News Release
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Editors Note: Advance interviews available. To cover at the event, contact Carol Miller.
For conference information see the press room at www.apapnyc.org. Photos available upon request.

APAP Announces 2016 Award Winners

Creative Minnesota Project Chair Sheila Smith;
Peak Performances Founder Jedediah Wheeler; DanceAfrica America’s Dr. Chuck Davis to be Honored at Association of Performing Arts Presenters Awards Luncheon on Jan. 18

Surprise “Distinguished Service Award” Winner to be Announced at Luncheon

DECEMBER 22, 2015 – In January, the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP) will once again honor esteemed artists, visionaries and advocates whose service to the performing arts has had a significant impact on the industry and on communities worldwide. The 59th Annual APAP Awards Ceremony and Luncheon will take place at noon, Monday, January 18, at the New York Hilton Midtown and is part of APAP|NYC 2016, the association’s annual conference and the world’s premier gathering of performing arts professionals.

Honorees are nominated from the field, four winners are selected by a panel of national arts leaders and arts presenters, and APAP presents the awards. North American Performing Arts Managers and Agents (NAPAMA) also presents two awards to its agents and presenters at the APAP event.

This year’s APAP award recipients are:

THE SIDNEY R. YATES AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF THE PERFORMING ARTS:
Sheila M. Smith, executive director, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts
Presented by Brian Jose, director, University of Florida Performing Arts

THE WILLIAM DAWSON AWARD FOR PROGRAMMATIC EXCELLENCE AND SUSTAINED ACHIEVEMENT IN PROGRAMMING:
Jedediah Wheeler, executive director for arts and cultural programming, Montclair State University
Presented by choreographer Elizabeth Streb

THE AWARD OF MERIT FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN PERFORMING ARTS:
Dr. Charles “Chuck” Davis, founder and artistic director, African American Dance Ensemble and DanceAfrica America
Presented by Pam Green, founder and president, PMG Arts Management

The winner of APAP’s FAN TAYLOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE TO THE FIELD OF PROFESSIONAL PRESENTING will be announced at the luncheon.
This year’s NAPAMA award recipients are:

NAPAMA AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE PERFORMING ARTS WINNER:
Steve Duchrow, director of performing arts, Elgin Community College Arts Center
Presented by Jerry Ross, co-founder and vice president, Harmony Artists, and president of NAPAMA

NAPAMA AGENT/MANAGER AWARD WINNER:
Harold Norris, director of booking, Pentacle
Presented by Monica Felkel, director of artist management, Young Concert Artists

BIOGRAPHIES

Sheila M. Smith, executive director, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts
Sheila Smith has been Minnesota Citizens for the Arts’ executive director since 1996. Now chair of the Creative Minnesota Project, she was a leader in the 2008 “Legacy” campaign to create 25 years of dedicated funding for the arts and environment through a constitutional amendment. She is on the Board and Public Policy Cabinet of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, and has been chair of the State Arts Action League, part of Americans for the Arts. She teaches at the University of Minnesota and has a Masters in Arts Administration from St. Mary’s University and a B.A. in Shakespeare from St. Olaf College. She previously served as staff at the Minnesota State Senate.

Jedediah Wheeler, executive director for arts and cultural programming, Montclair State University
Jedediah Wheeler is executive director for arts and cultural programming at Montclair State University in New Jersey. His program Peak Performances is recognized internationally for its commitment to creating and presenting works without compromise by singular artists in theater, dance, music, opera and performance art. Previously, Wheeler was president of International Production Associates (IPA), the arts management company based in New York City that challenged the conventional wisdom of its time. As the producer of Serious Fun! At Lincoln Center, Jed Wheeler received the 1992 Village Voice OBIE Award for Outstanding Achievement.
Dr. Charles “Chuck” Davis, founder and artistic director, African American Dance Ensemble and DanceAfrica America

Dr. Chuck Davis is one of the foremost teachers and choreographers of traditional African dance in America. Davis founded the Chuck Davis Dance Company in New York in 1968 and the African American Dance Ensemble in Durham, North Carolina in 1983. He has been a panelist for several programs of the National Endowment for the Arts and is a recipient of the AARP Certificate of Excellence, the North Carolina Dance Alliance Award, the 1990 North Carolina Artist Award, and the North Carolina Order of the Long Leaf Pine. In 1992 he received the North Carolina Award in Fine Arts, the state’s highest honor. He has received honorary doctorates from several universities. Most recently, Chuck Davis and DanceAfrica were cited as one of “America’s Irreplaceable Dance Treasures: The First 100” by the Dance Heritage Coalition. Dr. Davis brings the joy of the dance, the excitement of the rhythm and the intensity of humanity to everything he does.

APAP|NYC 2016 is the world’s largest networking forum and marketplace for performing arts professionals. More than 3,600 presenters, artists, managers, agents and emerging arts leaders from all 50 U.S. states and more than 30 countries convene in New York City for five days of professional development, business deals and exciting performances. The week includes more than 1,000 world-class performance showcases, nearly 370 exhibitors and dozens of professional development sessions.

ABOUT APAP
The Association of Performing Arts Presenters is the national service, advocacy and membership organization for presenters of the performing arts. APAP is dedicated to developing and supporting a robust performing arts industry and the professionals who work within it. APAP|NYC conference information APAPNYC.org | APAP membership information APAP365.org Twitter @APAP365 | Facebook facebook.com/APAPNYC

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