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American Women in Radio & Television Announces Geraldine Laybourne, Chairman/CEO of Oxygen Media, as Keynote Speaker for Gracie Awards Luncheon

June 8, 2005 (McLean, VA) - American Women in Radio & Television (AWRT) is pleased to announce that **Geraldine Laybourne**, Chairman/CEO of Oxygen Media, will be this year's Gracie Allen Awards® Luncheon Keynote Speaker. The Gracies® luncheon will take place on Thursday, June 23, 2005 at 12:30 p.m. at the Tavern on the Green in New York. The Gracies Luncheon will be hosted by **Roz Abrams**, Anchor of CBS 2 News New York. The Gracie Allen Awards recognizes exemplary programming created for women, by women, and about women in all facets of electronic media, including radio, television, cable and web-based media.

Geraldine Laybourne founded Oxygen Media and has served as its chairman and chief executive officer since its inception. A pioneer in creating innovative and high-quality television programming for children, Ms. Laybourne spent 16 years at Nickelodeon, taking over the management of the network in 1984. Prior to starting Oxygen, Ms. Laybourne was president of Disney/ABC Cable Networks (from 1996-1998) where she was responsible for overseeing current cable programming for the Walt Disney Company and its ABC subsidiary. Ms. Laybourne has been singled out for her many contributions to the industry. She was ranked No. 1 among the 50 most influential women in the entertainment industry by The Hollywood Reporter, in 1996 and named one of the 25 most influential people in America by Time magazine that same year. Her numerous awards include: the Annenberg Public Policy Center's award for Distinguished Lifetime Contribution to Children and Television, the New York Women in Communications Matrix Award® for Broadcasting, and the Creative Coalition's Spotlight Award. In 1995, she was inducted into the Broadcasting & Cable Hall of Fame. In October of 2004 she was inducted into The Cable Center Hall of Fame. Ms. Laybourne sits on a number of boards and advisory committees, including The National Cable Television Association, The National Council for Families and Television, New York Women in Film & Television (Advisory Board), Cable Positive (Honorary Chair). In 1997 she was elected to the Board of Trustees of Vassar College.

"AWRT picked me to be the keynote speaker because I am the only one who has been around as long as they have," emphasized Geraldine Laybourne. "And like them, I care about bringing along the next generation of women. AWRT has been standing up for women for decades and I am honored to be included in such an extraordinary event."

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June 8, 2005
Page Two

A black-tie Gala, hosted by CNN's Paula Zahn, will be held the previous evening, June 22, 2005, from 6:30-10:00 p.m. in the Broadway Ballroom of the New York Marriott Marquis Hotel, to honor the 2005 Gracie Allen Awards National and Grand Award 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 Allen Awards, established in 1975, honors programming and individuals of the highest caliber in all facets of electronic media, including news, drama, comedy, commercials, public service, documentary and sports.

Tickets for the Gala are \$225 for AWRT Members, \$250 for Non-Members, and \$300 (if available) at the door. Tickets for the Gala can be purchased online at www.awrt.org.

Ticket for the Luncheon are \$140 for AWRT Members, \$165 for Non-Members and \$200 (if available) at the door. Tickets for the Luncheon can be purchased online at www.awrt.org.

Sponsor packages are available ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000. For more information, please contact AWRT Headquarters at (703) 506-3290.

For more information about the Gracie Allen Awards, please visit www.awrt.org.

About AWRT: The year 2001 marked the 50th Anniversary and a golden highlight for American Women in Radio and Television (AWRT) Inc., the longest established professional association dedicated to advancing the impact of women in the electronic media and allied fields. Headquartered in the Washington, DC-metropolitan area, 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 media; serve as a medium for communication and idea exchange; and become active in community concerns.

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 Allen Awards[®], a live, New York-based gala that awards exemplary programming created for, by, and about women.

For more information about AWRT and the Foundation of AWRT, including membership, call its headquarters at (703) 506-3290, or visit its web site at www.awrt.org.

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