PBS Educational Program Based on Life of San Francisco Bay Area Black Man Garners Two Top 'Telly' Awards

"Why History Matters: The Choctaw Project," an adaptation of Carl Ray's acclaimed autobiographical play and compelling film documentary, won a Silver Telly Statuette, the highest award for cultural programming, and the Bronze Telly for achievement in set design.

San Jose, CA (PRWEB) March 6, 2006 -- The Telly Awards honor outstanding local, regional, and cable television commercials and programs, as well as the finest video and film productions. When the 27th annual Telly Awards were announced March 1, 2006, Bay Area educator, activist and former stand-up comedian Carl Ray learned that the KLCS-TV studio-taped adaptation of his acclaimed autobiographical play had been awarded two top prizes. "Why History Matters: The Choctaw Project" won a Silver Telly Statuette, the highest award for cultural programming, and the Bronze Telly for achievement in set design. The program was selected from among 12,000 entries.

In 1962 in Choctaw County, Alabama, 18-year-old Carl Ray witnessed his father's gruesome racially-motivated murder at the hands of a white man who was angered because he believed Ray had disrespected him in conversation. During the murder trial that followed, Ray was blamed for causing his own father's death because he had failed to respect the white man.

Since 1999, Carl Ray has relived the gripping story of witnessing his father's murder in the form of an acclaimed one-man, single-act play titled "A Killing in Choctaw." Los Angeles Public Broadcasting Station (PBS) KLCS created a set replicating the Alabama courtroom where the actual murder trial took place; filled it with jurors and spectators; then studio taped Ray's live performance for airing on its program "Why History Matters," and for the Los Angeles School District "Facing History and Ourselves" curriculum. KLCS Channel 58 aired the film documentary on October 25th and the taped play "Why History Matters: The Choctaw Project" on October 26th and October 30, 2005.


"It took me by surprise," Ray said of the request, "It's great that my life story is going to be the focal point of a Civil Rights curriculum. Ray continued, "My father will continue to live and be remembered in American history. I'm proud of that. But it's not just my story, it's an African American story. Incidents like this happened to countless African American families throughout this country's history. Ours was a horrendous family tragedy, and an abject lesson on racism in America."

KLCS General Manager Dr. Janalyn Glynmph notes that everyone at the Station is "truly honored when our efforts for education, inspiration and clarification are met with such prestigious recognition. Each person involved in this project was impacted by Carl Ray's moving, compelling and life-changing performance; particularly the high school students fortunate enough to interact with Carl during the videotaping."

"Why History Matters: The Choctaw Project" is a partnership between KLCS, Della Productions (Ray's production company) and "Facing History and Ourselves" to create this new resource and provide supplemental materials for the study of the Jim Crow Era and Civil Rights Movement. The program piloted in the Los
Angeles Unified School District.

* For interviews, press kits, invitations to lecture or perform his one-man play, please contact: Toni Beckham 408-499-3664
* To learn more of Carl Ray's fascinating story or his bi-annual Black College Tours, please visit www.carlraye.com

###
Contact Information
Toni Beckham
PR, et Cetera, Inc.
http://www.carlraye.com
408-499-3664

Online Web 2.0 Version
You can read the online version of this press release here.