

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 16, 2009

Contact: Troy Burton
Executive Director
Office: 410-225-3130
Fax: 410-225-3139 Fax
Email: eubieblake@rcn.com

**The Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute and Cultural Center Celebrates
Legendary Musicians 126th Birthday with Program
“Memories of Eubie: Remembering the Past by Cultivating the Future”**

BALTIMORE, MD - The Center continues to nurture the legacy of Baltimore native and legendary musician Eubie Blake with a 126th birthday celebration and scholarship program titled **Memories of Eubie: Remembering the Past by Cultivating the Future**. The community commemoration, which is **free and open to the public, although a donation of \$10 per person is requested to support a scholarship benefiting a Baltimore-area graduating senior planning to attend college to earn an undergraduate degree in music**. The event will be held at 847 North Howard Street in Baltimore on Sunday, February 8 from 3 to 5 p.m.

Born James Hurbert Blake on February 7, 1883, Eubie is best known for his accomplishments as a composer, lyricist and pianist of ragtime, jazz and popular music. With long time collaborator Noble Sissle, Blake wrote the Broadway musical *Shuffle Along* in 1921. The musical was one of the first productions ever to be written and directed by African Americans. Among his most recognizable songs are “Charleston Rag,” “Love Will Find A Way,” “Memories of You,” and “I’m Just Wild About Harry.” The musical *Eubie*, which featured the collective works of Blake, opened on Broadway in 1978. Blake died on Feb. 12, 1983.

Memories of Eubie: Remembering the Past by Cultivating the Future features musical performances by the Frederick Douglass High School Cab Calloway Academy’s nationally acclaimed *The Dukes of Jazz*, the Ed Terry Tap Dancers and selections by a quartet from the Baltimore Jazz Alliance.

Established in 1985, *The Dukes of Jazz* Combo has performed for such musical greats and dignitaries as Cab Calloway, the Count Basie Band, former President Bill Clinton, Patti LaBelle and Yolanda Adams, to list a few. Additionally, the jazz group has performed at political, social and religious venues in Maryland, Florida, Virginia, Pennsylvania and North and South Carolina. *The Dukes of Jazz* is the current reigning jazz group, having held the highest honor for four consecutive years, at the Festivals of Music in Myrtle Beach, SC. The group comprises students in grades 9 through 12.

Randolph Gardner, a senior at Frederick Douglass High School Cab Calloway Academy, is the inaugural recipient of the **Memories of Eubie: Remembering the Past by Cultivating the Future** Scholarship.

Gardner, 17, is a percussionist and has been developing his musical talent since his time at Westside Elementary School. For Gardner, music, especially drumming is a passion, and a degree in music will lay the foundation for a professional career. According to Gardner, “Music is something I love and one of the things I live for. This has been my childhood dream, and I know that I will be successful in music.” He plans to attend Bowie State University.

Memories of Eubie: Remembering the Past by Cultivating the Future Scholarship is a new initiative of the Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute and Cultural Center to preserve the traditions and legacy of music and jazz performance in Baltimore.

The scholarship will be awarded yearly to a deserving graduating senior in the city showing promise in music education and performance.

The Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute and Cultural Center is open Wednesday 1 p.m. – 6 p.m., Friday from 12 noon to 6 p.m., Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Sunday by appointment.

###

For more than three decades, the Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute and Cultural Center has sought to bring creative expression and urban consciousness to Baltimore through visual and performing arts education and development opportunities for children, youth and adults in our community.