

**AWARD-WINNING ILLUSTRATOR BRYAN COLLIER AND
AUTHOR DEBORAH GREGORY ENCOURAGE PHILADELPHIA’S CHILDREN TO
“JUMP AT THE SUN” AS PART OF DISNEY’S
ONGOING “READING TOGETHER” INITIATIVE**

Illustrator and Author to Appear at the African American Museum in Philadelphia

Philadelphia (Feb. 20, 2003) – Jump at the Sun Books, an imprint of Hyperion Books for Children/Disney Publishing Worldwide, will bring Caldecott and Coretta Scott King Award-winning illustrator Bryan Collier (“Martin’s Big Words”) and author Deborah Gregory (“Cheetah Girls”) to the African American Museum in Philadelphia on **Saturday, Feb. 22, from 1-4 p.m.** Collier and Gregory will read excerpts from their most recent works to hundreds of children and families, and will encourage the children to explore their imaginations by creating their own books. The event is part of Disney’s ongoing “Reading Together” initiative, which encourages parents and caregivers to read with children. The museum is located at 701 Arch Street.

“Disney Publishing Worldwide is dedicated to enhancing the creativity and imaginations of young children,” said Lisa Holton, Global Children’s Publisher, Disney Publishing Worldwide. “Our Jump at the Sun imprint was created to help celebrate African-American culture, and we are thrilled that two of our most esteemed illustrators and authors will be interacting with the children and families of Philadelphia, helping them learn to let their creativity flow.”

"The African American Museum in Philadelphia is dedicated to serving as a repository of African American culture and history in Philadelphia, the Delaware Valley, the Americas, and the world. The museum's mission is also committed to embracing the education of our youth, expanding their horizons, and allowing them an opportunity to learn about themselves and

others. It is our pleasure to have both Mr. Collier and Ms. Gregory with us during our Ujima Family Day celebration on February 22, 2003 so that we might reinforce the importance of literacy and creativity among our visitors," said Stephanie Wilson, director of Education and Public Programs.

Collier and Gregory will participate in individual question and answer sessions and excerpt readings, as well as a book signing in the African American Museum's store lobby. Following each of the readings, children will be invited to participate in "My Voice in Print," a hands-on book making activity. Collier will be reading to 5-8 year olds and Gregory will be reading to 9-13 year olds in Galleries Two and Three of the museum. Collier and Gregory will be on hand to sign books from 3 – 4 p.m.

Collier's innovative illustration style of combining collage with watercolor has garnered him many accolades including the Caldecott Honor for Excellence in Children's Illustration (2002) for Martin's Big Words, the Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award (2001) for Uptown which he also co-authored, and the Coretta Scott King Honor (2001) for Freedom River. Collier, who gained nationwide recognition for placing first in a Congressional Art Competition, has had his work displayed at the Capitol Building in Washington D.C. He also was awarded a scholarship to Pratt Institute in New York City through a national talent competition.

Gregory is the author of the bestselling Cheetah Girls books, which follow four teenage girls in Manhattan who dream of stardom in the music world. The Cheetah Girls series was so well received that it is being turned into a Disney Channel/ABC Family Channel television movie produced by Whitney Houston. Gregory, who earned a degree in English literature and writing at Empire State College, is also credited as a contributing writer to publications such as *Essence*, *More*, *Vibe* and *Grace* among others.

Martin's Big Words and Cheetah Girls were released by Jump at the Sun, an imprint of Disney Publishing Worldwide's Hyperion Books for Children, which launched in fall 1998 with the mission of celebrating the African-American experience and culture. "Jump at the Sun" takes its name from advice given to acclaimed African-American writer Zora Neale Hurston, whose mother encouraged her to aim high in life – to jump at the sun.

DisneyHand, the worldwide outreach program for The Walt Disney Company, oversees Disney's "Reading Together" initiative and is dedicated to making the dreams of families and children a reality through public service initiatives, community outreach and volunteerism in the areas of learning, compassion, the arts and the environment. The Walt Disney Company, together with its subsidiaries and affiliates, is a diversified, international family entertainment and media enterprise which includes Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, The Walt Disney Studios, ABC, Inc., ESPN, Disney Channel, Disney Stores, television and radio stations and Internet web sites. For more information on Disney's corporate public service efforts, please visit our Web site at www.disneyhand.com.

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