



Ntozake Shange Brings 'Rainbow' of Healing to Art Program for New Yorkers With Psychiatric Disabilities



Left to right: Ntozake Shange and Ifa Bayeza

NEW YORK, June 3 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ Community Access announced today that Ntozake Shange has joined forces with the organization as a visiting artist in its New York City-based art program for people with psychiatric disabilities. Shange is the author of the landmark theater work *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf*, which is headed to Broadway again with a new contemporized script and is being adapted for a film version directed by Tyler Perry.

Community Access is a leading provider of housing, employment preparation, counseling and support services for low-income New Yorkers with mental illness. The organization helps people recover and lead independent lives through providing multiple self-help and healing outlets.

Steve Coe, Chief Executive Officer, shared: "The diversity of learning that Community Access offers is a true reflection of the diversity of our community.

Fostering creativity, providing real-world experiences, and offering people a home of their own are central to helping people be a part of our community."

Community Access' celebrated "Art Collective Program"—in which Shange is involved as a visiting artist—teaches people to create original works of art, with a focus on designing, writing and constructing hand-crafted books. **Suzanne Coley, Director and Artist-in-Residence, described the Art Collective as the only program of its kind in the United States: "The chance to involve a legend like Ntozake Shange in our art program is life-changing for our participants. Ntozake is introducing a whole new rainbow of perspective to our program. She is helping our artists learn what it takes to share their own stories and become their dreams."**

Shange and her real-life sister, Ifa Bayeza, also a celebrated playwright and poet, will appear in a benefit event together on June 24, 2010 to help raise support and awareness for Community Access. The event, to be held at the Riverside Church Theatre in New York City, will begin at 6 PM with a VIP reception, followed by a 7 PM reading by the sisters from selected published and unpublished short works related to family, personal recovery and community healing.

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