

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Celebrities Team Up With the Screen Actors Guild Foundation For National Literacy Program ‘Storyline Online’**

*The Innovative Online Program Optimizes Traditional Story-Time for a New Generation*

Los Angeles, CA. The Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Foundation, the charitable arm of the Screen Actors Guild, has gathered celebrity members in film and television to promote a program to increase literacy nationwide, *Storyline Online* ( [HYPERLINK "http://www.bookpals.net/storyline"](http://www.bookpals.net/storyline) [www.bookpals.net/storyline](http://www.bookpals.net/storyline)). The program streams video programs on-line featuring celebrities reading children’s books aloud and offers books of various themes by award winning authors.

SAG Foundation Executive Director, Marcia Smith comments, “In today’s sophisticated society, it is unacceptable to discover that more than 40 million Americans are functionally illiterate. *Storyline Online* is dedicated to improving literacy and promoting a love of reading to children at the critical elementary school level.”

The 2003 line-up showcases readings by **Elijah Wood** (Lord Of The Rings), **Melissa Gilbert** (Little House on the Prairie and SAG President), **Esai Morales** (NYPD Blue and American Family), **Bonnie Bartlett & William Daniels** (St. Elsewhere and Boy Meets World) and special guest former Vice President **Al Gore**.

Launched in 2002, the program builds on the SAG Foundation’s BookPALS (*Performing Artists for Literacy in Schools*) program, in which professional actors read books to children in schools where the student population is predominantly made up of socio-economically disadvantaged children who currently demonstrate low scores on standardized literacy tests. Many of the students are English second language learners.

Sponsored by Verizon, *Storyline Online* is a ground-breaking web site that uses technology to make the magic of books come alive. Teachers and parents will find the videos exciting and easy since each video is accompanied by a prepared curriculum including theme, lesson suggestions and a bibliography of related books integrating technology with early literacy.

-More-

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**About SAG Foundation**

SAG Foundation ( [HYPERLINK "http://www.sagfoundation.org"](http://www.sagfoundation.org)  
[www.sagfoundation.org](http://www.sagfoundation.org)) is the charitable arm of the Screen Actors Guild offering financial, health and education assistance to SAG members. It has reached the community at large with its nationally recognized BookPALS program for which SAG members lend their reading talent to children in schools. Since its inception in 1993, BookPALS has garnered enormous success and many awards for providing literacy opportunities to millions of children.

Artwork is available upon request.

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