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**Puddle Jumping for Financial Literacy:
The National Theatre for Children Brings Personal Finance Lessons to
Schools with *Mad About Money* and *Googolplex@School***

Minneapolis, Minn. – October 26, 2006 – The National Theatre for Children, Inc. (NTC), the largest in-school touring theater group in the country, announced that its financial-literacy productions, *Googolplex@School* and *Mad About Money*, began multistate fall tours this month. The two shows will travel by float plane through Alaska and on the road to Texas, Maryland, Tennessee and Washington, where they will present the basics of saving, budgeting, credit and investing to middle-school students with a fun, interactive approach to education.

NTC presented *Googolplex@School*, developed in partnership with Credit Union National Association and sponsored by the Alaska Credit Union League, to 2,725 students at nine middle schools in Alaska – one-fourth of the middle schools in the state – last week. *Mad About Money*, which NTC created in partnership with Lightbulb Press, begins a three-and-a-half week tour today that will take the troupe to 10 schools in Texas, 12 schools in Tennessee, 10 schools in and around Baltimore and 12 in Washington. The performances are being sponsored by Citibank, the Tennessee Securities Division, CitiFinancial and the Washington State Department of Financial Institutions, respectively.

NTC's financial-literacy shows have been proven to increase students' knowledge of savings and help them adopt a more positive attitude toward using their money responsibly, according to Dr. Lewis Mandell, a professor and former dean of the School of Management at the University at Buffalo, who recently calculated the impact of *Googolplex@School* on students in Chicago-area middle schools.

"*Googolplex@School* appears to be a promising intervention," Dr. Mandell reported. "Given the total time requirement of less than an hour, this improvisational play seems to have been remarkably effective in improving students' knowledge."

These two tours depart from NTC's typical format in different ways this fall. The Texas productions of *Mad About Money* will be presented in both English and Spanish to meet the

needs of the diverse student bodies in San Antonio, Houston and Dallas. And while NTC actors are usually accustomed to spending weeks on the road, those on the *Googolplex@School* tour in Alaska will instead fly from school to school in small aircraft.

“We’re puddle-jumping for financial literacy in Alaska. NTC will go anywhere and reach anybody – in any language – to share these important lessons with schoolchildren,” said Ward Eames, NTC’s president and founder. “The American Bankruptcy Institute conducted a study in 2003 that found that more young people declared bankruptcy than graduated from college that year, so it is imperative that we do all we can to help this generation avoid that fate.”

“NTC’s track record of boosting students’ knowledge of personal finance motivated us to partner with the company for our educational outreach efforts, and we couldn’t be more pleased,” said Al Strawn, a member of the Alaska Credit Union League and general manager of Matanuska Valley Federal Credit Union in Palmer, Alaska. “The middle-school years are such a vital time to teach students about responsible financial practices, and NTC allows us to impart these lessons in an engaging manner that really helps the kids retain what they’ve learned beyond the performance itself.”

“NTC’s willingness to tailor its productions for our bilingual students demonstrates the company’s commitment to reaching children from all backgrounds,” said Paula Sullivan, the vice president and community relations director at Citibank Texas. “We know that this extra step will make a big difference for all of our students, but especially for the ones whose first language is Spanish. This is another example of how Citibank makes communities better because we’re there.”

Googolplex@School and *Mad About Money* feature two-person casts who play a wide variety of colorful characters in four sketches. While watching a dad teach his son the difference between “needs” and “wants,” or an unsuspecting car buyer learn about credit from a smooth-talking salesman, students learn to prioritize how their money is spent, the importance of developing a savings habit and ways to invest for the future.

Independent studies of NTC in-school performances have shown that 99 percent of educators believe that the use of live theater increases students' capacity to retain key messages. The school program includes not only a live performance, but it also integrates Internet and take-

home activities and classroom curriculum that meets the states' education standards in science, social studies, language arts and performance art interpretation.

For more information about NTC and its programs, including *Googolplex@School* and *Mad About Money*, visit www.nationaltheatre.com or call 1-800-858-3999.

About The National Theatre for Children

Founded in 1978, The National Theatre for Children, Inc. (known at that time as Small Change Original Theatre, Inc.) is dedicated to educating young people on important and timely curricular subjects by offering educational live theater in our nation's schools. Based in Minneapolis, NTC has developed the art of teaching through live theater into an evidence-based science of its own. NTC has pioneered extremely successful programs in health, science, social studies, reading and math. Each year, dozens of troupes perform live educational theater programs in front of millions of students, in thousands of schools, nationwide.

About Credit Union National Association

With its network of affiliated state credit union leagues, Credit Union National Association serves more than 90 percent of America's 8,800 credit unions, which are owned by more than 88 million consumer members. Credit unions are not-for-profit cooperatives providing affordable financial services to people from all walks of life. For more information, visit www.cuna.org.

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