

A Night of A Thousand Stars at the 34th Annual Gracie Awards® Gala



Pictured Above:

Gracies Host Niecy Nash with Dr. Maya Angelou; AWRT/Dove Real Beauty Award Honoree Amy Poehler with Dove's Kathy O'Brien; Niecy Nash, Ruby Gettinger, Kathy Griffin, Suze Orman, and Rachael Ray; Katie Couric; AWRT President Maria Brennan, Keke Palmer, Judy McGrath, and AWRT Chair Sylvia Strobel, Esq.

Pictures Courtesy Larry Busacca/Wireimage

For the pictures included in this release as well as additional pictures, visit www.wireimage.com.

New York, NY – June 4, 2009 – Last night, New York City's Times Square shone a little brighter as American Women in Radio and Television (AWRT) descended upon the Marriott Marquis on Broadway, where the 2009 National Gracie Award winners were honored in a star-studded gala. Hosted by the Style Network's *Clean House* and Comedy Central *Reno 911*'s **Niecy Nash**, the Gracies Awards Gala recognizes exemplary programming created for women, by women, and about women in all facets of electronic media, including radio, television, cable and new media.

The black-tie Gala attracted the best and brightest in the field, including: XM *Oprah & Friends*' **Dr. Maya Angelou** and **Gayle King**; NBC *Law & Order: SVU*'s **Mariska Hargitay** and **Stephanie March**; Bravo *My Life on the D List*'s **Kathy Griffin**; Bravo *Real Housewives of New York City*'s **LuAnn de Lesseps**, **Kelly Killoren Bensimon**, **Alex McCord**, and **Jill Zarin**; CBS News' **Katie Couric** and **Bob Schieffer**; NBC News' **Ann Curry**; CNN's **Anderson Cooper**, **Candy Crowley** and **Erica Hill**; HBO *Big Love*'s **Branka Katic**; CNBC's **Suze Orman**; **Jane Pauley**; **Melissa Rivers**; ABC *All My Children*'s **Debbi Morgan** and **Cornelius Smith, Jr.**; Nickelodeon's **Keke Palmer**; ESPN's **Hannah Storm** and **Lisa Salters**, as well as many others.

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Movie and television star, **Amy Poehler**, was honored with the 2009 *Dove Real Beauty Award*. Since 2004, AWRT has partnered with Dove on the *Campaign for Real Beauty*, and created the *Dove Real Beauty Award* to honor an individual who best embodies and expresses the "substance and spirit" of real beauty through her life and career. On screen and off, Amy Poehler has consistently demonstrated her dedication to empowering women and girls everywhere. Through her network series *Parks and Recreation*, and her digital series for the ON Networks, *Smart Girls at the Party*, Amy continues to acknowledge and support girls who are "changing the world by being themselves".

MTV Networks' Chairman and CEO, **Judy McGrath**, received the 2009 *Foundation of AWRT Achievement Award*, to honor the extraordinary strides and tremendous successes she's accomplished in the field of electronic media. As a long time member of the MTV family, McGrath has helped turn MTV into the influential global brand it is today, symbolizing a culture, a style, an attitude and a vibrant musical landscape which indelibly brought the creativity of music, with its passion, originality and energy, to television.

Rachael Ray, entertainment icon, daytime talk show host and best-selling author, received the *AWRT Tribute Award*, which is given to one who, through their work, truly makes a difference in the media and beyond. Rachael's tremendous accomplishments, in a short period of time and in a cross section of media properties, have sent a strong message of empowerment to women around the world.

The audience was dazzled by R&B songstress **LaShell Griffin**, who captivated the crowd with her towering voice, singing a track from her sophomore album, *Dreams Are Possible*.

"AWRT is proud to honor such amazing women who not only make the electronic media industry an exciting, intelligent and informative arena, but also inspire all of us and women everywhere to be the best we can be," emphasized AWRT President Maria E. Brennan, CAE. "We congratulate and commend all of this year's winners."

The Gracies are presented by the Foundation of AWRT, the philanthropic arm of AWRT that supports educational programs, charitable activities, public service campaigns and scholarships to benefit the public, the electronic media and allied fields. The Gracie Awards, established in 1975, honors programming and individuals of the highest caliber in all facets of radio, television, cable and web-based media, including news, drama, comedy, commercials, public service, documentary and sports.

The event is made possible through the generous support of the 2009 title sponsor Dove and *The Campaign for Real Beauty* and the following additional sponsors: Arbitron, CBS News, Clear Channel, CNBC, CNN, Disney-ABC Television Group, Ford Motor Company Fund, Katz Media Group, MTV Networks, National Public Radio, NBC, NCTA, Oprah Radio, The Rachael Ray Show, The Style Network, VCI Solutions, and WE tv.

For more information about the 2009 Gracies, please visit www.thegracies.org. For the most up-to-date, insider information, follow the Gracie Awards on Twitter @thegracies. **CREDENTIALLED PRESS:** For press information about covering the red carpet and the event, please contact JLM Public Relations at 212-431-5227.

About AWRT: The year 2009 marks the 58th Anniversary of American Women in Radio & Television (AWRT), the longest established professional association dedicated to advancing women in media and entertainment. AWRT carries forth its mission by educating, advocating and acting as a resource to its members and the industry at large. Founded in 1951, AWRT works to improve the quality of electronic media; promote the entry, development and advancement of women in the field; foster communication and idea exchange; and give back to the community we serve.

About The Foundation of AWRT: The Foundation of AWRT is the philanthropic arm of American Women in Radio and Television, supporting educational programs, charitable activities, public service campaigns and scholarships to benefit the public, the electronic media and allied fields. The Foundation of AWRT has created partnerships and joint-initiatives with the National Middle School Association, the Emma Bowen Foundation, the American Red Cross and other organizations that are philosophically aligned with the mission of the Foundation of AWRT.

The Foundation supports several public service campaigns including most recently *AWRT Empowering America* which pays tribute to many of America's most pioneering and inspiring women. Through this initiative, the Foundation of AWRT has adopted needy urban middle schools around the country and provided educational donations derived from collateral based on the *Empowering America* program. The Foundation also produces nationally acclaimed recognition programs including the Gracie Awards[®], a live, New York-based gala that awards exemplary programming created for, by, and about women. Please visit its web site at www.awrt.org.