

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: David Harris, The Mind Trust  
[dharris@themindtrust.org](mailto:dharris@themindtrust.org); (317) 822-8102

Amber Deckard, Summer Advantage USA  
[adeckard@summeradvantage.org](mailto:adeckard@summeradvantage.org); (317) 727-9814

**-The Mind Trust Fellow Earl Martin Phalen To Receive Black Entertainment Television's  
*Shine a Light Award* at Nationally Televised Awards Ceremony-**

Indianapolis, IN - The Mind Trust, an Indianapolis-based nonprofit supporting education innovation and entrepreneurship, is pleased to announce that Earl Martin Phalen, a recipient of The Mind Trust's prestigious Education Entrepreneur Fellowship, will be presented with the BET *Shine a Light Award* for his work improving education for low-income children in Indiana and across the country.

Phalen is the Founder of Summer Advantage USA, a new national nonprofit that provides elementary and middle school students living in low-income communities with research-based summer learning programs designed to produce substantial academic gains and help close the achievement gap.

Studies have shown that low-income students lose about two months of grade level equivalency in math and reading skills over the summer. In summer 2009, Summer Advantage USA launched in Indianapolis, providing nearly 800 students with five weeks of academic and enrichment activities led by highly qualified teachers. The program produced very impressive results: students gained approximately three months of reading and math skills during the five-week program.

This summer, Summer Advantage USA is serving over 3,000 students in Indianapolis and communities across Indiana.

Phalen is also the CEO of Reach Out and Read, a national network of 25,000 pediatricians in 4,500 hospitals that support early childhood literacy. Reach Out and Read is an evidence-based nonprofit organization that promotes early literacy and school readiness in pediatric exam rooms nationwide by giving new books to children and advice to parents about the importance of reading aloud. The 3.9 million families served annually by Reach Out and Read read together more often, and their children enter kindergarten better prepared to succeed, with larger vocabularies and stronger language skills.

David Harris, Founder and CEO of The Mind Trust congratulated Phalen on his honor. "Earl is an extraordinary education entrepreneur," Harris said. "Summer Advantage USA is changing how the summer months can be used to dramatically improve academic outcomes. We are pleased that Earl is being recognized by BET for the extraordinary work he has done in Indianapolis and around the nation."

Phalen noted, "This award is a testament to community partners like The Mind Trust and our amazing educators and pediatricians who tirelessly support a brighter future for children across the country. When we come together to improve our communities, phenomenal things can happen. I want to also personally thank my family, my mentor Professor Charles Ogletree, and BET CEO Debra Lee for their commitment to our children and families."

Owned by media giant Viacom and distributed to over 104 million households in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean, the BET Awards recognize outstanding achievement in entertainment and professional sports. Queen Latifah will host the BET Awards, which will be held at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles and will air June 27, 2010 at 8pm (EST) on BET.

### **About The Mind Trust**

The Mind Trust is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to dramatically improve public education for underserved children by empowering education entrepreneurs to develop or expand transformative education initiatives. To achieve its mission, The Mind Trust has two strategies: (1) a *nationally unique* Education Entrepreneur Fellowship that serves as an incubator for transformative education ventures; and (2) a Venture Fund to recruit to Indianapolis the nation's most successful entrepreneurial education initiatives. The Mind Trust has invested over \$3 million from its Venture Fund to successfully attract Teach For America, The New Teacher Project, College Summit and Diploma Plus to Indianapolis. [www.themindtrust.org](http://www.themindtrust.org)

### **About Summer Advantage USA**

Summer Advantage USA engages thousands of children each summer in highly effective summer learning, physical fitness and enrichment courses such as art, drama and music. Participation in Summer Advantage USA makes a net five month difference in learning achievements for children. Earl Martin Phalen is the Founder. [www.summeradvantage.org](http://www.summeradvantage.org)

### **About Reach Out and Read**

Reach Out and Read is comprised of 25,000 pediatricians in 4,500 hospitals across the nation. Pediatricians “prescribe reading” to 3.9 million children annually. It is one of the few medical nonprofits with both substantial evidence of impact (14 independent evaluations) and significant national scale (over 30% of all low income mothers and preschoolers in the United States participate in the program). Earl Martin Phalen is the CEO. [www.reachoutandread.org](http://www.reachoutandread.org)