

The Actors Gymnasium is the proud recipient of The 2009 Evanston Mayor's Arts Organization Award



**the actors
gymnasium**
Circus & Performing
& Arts School

EVANSTON ROUNDTABLE

3 March 2010

Awards for the Arts to Thomson, Nash and The Actors Gymnasium

Karen Thomson of Literature for All of Us and The Actors Gymnasium received the Mayor's Award for the Arts at a ceremony that took place after the Mayor's State of the City address. Ms. Thomson and The Actors Gymnasium each received an etching by Elizabeth Ockwell, resident artist at Noyes Cultural Arts Center. Ms. Thomson, founder of Literature for All of Us, received the individual award. The organization's tagline is "opening worlds by opening books." One of the letters received about a book group Ms. Thomson founded for Literature for All of Us participants said, "I was a lost soul guided into a new world through reading and writing. ... The book group gave me the gift of hope and gift of dreams."

The Actors Gymnasium, founded in 1995, is a school for circus and performing arts dedicated to the education and development of multi-skilled, physical-theatre artists. Best known for its circus and aerial arts classes, The Actors Gymnasium is housed in the Noyes Cultural Arts Center.

"I love having a circus in town," said Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl in presenting The Actors Gymnasium award to its artistic director Larry DiStasi. "They teach people to fly."

The Arts and Business Committee Leadership Award went to Jim Nash, president of Farnsworth-Hill, Inc., an Evanston-based real estate brokerage and management firm. Mr. Nash was selected because of his participation in Art Under Glass, a program that exhibits local artists in vacant storefront spaces. In top photo, Ms. Thomson receives the Ockwell etching from Jeff Cory of the Evanston Arts Council; in photo at bottom, Mayor Tishdal presents the award to Larry DiStasi of The Actors Gymnasium. Photos taken by Natalie Wainwright.