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Media Contact: Lisa M. Kang,
Executive Director

Phone: 919.619.0483

Fax: 919.932.5799

E-Mail: Lisakang1@gmail.com

**NORTH CAROLINA ARTS IN ACTION CELEBRATES NATIONAL DANCE WEEK
WITH RASHKIS ELEMENTARY 4TH GRADE
& BALLET GREAT JACQUES D'AMBOISE**

CHAPEL HILL, NC April 25, 2006 – Only 14 weeks ago, North Carolina Arts in Action (NC-AIA) launched its innovative in-school dance program with the entire Rashkis Elementary 4th Grade. Ballet great and National Dance Institute Founder Jacques d'Amboise was there. Now he's back during National Dance Week, to see these students "in action" at their dance performance entitled *Moving to the Masters* on Thursday, April 27th at 1pm (in-school performance) and 7pm (free community performance).

Under the direction of Kirstie Tice Spadie, the Rashkis elementary 4th Grade will be moving to Mozart, bopping to Bach and hip-hopping to Handel with a special "I've Got the Music in Me" finale. "When this program first began, there were some students who were not interested in dancing at all. Now after 14 weeks, it has been rewarding to see how all of the students have shown excitement, energy, dedication and commitment. They are all *Moving to the Masters*," exclaimed Principal Deshera Mack.

This performance is dedicated to Mel and Zora Rashkis. Thanks to their assistance, North Carolina Arts in Action Founder and Chair Shirley Berger introduced this pilot program to the 4th graders of Rashkis Elementary. Berger served for many years on the Board of Directors of the National Dance Institute: New Mexico and has supported many other programs for children and the arts.

510 Meadowmont Village Circle, Suite 328, Chapel Hill, NC 27517

The mission of North Carolina Arts in Action (NC-AIA) is to transform the lives of North Carolina school children through dance. Using dance as a catalyst, NC-AIA seeks to engage children and their communities through participation in the arts. NC-AIA fosters a love of the arts, pride of achievement , and a belief in themselves that will carry over into all aspects of their lives. NC-AIA strives for diversity – including students of all economic, ethnic and social backgrounds as well as special needs children. This January, NC-AIA launched its first in-school pilot program at the Mel and Zora Rashkis Elementary School with 110 fourth graders participating.

A close relationship is in place between NC-AIA and the National Dance Institute of New York (NDI: New York), a non-profit organization founded by former principal dancer of the New York City Ballet, Jacques d'Amboise. Mr. d'Amboise is the Vice President of the NC-AIA Board of Directors and provides guidance to NC-AIA's Executive Director and Artistic Director. He is recognized as one of the finest dancers of our time and has been contributing his skills for over 30 years in the field of education.

Photography available on request.

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