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MORE THAN 300 PLAYS SUBMITTED TO THEATRE CONFERENCE

OMAHA, Neb.—Three hundred nine plays were submitted for consideration for Metropolitan Community College's (MCC) fifth annual Great Plains Theatre Conference from 40 states, the District of Columbia and Canada.

Todd and Betiana Simon along with Paul and Annette Smith have agreed to be the Mainstage Series Playwright Sponsors for the second year in a row; additionally they are spearheading a fundraising initiative to sponsor all of the housing and registration costs for the Playlab playwrights to attend the Conference. This effort places the Great Plains Theatre Conference among the top play development programs in the country.

Confirmed featured artists include:

- David Lindsay-Abaire, Pulitzer-Prize winner for his work *Rabbit Hole*. His newest show, *Shrek the Musical* (book and lyrics) premiered at Seattle's 5th Avenue Theater and is playing on Broadway. His other works include *Fuddy Meers*, *Kimberly Akimbo*, *Wonder of the World*, *High Fidelity* and *A Devil Inside*.
- Constance Congdon, internationally known theatre scholar, lecturer and playwright from Amherst College will attend and present works this year.
- Marshall Mason, five-time Tony Award- nominated Broadway director and five time Obie-award winning director for his off- Broadway credits.
- Dr. V. Armugham, international theatre scholar, director and actor from Pondicherry University Pondicherry, India will attend and bring his unique perspective of theatre to the Conference.

Additionally, the Conference will celebrate the 30th anniversary of Dr. Jo Ann C. McDowell's oversight/founding of three major American theatre conferences: The William Inge Festival, Independence, Kan., the Last Frontier Theatre Conference, Valdez, Alaska, and the Great Plains Theatre Conference at MCC. The Conference will celebrate her founding of these important events and her deep, long lasting relationships with some of the most celebrated American theatre playwrights of the past 50 years. It is noted that Dr. McDowell's rolodex is littered with

the “A” list of American theatre, and she prides herself on nurturing the next generation of great theatre voices.

Celebrating the fifth anniversary of the Great Plains Theatre Conference with more than 1200 new plays submitted over the short but significant lifetime of the Conference and honoring five Pulitzer-Prize winning/nominated playwrights (Edward Albee, Arthur Kopit, Doug Wright, Theresa Rebeck and David Lindsay-Abaire), The Great Plains Theatre Conference has become the intersection where Omaha and national creative communities come together.