ANNE FRANK CENTER CELEBRATES EMPOWERMENT AND AMY POEHLER’S SMART GIRLS AT ANNUAL AWARDS GALA

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The Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect (AFC) is pleased to announce two of the recipients of the 2018 Spirit of Anne Frank Awards (SAFA). Amy Poehler’s Smart Girls is receiving the SAFA “Youth Empowerment Award,” in recognition of encouraging youth, especially young women, to exercise their intellect, creativity, and power to excel in all fields, including arts, science, politics, and culture. Racquel Harris Mason is receiving the “Business Community Leadership Award” in recognition of her vision for community-based mentoring programs and accomplishments as a Vice President with Coca-Cola. The SAFA awards recognizes worthy role models who uphold Anne Frank’s ideals of hope, justice, and equality.

Founded by comedian and actress Amy Poehler and producer Meredith Walker, Amy Poehler’s Smart Girls is dedicated to helping young people cultivate their authentic selves, emphasizing intelligence and imagination over “fitting in” and celebrating curiosity over gossip. An online resource for inspiration, news, videos, and mentoring summits, Smart Girls strives to offer “a place where people can truly be their weird and wonderful selves. We are funny first, and informative second, hosting the party you want to attend.”

Empowering youth is a priority for the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect, as Anne Frank herself both demonstrated and dreamed that much of the power to change the world lies within ourselves. By linking the past with the present, people around the world relate to Anne because she expressed the same emotions that most teenage women feel at that age: angst, love, isolation, fear, confidence and loneliness. Her emotions reflect our own. With the diary of Anne Frank and her discovery of self-expression, the Anne Frank Center teaches communities and individuals about the perils of intolerance, discrimination, and bullying. The Anne Frank Center preserves her legacy through educational workshops, exhibits, and theater programs that foster expression, youth and women’s empowerment, and relevance of the past to the present.

One such program is the AFC’s exhibit, “Let Me Be Myself: The Life Story of Anne Frank,” which looks at the way people deal with identity, discrimination, and exclusion. The traveling display tells the story of Anne’s struggle to find out who she was as a young woman, while living through the horrors of World War II and the Holocaust, connected to the present with stories of similar struggles for youth today. Anne Frank’s prominence as an inspirational figure is in large part because of the universality of her experience. Regardless of country, religion, ethnicity, or historical timeframe, people relate to the joys and fears of being human, of growing up, of facing adversity, and of understanding our true selves.

This year’s Anne Frank Center SAFA “Business Community Leadership Award” will be presented to Racquel Harris Mason, Vice President of the Coca Cola Company. Racquel’s advocacy and passion for lifting women’s voices up began when she created the BRIDGES mentoring program, a key component of the model Wharton West Philadelphia Project, which helps mentor and tutor young students. Since then she has risen through the corporate world, previously serving as Division Vice President of Marketing for the Pediatric Business Unit of Abbott Laboratories Nutritionals Group before joining Coca-Cola. She has persisted and excelled throughout her career and is committed to fostering female leadership for generations to come.

Anne Frank wrote, “Let me be myself and I am satisfied. I know that I’m a woman, a woman with inward strength and plenty of courage.” Through the 22nd Annual Spirit of Anne Frank Awards, the Anne Frank Center honors women of inward strength and courage who shatter the glass ceiling, lift women’s voices up, and challenge gender inequality in the workplace.

These role models will join other honorees and scholarship winners dedicated to humanity and social justice, including Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School teacher Ivy Schamis, Syrian refugee and violinist Mariela Shaker, author and museum curator Jud Newborn, and Holocaust survivor and philanthropist Rosa Strygler (1928-2018). The Spirit of Anne Frank Awards gala will be held on June 12,2018 at espace, [635 West 42](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?DynEngagement=true&H=eD76f58HlUnRmzbPZf5yw%2B7LSgBzaQg0S1071ajiM0VK9rmBWpxqVFWUvsS45%2BjeFk8WOquc6qD4IYOA1dJxT0rkWWjOZP4h2TBqUx6D8LmF%2FY8%2B5fEuG5v5kQP60KVZ&G=0&R=https%3A%2F%2Fmaps.google.com%2F%3Fq%3D635%2BWest%2B42%26entry%3Dgmail%26source%3Dg&I=20180507182938.0000000ba081@mail6-96-usnbn1&X=MHwxMDQ2NzU4OjVhZjA5YjBlMzhhNDdiMzIwOTU3MGVjZTs%3D&S=LCZsIAO5vvJVER1phMRFag0DA30aq_Ovn4lvPMUHqJQ)nd St., New York. For more qinformation and tickets visit [annefrank.com/safa](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?DynEngagement=true&H=eD76f58HlUnRmzbPZf5yw%2B7LSgBzaQg0S1071ajiM0VK9rmBWpxqVFWUvsS45%2BjeFk8WOquc6qD4IYOA1dJxT0rkWWjOZP4h2TBqUx6D8LmF%2FY8%2B5fEuG5v5kQP60KVZ&G=0&R=http%3A%2F%2Fannefrank.com%2Fsafa&I=20180507182938.0000000ba081@mail6-96-usnbn1&X=MHwxMDQ2NzU4OjVhZjA5YjBlMzhhNDdiMzIwOTU3MGVjZTs%3D&S=Nk1gr5ccyU-l6PVK4I9r6j_snYKaiuR46QPPQhwW_24) or email [gala@annefrank.com](mailto:gala@annefrank.com).

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