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## Talib Kweli & Platform One Entertainment Help “Working in the Schools” Through a Benefit Concert and Silent Auction

**Chicago, IL** — One of Chicago’s hottest fanfare events, *Dare 2 Dream*, will kick off its fourth benefit concert on Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 at the House of Blues in Chicago. Hip hop icon and featured artist, Talib Kweli will be perform to benefit Working in the Schools (WITS), a non-profit that promotes literacy and the love of reading among Chicago’s youth by providing one-on-one tutoring and mentoring programs.

Created by marketing company Platform One Entertainment, *Dare 2 Dream* is a benefit concert series that helps raise money and funding for a specific cause and/or charity through musical entertainment. Featuring some of today’s hottest artists, *Dare 2 Dream* has become a vital source bringing attention to important social issues. “I want to thank *Dare 2 Dream* for supporting WITS and showcasing its outstanding work and dedicated volunteers,” said Mayor Richard M. Daley. “Working together, WITS has mobilized businesses, government and the community to help thousands of low income and minority Chicago Public School students prepare for the future by improving their reading skills.”

The Chicago Public School (CPS) system has been ranked the worst in the nation, with only six percent of high school freshman actually graduating from college. Half of them did not finish high school while eighty five percent of the four hundred thousand students in the CPS system live under the poverty line. This is an unacceptable reality and as Jeff Sodikoff from Platform One comments, “We all need to find ways to help support CPS to strengthen these kids’ abilities to succeed. There’s nothing more valuable than the ability to read.”

“Signing on Talib Kweli for this event has been a great partnership,” explains Sodikoff. “He’s been one of rap’s most exceptional and consistent artists. As the son of two teachers and advocate of socially-conscience messages in his music, Talib is an extraordinary role model to Chicago’s public school students and is thrilled to headline the *Dare 2 Dream* benefit event.” Released in 2000, Talib’s *Reflection Eternal*, the RIAA-certified gold album was one of the most acclaimed albums of the year. In 2002, smash single “Get By,” and the biting political commentary “The Proud” made *Quality* a landmark recording and Kweli’s second gold album. Subsequent recordings in 2004 (*The Beautiful Struggle*) and 2005 (*Right About Now*) solidified his status as one of rap’s most talented and important voices. His most recent album, *Eardrum*, debuted at number two on the *Billboard 200* and garnered significant critical acclaim. “I am honored and blessed to be performing for *Dare 2 Dream*,” said Talib. “It is causes like this that inspire the fabric of my work.”



As the beneficiary charity, WITS' strives to provide consistent tutoring and mentoring during impressionable years of development and prepares Chicago's future leaders with a solid foundation for success through the simple act of reading. Knowing the statistics, WITS signed on immediately with Platform One Entertainment and *Dare 2 Dream* to help make a difference. "On behalf of all our volunteers, students, and supporters, WITS is delighted to partner with Platform One Entertainment for this exciting concert. We are honored to be the beneficiary of the *Dare 2 Dream* concert and thankful for the opportunity to bring light to the work of our dedicated volunteers and community partners," states Jenné Myers, Executive Director of WITS.

WITS' programs reintroduce business, government, and community members to their schools, provide teachers and principals with needed support, and give children the skills they need to succeed. Over the years, WITS has been endorsed by Former President Bill Clinton, Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, former Chicago Public Schools CEO Arne Duncan, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, former U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley and the Chicago Public School Reform Team. Today, WITS serves more than 2,300 students in 26 elementary schools with the support of 31 partnering organizations and more than 1,200 volunteers.

Platform One Entertainment continues to demonstrate its commitment to developing and delivering momentous events to significantly contribute to prominent causes and charities. In the past year, Platform One has already generated noteworthy visibility and funding for The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, The Common Ground Foundation, The Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness and The University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital. Partnerships with artists including Kings of Leon, Common, Cypress Hill, and several others have made *Dare 2 Dream* a continued success. "I'm extremely proud and honored to partner with the incredible Talib Kweli to help foster major awareness and raise important funding for Working in the Schools all while continuing our pursuit to harness the power of music and entertainment to benefit important causes," states Platform One Entertainment President, Jeff Sodikoff.

***About Platform One Entertainment***

*Platform One Entertainment is extremely committed to continuing the development and delivery of amazing events to help benefit and bring meaningful awareness and fundraising to important causes and charities. Platform One is a full service, cause-oriented, marketing company that brings years of success working with artists, record labels, brands, non-profits, publishers, media and management companies. Platform One's focus is the development and execution of innovative marketing solutions and strategies geared at maximizing exposure and brand loyalty for their clients and partners. For more information, visit [www.platform-1.com](http://www.platform-1.com).*

***About Working in the Schools***

*Working in the Schools (WITS) is a 501(c)3 organization that promotes literacy and the love of reading among Chicago's youth by providing one-on-one tutoring and mentoring programs. With the help of more than 1,200 volunteers and 31 corporate partners, WITS serves 2,300 elementary students in 27 Chicago Public Schools.*

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