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Lively Teaching Resource to Help Students Understand the Principles of American Democracy through Jazz Appreciation

Let Freedom Swing: Conversations on Jazz and Democracy
A Resource for Teachers Featuring Sandra Day O'Connor and Wynton Marsalis

NEW YORK October 2010— An innovative and exciting new educational project, *Let Freedom Swing*, was launched this week at letfreedomswing.org. The project includes a DVD featuring retired Supreme Court Justice, Sandra Day O'Connor, and musician, composer, educator, and Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, Wynton Marsalis, in three short videos (20 minutes) that explore how jazz captures the essential principles of American democracy. Ten thousand copies of the DVD and accompanying Study Guide will be distributed to educators across the nation. The videos and Study Guide will also be available to download for free from the website.

Steven Goldberg, President of the National Council for the Social Studies, writes: "*Let Freedom Swing* provides social studies educators with a unique curricular integration of democracy and jazz. It is a wonderful set of lessons and materials for teachers to engage students of all ages. This project reflects active learning and will excite both students and their teachers."

The videos present O'Connor and Marsalis in three lively and engaging modules that middle and high school teachers can use in whole or in part to stimulate discussion in their classrooms: *We The People*; *E Pluribus Unum*; and *A More Perfect Union*. Set against historical footage, the videos include performances and commentary by young as well as established jazz musicians such as Vijay Ayer, Ali Jackson, Erica von Kleist and other artists and scholars.

The project is a collaboration by Jazz at Lincoln Center, The Documentary Group, and Columbia University's Teachers College, with generous funding from The Rockefeller Foundation.

Jazz at Lincoln Center is dedicated to inspiring and growing audiences for jazz, producing thousands of education and performance events each year around the world. jalc.org

The Documentary Group produces work based on a simple principle: have faith in the intelligence, taste, curiosity and integrity of the audience. www.thedocumentarygroup.com/

Teachers College, Columbia University is dedicated to promoting equity in education and overcoming the gap in educational access and achievement between the most and least advantaged groups in this country. www.teacherscollege.edu

The Rockefeller Foundation fosters innovative solutions to many of the world's most pressing challenges, affirming its mission, since 1913, to “promote the well-being” of humanity. Today, the Foundation works to ensure that more people can tap into the benefits of globalization while strengthening resilience to its risks. Foundation initiatives include efforts to mobilize an agricultural revolution in Sub-Saharan Africa, bolster economic security for American workers, inform equitable, sustainable transportation policies in the United States, ensure access to affordable and high-quality health systems in developing countries, accelerate the impact investing industry’s evolution, and develop strategies and services that help vulnerable communities cope with the impacts of climate change. For more information, please visit www.rockefellerfoundation.org.

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