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3rd ANNUAL IFP INDEPENDENT FILM GALA **TO BE HOSTED BY theWIT HOTEL**

CHICAGO, IL (April 13, 2009) IFP/Chicago announces its third annual Independent Film Gala, which will be held on Friday, September 25th, 2009 at the soon-to-be-opened theWit Hotel. The evening will begin with a VIP reception at 6:00 p.m. followed by regular admission at 6:30 p.m. Last year's event brought together over 300 industry guests, including Emcee for the evening, *Wild Chicago's* Ben Hollis, and Honorary Chair, Harold Ramis. The event raised over \$65,000 in support of the valuable mission of IFP. The Emcee, Honoree(s) and Host Committee members for the 2009 Gala will be announced on the IFP website at www.ifpchicago.org in the coming weeks.

In addition to food, drinks and entertainment, there will be both silent and live auctions. The 2008 Independent Film Gala's live auction items included a designer gown from *Project Runway's* Angela Keslar; an all-inclusive trip to New York City that included tickets to *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* and *The Colbert Report*; and two tickets to the Independent Spirit Awards Nominee Reception with hotel and airfare for two. This year's auction items will be sure not to disappoint as well and will be announced throughout the summer.

All proceeds will go to expand IFP/Chicago's services and programs serving filmmakers and the filmmaking community throughout the Midwest, including a very successful mentorship program. The IFP/Chicago mentorship program produces a completely student-created film each year with underserved students at Chicago Vocational Career Academy. Due to the success of last year's Gala, IFP/Chicago was able to add a second school. IFP/Chicago's entirely student-produced films have won the Student Award of Excellence for Technical Achievement from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for the past two years making CVCA only the second school in history to win the award twice. The films, *The Last Stain* and *Hush*, can be viewed on our website at www.ifpchicago.org.

IFP/Chicago is pleased to announce theWit Hotel as our first Premier Sponsor for 2009. theWit, a 298-room deluxe luxury boutique hotel scheduled to open in late May at the corner of State and Lake in Chicago's Loop, offers an amusing and sophisticated urban guest experience. It's the hotel where glittering history is reborn in the most modern style. Unique features including innovative guest technologies, SCREEN, a state of the art multimedia theatre, and ROOF, a glittering 27th floor lounge, set this property apart from the competition.

For more information about sponsorship, joining the Host Committee or becoming a part of the 2009 Independent Film Gala please contact Colleen O’Neill, Director of Development, at coneill@ifp.org.

About IFP/Chicago

IFP/Chicago (Independent Feature Project) is committed to the idea that independent film is an important art form and a powerful voice in our society. IFP provides resources, information and avenues of communication for independent filmmakers, industry professionals and independent film enthusiasts in Chicago and throughout the Midwest. We encourage quality and diversity in independent production and assist filmmakers at all levels of experience in realizing their unique vision. IFP/Chicago publishes a monthly e-newsletter (circ. 4,000 and growing), and hosts a listserv (circ. 800 and growing) as part of our effort to foster communication and opportunities throughout the Midwest film community.