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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Washburn's School Community is 'All In' for the 21st Century; *'Windows of Opportunity Event' raises the bar on Excellence***

MINNEAPOLIS, MN – With a new principal, new teaching staff, new enrollment growth, the return of the International Baccalaureate program, a boys state basketball championship, a state Robotics Championship and the first musical (The Wiz) in over 17 years... a lot of momentum at Washburn has been built up the past two years.

And the momentum will only continue this year. This summer, the Washburn High School Foundation launched a new and innovative fundraising campaign, unusual for a single public undergraduate school. There are three phases to the Washburn Connections Campaign: immediate needs, capital needs, and endowment needs.

The first phase is an immediate \$400,000 goal (targeted for completion by end of the 2009/2010 academic year). So far, \$100,000 in donations and pledges has already been raised toward this goal. These monies will go toward academic needs, particularly to help fund the necessary training needed for the International Baccalaureate program to be implemented at Washburn. Approximately \$50,000 will also go to both the Arts and Athletics programs.

To help spearhead this effort, the Washburn High School Foundation has hired a paid part-time fundraising coordinator, David Buck.

“There’s been a lot of groundbreaking activity happening at Washburn this past year,” said David Buck, of Abundance Philanthropy, LLC. “What we’re doing with the Washburn Connections Campaign just continues in this vein. The campaign will help reconnect all of Washburn’s stakeholders (alumni, parents, future parents, the community, etc.) back into the life of the school. Yes, we’re looking for financial donations (tax deductible), but we’re also looking for volunteers. There are many ways to contribute.”

“Our goal at Washburn is to be regarded as one of the premier high schools in the Twin Cities within the next five years,” said Carol-Markham-Cousins, Washburn’s principal since 2007. “It’s what our community demands from us, and it’s what we will deliver.”

One of the primary ways the campaign raises money is through house gatherings with a small program. “The sense of community that is shared in these house gatherings is amazing,” said David Buck. “Hearing the students speak and perform is always the highlight.”

## **Kick Off Event**

To rally community support behind the Connections Campaign, a Windows of Opportunity Kick-Off Event will be held Thursday, October 8, 2009 from 6:30-9:30 pm at the landmark Parkway Theater at 48<sup>th</sup> and Chicago in south Minneapolis. Joe Senkyr-Minjares, a parent of five Washburn alumni, and the owner of Pepitos, will donate the use of the Parkway Theater for the event.

Billed as “Windows of Opportunity,” the event will highlight what’s happening at Washburn today and where the school is headed toward becoming a premier urban public school. This upbeat, celebratory event will feature food catered by Pepitos, guest speakers, notable alumni, brief student performances, a short film about Washburn, and a live band – The Thunderheads. A turnout of 400 alumni, parents, staff and community members is expected.

“The Windows of Opportunity Event is just the beginning,” say both Vicki Bunker and Jeremy Graff, co-chairs of the Connections Event committee and Washburn alumni. “Our ultimate goal with the Washburn Connections Campaign is to generate a renewed sense of Miller pride throughout the Washburn High School community.”

### **Event Details**

Tickets to the Washburn Connections Event are \$20 each and can be ordered at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com) or by calling (612) 308-9394.

For more information on the campaign go to [www.WashburnConnections.org](http://www.WashburnConnections.org). If you are interested in hosting a house gathering, making a donation of your time, money or other resources, or have questions, contact David Buck at 612-308-9394.

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