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Tommy Tune to Be Honored at American Celebration

ORANGE, Calif., July 11, 2008 -- Nine-time Tony Award-winner Tommy Tune is set to receive this year's Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award at Chapman University's annual American Celebration. Tickets and tables for the November 1 black-tie gala and stage show, held in Chapman's Memorial Hall, will go on sale soon; check www.chapman.edu/amcel for more information, or call 714-744-7958.

Proceeds from the American Celebration gala – Orange County's largest single gala fund-raiser – support Chapman University's scholarship fund, making it possible for deserving students who might otherwise be unable to enroll to attend Chapman. Last year's American Celebration broke all individual-event fund-raising records for the university and the individual gala record for the county, raising \$2.4 million for these vital scholarships. Nearly 80 percent of Chapman students receive some form of scholarship assistance.

Tommy Tune will add the Chapman award to an already crowded trophy shelf. His nine Tony Awards, in four different categories (actor, featured actor, choreographer, director), are a record for any Broadway artist. He has also received the nation's highest award in the performing arts – the National Medal of Arts – as well as eight Drama Desk Awards, two Astaire Awards, the American Dance Award, the Drama League Award and the George Abbott Award for Lifetime Achievement, among countless other honors.

The tall (6-foot 6 ½-inch) Texas-born performer began his professional career in the mid-1960s, when he danced in the chorus line of three Broadway shows. He was discovered by a Twentieth Century Fox talent scout and was cast as Ambrose in the movie version of *Hello, Dolly!* (1969), starring Barbra Streisand and directed by Gene Kelly. He also performed in the film musical *The Boy Friend* (1971), starring Twiggy, and then returned to Broadway in Michael Bennett's musical *Seesaw* (1974), winning his first Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in a Musical.

Tune made his New York directorial debut with the groundbreaking Off Broadway hit *The Club* (1976), for which he was honored with the Obie Award. On Broadway, he debuted as choreographer/co-director of *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, followed by *A Day in Hollywood/A Night in the Ukraine*, which he directed and for which he won his first Tony Award for Choreography.

In 1981 Tune helmed the hit musical *Nine*, and as awarded his third Tony, for Directing a Broadway Musical. A double Tony Award win followed, as Best Actor in a Musical and Best Choreography for the Gershwin musical *My One and Only*, co-starring his old friend Twiggy (1982). *Grand Hotel: The Musical* (1989) was next, with Tony wins for Best Choreography and Best Direction. The following year, Tune did what no artist had done before when he won the same two Tony Awards, this time for *The Will Rogers Follies*.

Tune wrote and published a memoir, *Footnotes*, in 1997, and in the same year recorded a CD, *Slow Dancin'*. More recently, audiences have seen him starring in the \$90 million spectacular *EFX* at the MGM Grand Hotel, and in his most recent theatrical production, *Dr. Doolittle*, in which he toured the U.S. in 2006.