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PRESS RELEASE

**Mr. & Mrs. Richard P. Simmons Support August Wilson Center  
with \$500,000 Gift**

***The Center's progress with \$35.9 million Capital Campaign charted on new  
"thermometer" posted at construction site***

**Pittsburgh, PA—March 10, 2008—**The August Wilson Center for African American Culture announces today the receipt of a \$500,000 contribution from devoted philanthropist Richard P. Simmons and his wife, Virginia.

The contribution is in support of the August Wilson Center's Capital Campaign and will help to fund the development of permanent exhibitions, performances and educational programming in the new facility, which is presently under construction and scheduled to open early in 2009. Part of the Simmons' donation will be used to underwrite the second floor lobby of the new building.

Neil Barclay, the August Wilson Center's President and CEO, expressed his gratitude for the Simmons' gift, saying, "Building this multifaceted performing and visual arts center is a tremendous undertaking and very unique to Pittsburgh. The Center's Board of Directors and staff are thankful that someone of Mr. Simmons' leadership experience has endorsed our project significantly, and that his family is behind the effort."

Simmons, the retired chairman of Allegheny Technologies Inc., is heavily involved in Pittsburgh's cultural institutions and economic development efforts as well as his family's philanthropy in the arts, education, music and medical research.

"We gave a great deal of thought to supporting this worthy crusade. With this pledge we wish Neil and the August Wilson Center well in their efforts to complete this campaign successfully," Simmons said.

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## **August Wilson Center Receives \$500,000 Gift from Richard P. Simmons Foundation/Page 2**

The August Wilson Center is in the final stages of its Capital Campaign for a \$35.9 million facility under construction in the Cultural District, Downtown. More than a museum, the two-story, 65,000-square-foot, multidisciplinary cultural center will be reflective of all aspects of African American culture and include exhibition galleries, a theater, an education center, a café and gift shop, and multipurpose spaces for community programs and events.

To display the progress of the Capital Campaign, and to encourage public support, the Center has posted a donation "thermometer" at the construction site, located at the intersection of Liberty Avenue, Tenth Street and William Penn Place. The thermometer shows the current status of the Capital Campaign, which is \$28.3 million (an additional \$3 million is pending from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania), and the final goal, \$35.9 million.

The thermometer will be updated periodically to reflect new donations. To make a financial contribution to the August Wilson Center, visit [www.AugustWilsonCenter.org](http://www.AugustWilsonCenter.org) or call Tiffany Jimenez, director of major gifts, at 412.258.2700.

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### **About the August Wilson Center for African American Culture**

The August Wilson Center for African American Culture preserves, presents and interprets the art, culture and history of African Americans in western Pennsylvania and people of African descent throughout the world. The Center realizes its mission through an engaging schedule of visual and performing arts presentations as well as historical, educational and public programs.

The Center is involved in a \$35.9 million Capital Campaign to build a new facility located at Liberty Avenue, Tenth Street and William Penn Place in Pittsburgh's Downtown. More than a museum, the multidisciplinary cultural center will be reflective of all aspects of African American culture. Opening in early 2009, the Center's striking, two-story, green building will house exhibition galleries, a 479-seat theater for performances in all disciplines, an education center, a café and gift shop, and multipurpose spaces for community programs and events.

More information is available on the Center's Web site at [www.AugustWilsonCenter.org](http://www.AugustWilsonCenter.org) and by calling 412.258.2700.