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky communities.

About the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati: As the area's largest youth and family-focused not-for-profit, the YMCA reinforces character values through assets-based programs and services to more than 143,000 individuals, kids and families annually. Adult mentors encourage young people to be caring, responsible, respectful, and honest through sports, summer camps, structured child and afterschool care, and leadership building programs. Branches offer quality time for families, resources for parents, and a variety of opportunities for seniors to be active. The Membership for All sliding scale fee structure means everyone, no matter their ability to pay, can always benefit from the YMCA. Last year alone more than 17,400 families and individuals enjoyed healthier and happier lives because generous partners helped the YMCA in its vision to be accessible to all.

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