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## **IPOP! NEW YORK CROWNS TOP ACTING AWARDS TO THREE LOCAL ATLANTA TEENS**

### ***Teen Performers From Atlanta Win Top Prize in New York Performance Competition***

(Los Angeles, August 4, 2006) – iPOP! (International Presentation of Performers) Headquarters is pleased to announce the winners of their Teen Acting Division to three local Atlanta youths. Charlene Dykes, school director for John Robert Powers Atlanta is beyond thrilled of the success of her students. “To have anyone from our city win at iPOP! would have been exciting, but the fact that Atlanta took home the top three prize in acting says something about the talent in these kids and this city.” Fourteen year old Karli Barnett and Marlon Hulett, and eighteen year old Mark Couch, beat out over 1,200 performers who competed for modeling and talent agency recognition at this year’s iPOP! held in New York City.

Karli Barnett, a typical all American girl next door who enjoys cheerleading and participating in student government, recalls winning Actress of the Year as a “true validity that this is what I was meant to do.” As an incoming freshman at Mount Pisgah School in Alpharetta, Karli began her training at John Robert Powers earlier in this year when a family friend suggested that she take classes to sharpen her natural acting talent. “Before my training I was very inexperienced and hadn’t been exposed to much out there. I have definitely noticed my confidence and discipline level grow. I am grateful of the opportunities given to me and really want to show the world that if you believe in yourself, you can achieve any dream you have.” Karli continues to follow her dreams and strives in taking risks during her performances, hoping that her passion and determination to succeed will inspire others.

Marlon Hulett of Sneville, has also recently found himself on the rising track to stardom soon after winning Actor of the Year in New York. After discovering the pleasure of making people laugh through performing, Marlon found himself taking professional acting classes at his local John Robert Powers School in Atlanta. The novice actor, who previously had only attended one major audition prior to iPOP! was awarded top prize in “Best Monologue” and “Teen Actor of the Year” for his age division. “The experience can be summed up in one word: amazing. I enjoyed being around other participants because everyone was able to learn from each other no matter what stage of experience we had.” In addition to acting, Marlon enjoys drawing and writing poetry and hopes to take the entertainment industry by storm. “iPOP! has made me realize that I can do many

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facets of the entertainment industry whether I end up doing acting or become a writer or director. I am excited about whatever opportunities come my way.”

Up in the Appalachian mountains of Northern Georgia, Mark Couch was destined to make a name for himself. Since middle school, Mark dreamed of becoming a performer after finding himself drawn to the comedic talents of his idol Jim Carrey. By working hard at various odd jobs to help pay the rent and support his father, Mark was able to pay his way through acting classes where he learned the excitement of performing for others. “I was very honored to have been selected to compete at iPOP!”, Mark says, “I saw this as my chance to jump at the opportunity in front of me and to show the world what I had to offer.”

In addition to winning Actor of the Year, Mark graced his first runway under the direction and supervision of fashion producer Michael Maddox. While modeling clothes for Dulche de Leche, Sterling Capriccio, and Polo, Mark learned that it takes concentration and discipline to succeed in the world of entertainment. “Winning for acting was such an honor because so many people believed that I could do this. I wanted to make my family proud and I did. This was a once in a lifetime experience and it has been uphill ever since” Receiving the most call backs out of his school, Mark is currently auditioning for local talent scouts and continues to work hard at getting his name out to agents.

Billed as a unique training program, iPOP! provides participants hours of one-on-one training with top professionals in all mediums of entertainment. iPOP!’s goal is to prepare aspiring performers to meet perspective agents, managers and casting directors. Last year’s attendees successfully landed lucrative modeling assignments and performance bookings across the country. Participants also gained representation by the biggest agencies Hollywood and New York has to offer.

Performers who are passionate about their talent and are driven to acquire the experience and training needed in preparation for an agent were all welcomed to participate. Students encountered the critical eyes of over one hundred of the entertainment industries’ most influential agents, managers, and casting directors who attended the audition and coaching sessions. A final night awards ceremony included a Talent Showcase and Fashion Show. Performers were selected for this showcase throughout the week based on their coaching and audition sessions. VIP judges selected the overall Top Female & Male Model as well as a Top Female & Male Talent for the event.

John Robert Powers is one of many modeling and acting schools that fully supports iPOP! and its vision in discovering new talent.

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