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**Robert Wood Johnson 1962 Charitable Trust**

**Pledges \$195,000 Grant to Support**

**Princeton Symphony Orchestra's  
Music Education Program *BRAVO!***

**December 4, 2008...** The Robert Wood Johnson 1962 Charitable Trust has generously pledged a three-year grant totaling \$195,000 to support the small-ensemble portion of Princeton Symphony Orchestra's music education program *BRAVO!* Funded entirely by the Robert Wood Johnson 1962 Charitable Trust since the mid-1990's, *BRAVO!* presents eighty to ninety small ensemble performances and instructional workshops in thirty local elementary schools, reaching up to one hundred students at each performance. In these workshops, PSO musicians teach about the instruments of the orchestra in four different presentations, each featuring one of the instrument families – brass, winds, strings and percussion. The programs are designed to inspire interest in learning to play an instrument and also to prepare students for the *BRAVO!* orchestra concerts they are invited to attend each spring. In a statement expressing her gratitude, PSO Executive Director Melanie Clarke said, "We extend our deepest appreciation to Betty Wold Johnson and the Robert Wood Johnson 1962 Charitable Trust for this remarkable gift. The Trust's generous financial underwriting of *BRAVO!* since the mid 1990s has been transformational, allowing PSO musicians to become dedicated partners in music education throughout our region. *BRAVO!* has introduced the Orchestra to thousands of children and contributes to young people's understanding of art as well as their own development as performing artists."

*BRAVO!* small ensemble programs are offered to public, private and special need schools. For some students this is the only classroom music instruction they receive and for most students it is their first exposure to and interaction with classically trained professional musicians. The schools that participate in the *BRAVO!* small ensemble program enjoy longstanding relationships with the orchestra and PSO musicians. Many of *BRAVO!*'s schools, from Trenton to New Brunswick,

have been served continuously for more than a dozen years. The faculty, parents and students at these schools recognize and appreciate the role that the Princeton Symphony Orchestra and ***BRAVO!*** play in music education in their communities.

Offered free of charge, ***BRAVO!*** is a community resource for children, teachers, and parents. Last season, 5,000 students enjoyed a classic tale -- Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* -- in an orchestra concert performed at Richardson Auditorium and at the State Theater of New Brunswick. PSO continues to expand the reach of ***BRAVO!*** through master classes offered to talented high school instrumentalists, through regional youth orchestra conducting workshops, and through the new ***ListenUp!*** series for middle school students. ***ListenUp!*** invites students to create art in response to what they hear at PSO concerts.

### **About the Princeton Symphony Orchestra**

Founded in 1980 by Portia Sonnenfeld, today's Princeton Symphony Orchestra has been hailed by critics as New Jersey's "virtuoso orchestra." Over the course of its 28-year history, the orchestra's leadership has invested in artistic excellence as well as community and educational concerts and programs that contribute broadly to civic life and establish the PSO in partnerships with local educational, arts and social service organizations. Since its inception, the Princeton Symphony has been guided by an extraordinary Board of Trustees and is grateful for the vision of its early Trustees who included Frank E. Taplin, Jr., Edward Cone, William F. Scheide, Reid White, Nathaniel Burt, and Judy Thomson. Caren Sturges, Board Chair, currently leads an active and deeply committed Board. For the 2008-2009 season, the PSO received a **Citation of Excellence** from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for its work commissioning and presenting a new composition—Paul Moravec's Clarinet Concerto.

**For more information, please visit our website at [www.princetonsymphony.org](http://www.princetonsymphony.org), or contact the PSO office at 609-497-0020.**