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Burnsville Performing Arts Center

Wolf Larson named Executive Director

For Immediate Release:
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Wolf Larson will be the first Executive Director of the new Burnsville Performing Arts Center opening in December of 2008 in Burnsville, MN. The announcement was made by **Steve Peters**, president and CEO of VenuWorks, the company retained by the City of Burnsville under a five year contract to manage the new performing arts center.

Larson has worked in the performing arts industry for more than 20 years. He comes to Burnsville from the Flint Center for the Performing Arts in Cupertino, Calif., where he has been the assistant general manager since 2002. Before that he worked 15 years for JAM Productions in Chicago, serving in the theatrical and concert divisions. He also has experience working with the Chicago Ballet, the Practical Theatre Company of Evanston, Ill., and the national touring company for Second City of Chicago.

"I have produced events as diverse as classical ballet and contemporary rock music in venues ranging from classrooms to football stadiums across the U.S. and Canada," said Larson, who received his bachelor's degree from Northwestern University and recently completed his MBA at St. Mary's College of California.

"I believe my extensive experience in the arts as a promoter, performer, designer and manager, combined with a formal business background, allows me to offer a unique perspective to the operation of a major performance organization," Larson said.

Larson was responsible for budget preparation and implementation, maintaining client relations and event booking at the Flint Center.

"I believe this experience has prepared me to assume a leadership role at a venue such as the Burnsville Performing Arts Center," Larson said.

Peters said Larson's credentials made him an excellent fit for the Burnsville Performing Arts Center, which is scheduled to open in the winter of 2008.

"Wolf is someone that our VenuWorks facilities staffs enjoyed working with when he was at JAM Productions," Peters said. "We were happy to find out he was interested in this position and glad to be able to bring him on board in this capacity.

"Obviously, Wolf has extensive experience in the entertainment field. He has learned the business from both sides – as a promoter and facility manager – and has been successful in these roles. We will be relying upon those experiences to lay a solid foundation for what we believe will be one of the premier theatrical facilities in the Upper Midwest."

"I had the pleasure of meeting Wolf and his family," said Elizabeth Kautz, Mayor of Burnsville. "His strong arts and business background will make him an outstanding leader for our City's Performing Arts Center."

The Burnsville Performing Arts Center is a \$20 million project. It will feature a 1,000-seat theatre, as well as a 150-seat "Black Box" theatre, an art gallery and meeting rooms. Ground was broken in July 2007. The architect is Ankeny Kell Architects of St. Paul, Minn.

BACKGROUND

VenuWorks (formerly Compass Facility Management) is well known for its success in providing full management services for arenas, theaters, and convention centers, which are primarily under the governance of municipalities, counties, colleges, and universities. VenuWorks, headquartered in Ames, Iowa, is the third largest facilities management company in the United States, serving 26 facilities in 15 communities throughout the US. It also manages food and beverage operations and provides event booking and promotion services. VenuWorks also performs feasibility studies and consulting work for clients with existing and prospective public assembly facilities.