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**826 SEATTLE BENEFITS FROM THE \$250,000 HEINZ AWARD FOR ARTS AND HUMANITIES**

**Novelist and 826 Founder Dave Eggers recognized by Foundation for literary and philanthropic achievements; will share prize money with Seattle writing center**

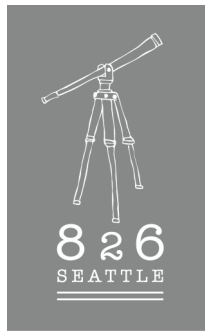
SEATTLE, September 13, 2007— Dave Eggers, the critically acclaimed novelist whose meteoric commercial success propelled him into the worlds of philanthropy, advocacy and education has been selected to receive the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Heinz Award in the Arts and Humanities, one of the largest individual achievement prizes in the world. Seattle will be a beneficiary of this award as \$25,000 will go directly to the work of 826 Seattle, one of the seven youth writing labs that Eggers founded around the country.

The author of best-selling works in both fiction and nonfiction as well as the founder of inner-city writing laboratories for youth and a publishing house for writers, Eggers is among six distinguished Americans selected to receive one of the \$250,000 awards, presented in five categories by the Heinz Family Foundation. At age 37, he is the youngest-ever recipient of the Heinz Award.

“Dave Eggers is not only an accomplished and versatile man of letters but the protagonist of a real-life story of generosity and inspiration,” said Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation. “As a young man, he has infused his love of writing and learning into the broader community, nurturing the talents and aspirations of a new generation of writers and creating new outlets for a range of literary expression. Whether as a writer, mentor or benefactor, he has provided voice to the value of human potential.”

“We are honored that Dave Eggers has decided to share the Heinz prize money with 826 Seattle,” said Teri Hein, executive director of the Greenwood-based writing and tutoring center. “His gift will help the organization serve hundreds of Seattle area students seeking to improve their creative and expository writing, and build the skills and confidence necessary to succeed in life.”

Having burst on the literary scene with his autobiographical bestseller, *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, before he was 30, Mr. Eggers has since enjoyed critical acclaim in both



fiction and nonfiction, in particular, with his 2006 novel, *What Is the What*, which was a finalist for the 2006 National Book Critics Award for Fiction. The *New York Times Book Review* called the novel “eloquent testimony to the power of storytelling . . . an extraordinary work of witness, and of art.”

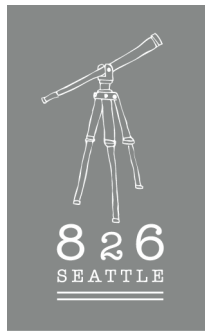
But it is his infectious love of writing—together with an inspiring commitment to nurturing young literary voices—that provided Mr. Eggers the impetus to found 826 Valencia, a writing laboratory for children that has expanded from his home in San Francisco to six other U.S. cities: Seattle, Boston, New York, Ann Arbor, Chicago, and Los Angeles. At a time when other young writers would be searching out the next bestseller, Mr. Eggers used monies from his book earnings in 2002 to open the first center, providing free tutoring, writing workshops, summer camps, publication projects and other services to kids age six to eighteen.

In order to help emerging writers, Mr. Eggers also launched McSweeney’s, a publishing house that produces his and other writers’ works, as well as *McSweeney’s*, a literary quarterly; *The Believer*, a monthly magazine on literary and political matters; and the Voice of Witness oral history series about social injustice. Having co-authored a book in 2005 about the relationship between teacher compensation and student achievement, Mr. Eggers also has become an outspoken advocate for raising teacher pay. His talents are not confined to the written page—Mr. Eggers has co-written the screenplay to the movie version of the children’s book, *Where the Wild Things Are*, by Maurice Sendak. The movie, directed by Spike Jonze, is expected to be released later this year. For the compelling impact of Mr. Eggers’s work, *Time* magazine named him one of its “100 Most Influential People of the Year” in 2005.

“I used to write in isolation, at a remove from the world—a remove I thought was necessary to a writer’s life,” Mr. Eggers said. But in the last five years or so, I’ve really come to realize how connected I need to be, and more importantly, how huge the impact of a book can be. A book can affect real change, in terms of understanding an issue or group of people, and even in concrete terms. At McSweeney’s and 826 Valencia, we’ve been lucky to have published books that raised tens of thousands of dollars for our literacy programs, books that have given voice to victims of human rights abuses, and now the response to *What Is the What* will actually make new schools possible in southern Sudan. And that’s on our small scale. Other writers and publishers are out there working on much larger scales, and their impact is incredible. Books still have a very central and powerful place in the world, and we’re happy to be a small part of it all. I’m humbled by this great honor from the Heinz Family Foundation, whose work I regard with respect and admiration.”

Since 1993, The Heinz Family Foundation has recognized individuals whose dedication, skill and generosity of spirit represent the best of the human qualities that the late Senator H. John Heinz III, for whom the award is named, held so dear.

Presented in five categories, the other Heinz Award recipients are



- **Environment (co-winners): Bernard Amadei**, Ph.D., Boulder, Colo., engineer, professor and founder of Engineers without Borders—USA; and **Susan Seacrest**, Lincoln, Neb., environmental advocate and founder of Groundwater Foundation
- **Human Condition: David L. Heymann**, M.D., Geneva, Switzerland, physician, World Health Organization administrator and international public health advocate
- **Public Policy: Donald M. Berwick**, M.D., Cambridge, Mass., physician, professor and health care reformer
- **Technology, the Economy and Employment: Hugh Herr**, Ph.D., Cambridge, Mass., inventor, professor and pioneer in biomechantronics

### **About the Heinz Foundation**

The Heinz Family Foundation, one of the Heinz Family Philanthropies, began as a charitable trust established by the late Sen. Heinz in 1984. His widow, Teresa Heinz, created the Heinz Awards in 1993 as the primary activity of the foundation. In addition to the Heinz Awards, the foundation directs a grant-making program that is active in a wide range of issues, principally those concerning women's health and environment, health care cost and coverage, as well as pensions and retirement security.

The Heinz Awards will be presented at a private ceremony on October 22 in Pittsburgh. Additional information is available online at [www.heinzawards.net](http://www.heinzawards.net).

### **About 826 Seattle**

826 Seattle ([826seattle.org](http://826seattle.org)) is a nonprofit writing and tutoring center dedicated to helping youth, ages six to 18, improve their creative and expository writing skills, and to helping teachers inspire their students to write. Its services are structured around the belief that great leaps in learning can happen with one-on-one attention and that strong writing skills are fundamental to future success. 826 Seattle is one of six 826 National chapters. The original, 826 Valencia, was founded by acclaimed author and philanthropist Dave Eggers and is located in San Francisco's Mission District ([826valencia.org](http://826valencia.org)). The others are in Ann Arbor ([826michigan.org](http://826michigan.org)); Brooklyn ([826nyc.org](http://826nyc.org)); Chicago ([826chi.org](http://826chi.org)); and Los Angeles ([826la.org](http://826la.org)).