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OPRAH WINFREY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY FOR GIRLS – SOUTH AFRICA CELEBRATES ITS OFFICIAL OPENING

Former South African President Nelson Mandela Attends Ceremonial Program

Tuesday, January 2, 2007, Henley-on-Klip, South Africa – Former South African President Nelson Mandela and local dignitaries will join Oprah Winfrey in celebrating the opening of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls - South Africa—a private learning and residential environment for grades 7-12 that engenders high standards of academic achievement and service leadership for girls who show outstanding promise despite their social circumstances. The Leadership Academy, which is located in Henley-on-Klip in Gauteng Province, opens on Tuesday, January 2, 2007.

As part of the opening welcoming events, Oprah Winfrey will raise the Leadership Academy's flag along with the first 152 students—from grades 7 and 8, who represent all nine South African provinces—followed by a ceremonial program in the campus' theatre. It is her vision that the Leadership Academy will help develop the future women leaders of South Africa.

"I know that this Academy will change the trajectory of these girls' lives," said Oprah Winfrey. "They will excel and pass their excellence on to their families, their nation, and our world."

"This school will provide opportunities to some of our young people they could never imagine, had it not been for Oprah. The key to any country's future is in educating its youth. Oprah is therefore not only investing in a few young individuals but in the future of our country. We are indebted to her for her selfless efforts. This is a lady that has, despite her own disadvantaged background, become one of the benefactors of the disadvantaged throughout the world and we should congratulate her for that," said Nelson Mandela.

In December 2000, during a visit with Nelson Mandela, Oprah Winfrey pledged \$10 million to build a school for girls in South Africa, for which she broke ground on December 6, 2002. As that commitment broadened, she established The Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy Foundation, to which she has contributed more than \$40 million toward the creation of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls - South Africa. Initially a public-private partnership with the Gauteng Department of Education, the Leadership Academy was signed over to become an independent school on August 20, 2006.

Among its 28-building campus, the Leadership Academy includes state-of-the-art classrooms, computer and science laboratories, a library, a theatre, a gymnasium, sports fields, a wellness center, modern dormitory facilities and a dining hall. The curriculum includes math, natural science and technology; arts and culture; social, economic and management sciences; life orientation and leadership; and languages. All of the teachers are South African.

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