



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

April Halprin Wayland
(310) 376-8760
aprilw@aiforc.org

October 2008

Celebrated Children's Authors & Artists Launch Pro-Obama Ad Campaign
More than a thousand national authors and illustrators flood web site

LOS ANGELES—More than 1,000 published children's book authors and illustrators – including Maurice Sendak, Judy Blume, Jules Feiffer (illustrator of *The Phantom Tollbooth*), Lemony Snicket (aka Daniel Handler—*A Series Of Unfortunate Events*), Gregory Maquire (*Wicked*), Ursula K. Le Guin, Marc Brown (the *Arthur* series), Louis Sachar (*Holes*), Gail Carson Levine (*Ella Enchanted*), Tomie dePaola, and Jack Prelutsky (the nation's first Children's Poet Laureate) are joining forces to place ads in support of Barack Obama, according to coordinators of Authors & Illustrators for Children.

“Award-winning authors and illustrators have flooded us with emails,” said Bruce Balan, co-founder of Authors & Illustrators for Children (AIC), a Los Angeles-based group, whose web site is www.aiforc.org.

Small Ad, Huge Response

In 2004, authors Bruce Balan and April Halprin Wayland formed AIC and created a simple ad endorsing the presidential candidate whose policies would best support a healthy and caring future for children. Hoping it would be endorsed by a few famous children's book writers and illustrators, they sent out 20 emails in support of John Kerry.

“The response was overwhelming,” said Balan. In the end, over 400 nationally known authors and illustrators joined the campaign.

“There's even greater energy this year,” said Wayland. “Our membership has tripled and more than 1,000 published authors and illustrators have asked to be a part of the ad.”

The striking ad, featuring an open book topping a list of 1,064 author and illustrator names, is headlined, “The characters we create inspire our readers. The character he possesses will inspire a nation. Join over 1,000 authors and illustrators who care about your children. Vote for Barack Obama.”

Online ads will be placed on sites that specifically target teachers, librarians and booksellers. “That’s our audience,” said Wayland. “People who know and respect these authors and illustrators and use their books daily.” Television commercials will also air in swing states.

Among the authors endorsing Barack Obama are the recipients of twelve Newbery Awards, four Caldecotts, a Pulitzer Prize, seven National Book awards, four Edgars, two Coretta Scott King Awards, and a MacArthur Fellowship. The list also includes the nation’s first two Children’s Poet Laureates. Some notable members are:

Maurice Sendak (WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE)
Judy Blume (ARE YOU THERE GOD, IT’S ME, MARGARET)
Lemony Snicket (A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS)
Gregory Maguire (WICKED)
Jules Feiffer (THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH)
Louis Sachar (HOLES)
Phyllis Reynolds Naylor (SHILOH)
Gail Carson Levine (ELLA ENCHANTED)
Marc Brown (The ARTHUR series)
Jack Prelutsky (THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK)
Ursula K. Le Guin (THE WIZARD OF EARTHSEA)
Patricia MacLachlan (SARAH, PLAIN AND TALL)
Avi (THE TRUE CONFESSIONS OF CHARLOTTE DOYLE)
Joanna Cole (THE MAGIC SCHOOL BUS)
Tomie dePaola (STREGA NONA)
Mordecai Gerstein (THE MAN WHO WALKED BETWEEN THE TOWERS)
Nikki Grimes (BRONX MASQUERADE)
Jane Yolen (OWL MOON)
Susan Cooper (THE DARK IS RISING)
Lois Lowry (THE GIVER)
Jacqueline Woodson (MIRACLE’S BOYS)
John Green (LOOKING FOR ALASKA)
David Shannon (NO, DAVID!)
Jerry Spinelli (MANIAC MAGEE)
Karen Hesse (OUT OF THE DUST)
Steven Kellogg (PINKERTON)
Ann M. Martin (THE BABY-SITTERS CLUB)
Kate DiCamillo (THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX)
Bruce Coville (MY TEACHER IS AN ALIEN)

“AIC is about creating a better future for all children,” says Wayland. The ad can be viewed and downloaded in pdf format at www.aiforc.org/obama.