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For immediate release:

Letters Home – Stories from Iraq & Afghanistan war soldiers at Young Auditorium

On Tuesday, November 3, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. Contemporary Issues presents *Letters Home* at Young Auditorium. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts. Tickets are available by calling 262-472-2222, or purchase on-line at www.uww.edu/youngauditorium.

The intense, emotional, heartfelt and honest stories of men and women who have served their country in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars are brought to life in *Letters Home*. Without politicizing, a powerful portrait of soldiers' experiences is portrayed by ten gifted actors who provide a voice not just for the soldiers, but for other family members as well. Their diverse voices are united in the belief that the person standing beside you is more important than you are. *Letters Home* is inspired by *The New York Times* articles, *The Things They Wrote* and the subsequent HBO documentary, *Last Letters Home*.

Letters Home puts the current war in Iraq front and center by bringing to life actual letters written by soldiers serving in the Middle East. The production uses letters and correspondences from Frank Schaeffer's books, *Voices From the Front*, *Letters Home From America's Military Family*, *Faith of Our Sons*, and *Keeping Faith*. The initial production last winter was critically acclaimed and was nominated for a Joseph Jefferson Award for "Outstanding New Play." Although the title of the play implies that all of the letters are from soldiers, they have also chosen to include a small number of correspondences from parents – their words, being no less important. These letters were written under the most difficult of circumstances; the disorientation of training, deployment, separation from family and loved ones, plus combat and occupation duties in Afghanistan and Iraq. They also help define for the audience—patriotism and what it means to serve our country today, through acts of bravery, compassion, social responsibility, a sense of community and brotherhood. *Letters Home* reveals the humanity that lies within the war as seen through the eyes of the men and women fighting it.

The production uses minimal props and set pieces to dramatize the letters. It employs the use of images and video projected behind the actors as they perform the letters as dramatic monologues. The photos and video used in the production are taken directly from actual soldiers' blogs and websites such as MYSFACE and FACEBOOK.

Come and see the dramatic and emotional stories of *Letters Home* at Young Auditorium on Tuesday November 3, 2009 at 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$29/\$24/\$19 gen. public, UW-W students \$16 and are available by calling 262-472-2222. Or purchase online at www.uww.edu/youngauditorium.

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