



news release

Contact: Diane Steinert, Communications Coordinator
330-677-4549 or dsteinert@WesternReservePublicMedia.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NewsNight Akron to choose 2009 Akron Newsmaker of the Year

Winner to be named during special broadcast on Friday, Jan. 8

KENT, Ohio — Tuesday, Dec. 29, 2009 — Each year, the weekly show **NewsNight Akron** announces the winner of Newsmaker of the Year, which recognizes the greater Akron individual whose work has had the most significant news impact during the past year. This year, for the first time, community members can vote for the 2009 Newsmaker of the Year. Western Reserve Public Media has set up a **NewsNight Akron** online voting page, accessible from its home page at westernreservepbs.org.

NewsNight Akron host Eric Mansfield and an expanded field of panelists will review and factor in the voting results prior to announcing the award winner on the Friday, Jan. 8, show, which will air on Western Reserve PBS (WNEO/WEAO 45.1/49.1) at 9 p.m. The special one-hour program will repeat on Western Reserve PBS on Saturday, Jan. 9, at 5 a.m. It also will air on the station's Fusion channel (WNEO/WEAO 45.2/49.2) on Saturday, Jan. 9, at 9:30 p.m. and on Monday, Jan. 11, at 8:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Nominees for the 2009 award are as follows:

- Bill Considine, president and CEO of Akron Children's Hospital
- Keith Dambrot, University of Akron head basketball coach
- Phil Gauer, president of Akron's fire union
- Craig Gilbride, retired Akron acting police chief
- Paul Hlynsky, Akron Fraternal Order of Police president
- LeBron James, Cleveland Cavaliers superstar

-more-



- Linda Kersker, recently deceased Akron municipal court judge
- The Rev. Knute Larson, retired co-senior pastor of The Chapel
- Fred Krum, deceased former director of Akron-Canton Airport
- Warner Mendenhall, attorney and former Akron city councilman who led mayoral recall campaign
- Jack Morrison, attorney removed from The University of Akron's board and from the Summit County Board of Elections for ethics violations
- Linda Omobien, newly elected Akron City council member
- Don Plusquellic, Akron mayor
- Caleb Porter, University of Akron head soccer coach
- Luis Proenza, president, The University of Akron
- The Rev. Ben Walker, retiring executive director, Haven of Rest

Following what has traditionally been a spirited debate, the winner will be chosen by panelists including host Eric Mansfield from WKYC-TV, Ed Esposito and Larry States from Rubber City Radio Group, Steve Hoffman from the Akron Beacon Journal, M. L. Schultze from WKSU and freelance journalist Jody Miller. Previous Newsmaker of the Year awardees include Luis Proenza, Sylvester Small and Plusquellic.

About NewsNight Akron

NewsNight Akron, which is recorded at Western Reserve Public Media's Production Hub in downtown Akron, is in its 11th season on Western Reserve PBS. The program offers spontaneous, lively, in-depth discussions about issues that affect the lives of people in greater Akron. Hosted by Eric Mansfield, WKYC-TV3 evening news co-anchor, **NewsNight Akron** features a roundtable discussion with a panel of local journalists that covers both breaking news stories on topics such as education, the community and local business, as well as ongoing subjects including elections and major news stories. Serving as regular panelists on the show are Ed Esposito, news director at Rubber City Radio Group; Steve Hoffman, political writer at the Akron Beacon Journal; and freelance journalist Jody Miller.

About Western Reserve Public Media

Western Reserve Public Media (formerly PBS 45 & 49) is owned and operated by Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a private, nonprofit corporation and consortium of Kent State University, The University of Akron and Youngstown State University. A trusted community resource, Western Reserve Public Media uses the power of commercial-free television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire.

Western Reserve PBS, a service of the organization, is the only broadcast television service that reaches all of northeast Ohio. It is available to 1.8 million households and 4.4 million people in the Cleveland and Youngstown designated market areas. In an average week, over 500,000 households tune in. The organization also operates three standard definition channels, Fusion (WNEO.2/WEAO.2), MHz Worldview (WNEO.3/WEAO.3) and V-me (WNEO.4/WEAO.4).

Through funding from eTech Ohio, Western Reserve Public Media provides K-12 educational technology training and instructional television programming to 21,500 educators and 256,700 students in eight Ohio counties. For more information about the organization, visit www.WesternReservePublicMedia.org or call 1-800-554-4549.

##