BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE ANNOUNCES
THREE-CITY TOUR OF
NOTES FROM THE FIELD: DOING TIME IN EDUCATION, THE CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

Award-winning actress Anna Deavere Smith to perform excerpts of her one-woman show in Stockton, Davis, and Klamath

August 7, 2015 — Berkeley Repertory Theatre today announces that it will present a three-city Northern California tour of Anna Deavere Smith’s Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education, The California Chapter, a one-woman show about the school-to-prison pipeline. Following a critically acclaimed three-week run at Berkeley Rep’s Roda Theatre, Smith will return to communities she visited during her research for the Pipeline Project to present excerpts of monologues from Notes from the Field. She will share her learnings and encourage dialogue and action to address the school-to-prison pipeline. The tour will also serve as an opportunity to spur youth within those communities to take action around racial inequities in the school system.

Excerpts of Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education, The California Chapter will be presented on Thursday, August 20 in Stockton and hosted by Fathers and Families of San Joaquin; Saturday, August 22 in Davis as part of the Sisters and Brothers at the Capitol Youth Conference and Advocacy Day; and on Monday, August 24 in Klamath, hosted by Judge Abby Abinanti and the Yurok Tribal Court. Tickets for these performances are not available to the public but for more information, please contact the host organizations:

- For Stockton: Sammy Nunez, snunez@ffsj.org
- For Davis: Evangeline Reyes, ereyes@calendow.org
- For Klamath: Matt Mais, mmais@yuroktribe.nsn.us

“Notes from the Field addresses one of the major civil rights issues of our time,” says Berkeley Rep Managing Director Susan Medak. “We’re honored to continue the conversation about the school-to-prison pipeline off our stage by bringing an excerpt of the show to the communities deeply affected by this issue. Theatre has the power to change lives, and we’ve seen that to be true with Anna’s performance. As we take the show on the road, we hope to continue to spark awareness and action toward a solution.”

“I’m elated to be returning to the communities who have enhanced my knowledge and deepened my awareness of the severity of the school-to-prison pipeline,” adds Smith. “I will be forever grateful for the individuals who opened up to me and welcomed me into their communities during my research for the Pipeline Project. I look forward to sharing my learnings and to witnessing these communities in conversation about this critical issue.”

Smith’s performance in Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education, The California Chapter at Berkeley Rep, which ran July 11 to August 2, was highly praised and lauded by critics and audiences alike. The San Francisco Chronicle writes, “Transforming herself into many different people, remarkably re-created from her extensive interviews, [Anna Deavere Smith] draws indelible connections between the high rates of incarceration of marginalized youth and other national problems in a manner as eye-opening and provocative as it is sure-handed and emotionally moving.” Adds Bay Area News Group/San Jose Mercury News, “In the theater [Smith] is famed as an innovator who has striven to take documentary theater to new heights. Here she is experimenting at the crossroads of art and public policy…. Unforgettable characters.

RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE
Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education, The California Chapter’s Northern California tour is funded in part by a grant from The California Endowment and from The California Wellness Foundation (Cal Wellness). Created in 1922 as a private independent foundation, Cal Wellness’ mission is to improve the health of the people of California by making grants for health promotion, wellness education, and disease prevention. Additional support for the project comes from the Akonadi Foundation; the Panta Rhea Foundation; the Sierra Health Foundation; Whole Foods Market; and the MAP Fund, supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The producers for the show are Anna Deavere Smith and Robert Council & Ann Parks-Council. Lead support for the Anna Deavere Smith School-to-Prison Pipeline Project is provided by The Ford Foundation. Major support is provided by The Atlantic Philanthropies, the NoVo Foundation, the Open Society Foundations, the Panta Rhea Foundation, and the Health Happens Here Initiative of the California Endowment. In 2014, Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education, The California Chapter, was part of the third annual Summer Residency Lab of The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep’s Center for the Creation and Development of New Work.

Anna Deavere Smith is an actress and playwright and has appeared at Berkeley Rep in Let Me Down Easy, Fires in the Mirror, and Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992. She is said to have created a new form of theatre. She has created more than 18 one-person shows based on hundreds of interviews, most of which deal with social issues. Twilight: Los Angeles, about the Los Angeles race riots of 1992, was performed around the country and on Broadway. PBS is currently streaming that play due to its relevance to current events. Her most recent one-person show, Let Me Down Easy, focused on health care in the U.S. Three of her plays have been broadcast on American Playhouse and Great Performances (PBS). In popular culture you have seen her in Nurse Jackie, Blackish, Madame Secretary, The West Wing, The American President, Rachel Getting Married, Philadelphia, and others. Books include Letters to a Young Artist and Talk to Me: Listening Between the Lines. She is founder and director of the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue at New York University. Recently she was named the 2015 Jefferson Lecturer by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The lecture, established in 1972, is the highest honor the federal government confers for distinguished intellectual achievement in the humanities. Prizes include the National Humanities Medal presented by President Obama, a MacArthur fellowship, the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Award, two Tony nominations, and two Obies. She was runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize for her play Fires in the Mirror. She has received several honorary degrees, among them from Yale University, Juilliard, the University of Pennsylvania, Spelman, Williams, Northwestern, and Radcliffe. She serves on the boards of the Museum of Modern Art, the Aspen Institute, the American Museum of Natural History, and Grace Cathedral-San Francisco. She is a University Professor at New York University.

ABOUT BERKELEY REP
Berkeley Repertory Theatre has grown from a storefront stage to an international leader in innovative theatre. Known for its core values of imagination and excellence, as well as its educated and adventurous audience, the nonprofit has provided a welcoming home for emerging and established artists since 1968. In four decades, four million people have enjoyed more than 300 shows at Berkeley Rep. These shows have gone on to win five Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, and many other honors. Its bustling facilities – the 600-seat Roda Theatre, the 400-seat Thrust Stage, the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, the Osher Studio, and a spacious new campus in West Berkeley – are helping revitalize a renowned city. For more information, visit www.berkeleyprep.org.

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