



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2010

Contact: Lauren Braun
Jasculca/Terman and Associates, Inc, for
Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center
312-573-5483 office / 248-303-5978 cell

ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM & EDUCATION CENTER HONORS THREE LEADERS WITH HUMANITARIAN AWARDS

**GALA FEATURING TOM BROKAW RAISES \$2 MILLION FOR HOLOCAUST
REMEMBRANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION**

CHICAGO – NBC Special Correspondent Tom Brokaw joined more than 1,600 of Chicago's foremost civic, business and charitable leaders, community members, local Holocaust survivors and Museum patrons at the Hyatt Regency Chicago last night to celebrate the inaugural year of the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center and honor three extraordinary individuals at its 2010 Humanitarian Awards Dinner.

Chicago-area business leaders Jeffrey Aronin, president and CEO of Paragon Pharmaceuticals, Inc, and David Speer, chairman and CEO of Illinois Tool Works (ITW), as well as Fritzie Fritzshall, Holocaust survivor, educator and activist, were presented with the Museum's 2010 Humanitarian Awards for their many accomplishments and steadfast commitment to fighting hatred, injustice and intolerance in our world.

"Last year at this time, the Museum was still a dream. Exhibitions were being installed and plans were being finalized for a momentous grand opening," said J.B. Pritzker, chairman of the Museum's Board of Trustees. "Today, we witness that dream in action every day. The Museum has become a vibrant center for learning and collaboration that has seen thousands of school children and community members leave with a newfound sense of empowerment and responsibility toward their fellow man. To have Tom Brokaw here with us tonight celebrating the culmination of the Museum's inaugural year underscores the enormous strides that have been made in the nearly thirty years since this institution first began as a small storefront museum on Main Street in downtown Skokie."

"From the launch of our Law Enforcement and Democracy Initiative, to many Holocaust and genocide education workshops for teachers, to hosting a naturalization ceremony that saw more than 120 immigrants become U.S. citizens, this inaugural year has been an extraordinary journey," said Richard Hirschhaut, executive director of the Museum. "We are profoundly grateful to Jeff Aronin, Fritzie Fritzshall and David Speer for their support and leadership. The success of the past year is a testament to the importance of their contribution and to their unwavering dedication to educating current and future generations about the dangers of intolerance and unchecked hatred."

The Museum, which opened last April, is likely the last international institution of its kind to be built with the active participation of Holocaust survivors. Fritzie Fritzshall is one of those survivors. "I'm extremely honored to receive this award," said Fritzshall, who is also president-elect of the Museum's board, "and to have the opportunity to not only witness, but also contribute to helping the Museum fulfill its mission and become a world-class destination for Holocaust remembrance and genocide and human rights education."

"It's always special to receive recognition – even more so when it's from an organization with such important values," said Jeffrey Aronin. "The Museum teaches lessons of tolerance, of compassion, and of understanding and accepting people's differences."

"The Museum tells an important story, one that we must not forget," said David Speer. "I am honored to represent ITW in its support of the Museum, specifically the 'Take a Stand' exhibit, which is an excellent resource to teach our youngest generation how to help make the world a better place."

With this gala, the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center, which has hosted tens of thousands of visitors and school children in its first year, surpassed previous fundraising efforts and raised over \$2 million in support of its mission and ongoing educational initiatives. The Museum's 2009 gala, featuring General Colin Powell, raised more than \$1.8 million and honored both the Museum and the countless individuals that helped make its realization possible as it prepared to open its doors for the first time.

Previous recipients of the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center's Humanitarian Award include: John Rowe, chairman and CEO of Exelon; Ted Schwartz, founder and chairman of APAC Customer Services and founder and principal of TCS Group; Richard Kiphart, principal of William Blair & Company; Michael Krasny, founder and former CEO of CDW Computer Centers and founder and president of Circle of Service Foundation; Larry Levy, founder and chairman of Levy Restaurants and chairman and CEO of The Levy Organization; and Jack Levin, partner in the law firm Kirkland & Ellis. Previous keynote speakers have included Marianne Pearl (2008), former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright (2007) and Walter Cronkite (2006).

Likely the last international institution of its kind built with the active participation of Holocaust survivors, the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center is the largest facility in the Midwest dedicated to preserving the memories of those lost in the Holocaust and to teaching current generations to fight hatred, indifference and genocide in today's world.

###