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NAMING OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO HONOR DEVOTED COMMUNITY ADVOCATE, PATRICIA COTSEN

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Buffalo, NY, January 14, 2010 -- Young Audiences of Western New York, Inc., is pleased to announce the renaming of their Annual Arts Abilities Conference in honor of Patricia Cotsen, an energetic and dedicated community member. Ms. Cotsen has provided significant service to this organization and many other institutions in Western New York.

The one-day conference is held annually to support the work of educators, administrators, artists, human service workers, and parents who use the arts to educate people most at risk of educational failure. This is the fourth year Young Audiences has offered this valuable day of learning, rejuvenation and retreat.

“BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS - The Fourth Annual Patricia Cotsen Arts Abilities Conference” will be held Tuesday, May 11, 2010, at Ani DiFranco’s Babeville. Workshops and presentations will be offered by leaders in the field, including Gayle Danley, Dale Davis, Stuart Fuchs, Carrie Marcotte, and Ellen Melamed.

“Young Audiences of Western New York is honored by – and better off for – having had Patricia Cotsen working on our behalf,” said Cynnie Gaasch, Young Audiences’ executive director. “We are pleased to acknowledge her commitment and service by dedicating this powerful annual opportunity for retreat and learning to Patty.”

Cotsen originally interviewed for the position of executive director of Young Audiences, but was so impressed with its work that she instead became a devoted member of the Board of Directors, giving a total of 18 years of service.

Cotsen has been involved in the greater Buffalo community in many ways, affecting children’s education, families’ quality of life, the arts, and the very fabric of the urban landscape. She was a board member of the King Urban Life Center, when an important community church was saved from demolition and granted landmark status thanks to her and others’ efforts.

In recent years, Cotsen was a docent at the Darwin Martin House and Albright-Knox Art Gallery. She has served on the Members Council of the Art Gallery and the Education Committee of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra.

Her numerous associations and experiences brought her in contact with a wide range of people in the community. She worked with Literacy Volunteers, and the World University Games Benefit Committee. She was the National Director of Smith College’s Alumnae Association, and Director of Temple Beth Zion. She was also a mediator for the Community Dispute Settlement Program for Special Education at both Family and City Courts.

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