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## Judy Dworin Performance Project's 14<sup>th</sup> *Moving Matters!* Residency Culmination: "*The Skin You're In*"

### **STUDENTS CELEBRATE THEIR ROOTS AND THE DIVERSITY OF THEIR COMMUNITY**

**Hartford, CT** – Students from Parkville Community School and M.D. Fox Elementary School bring energy and creativity to a multi-arts exploration of racial diversity and tolerance of differences developed by the Judy Dworin Performance Project's *Moving Matters!* Residency Program. The twelve-week project, inspired by Michael Tyler's children's book *The Skin You Live In*, culminates in a performance at the Koeppel Community Center at Trinity College on May 5, 2010 at 10:30 am.

Led by JDPP teaching artists and student assistants from Trinity College, a diverse group of over 200 children in grades 3-6 perform their own original production, *The Skin You're In*. To create the piece, students reflected on their own ethnic heritage – affirming uniqueness, commonality and connection. Classrooms were bursting with imagination and collaboration as thoughts bubbled up about the skin we *play in, dream in, are scared in* or even *ask why in*. Students noted that "you have to be brave to be different" and "No matter what color, we are all the same and we can all be friends." Their writing and movement ideas were then incorporated into original song lyrics and text accompanying the dances performed by each of the 10 participating classes.

In the final performance, each student and class experiences the pride of their own creative accomplishments while also appreciating the contributions of others. Describing the event, Project Coordinator and Associate Artistic Director of JDPP Kathy Borteck Gersten comments, "It is amazing each year to see over 200 children stay completely focused and engaged in a performance that says something important about them and the world in which they live - with a commitment and joy that is not only breathtaking, but totally inspiring!"

Professional artists joining the JDPP teaching artists to develop the production are Leslie Bird Musical Director for Women of the Cross, who helped students develop songs and set designer Cheri Soule who created vibrant set pieces to connect with the T-shirts designed by the children. Live music composed and performed by the multi-talented musicians/recording artists Sirius Coyote also enhances this unique collaborative arts project.

More information about *Moving Matters!* can be found on JDPP's website, [www.judydworin.org](http://www.judydworin.org). This performance is free and open to the public.

#### **About The Judy Dworin Performance Project**

The Judy Dworin Performance Project, Inc. (JDPP), a Hartford-based arts organization, has been inspiring social change through professional dance/theater performance and residency work for two decades. JDPP's *Moving Matters!* serves urban schools through multi-arts activities that inspire creative problem solving, healthy risk taking, arts appreciation, and success in language arts. Currently in its 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive year in residency at Parkville Community School and its first year partnering with M.D. Fox, JDPP has developed a unique approach through which students become aware of their own creativity and recognize the value of their ideas and perceptions about the world.