

For Immediate Release:

April 29, 2004

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**Proposal to Name San Jose Rep Theatre
Building After Susan and Phil Hammer**
*Mayor Gonzales cites the Hammers' strong support
for arts and long service to San José*



San José ---- Naming the San Jose Repertory Theatre's downtown theater building after former San José Mayor Susan Hammer and her husband Phil Hammer was jointly proposed today by Mayor Ron Gonzales and the San Jose Repertory Board of Directors in recognition of the Hammers' support for the arts and 40 years of service and leadership in San José.

The proposed name for the Rep's principal performance facility is the "Susan and Phil Hammer Theater Center." The San Jose Arts Commission will consider the recommendation in May, and the City Council will act on it by June this year.

"Susan and Phil have each dedicated their lives to serving the people of San Jose," said Gonzales. "They have been invaluable in building a strong foundation for the growth and

San Jose Rep Home Renamed “Susan and Phil Hammer Theatre Center”

2-2-2

vitality of arts and culture that has enriched life for our residents and made San José a cultural center for our region.”



As mayor, Susan Hammer led the effort to build a permanent home for the San José Repertory Theatre when she made the project a priority for the San Jose Redevelopment Agency in 1991. The new theater allowed the company to grow and serve local audiences and youth with quality performances and outreach. In addition, a dedicated space for the Rep freed up other performance venues for other local arts organizations.

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As a founding board member and as the board's second president, Phil Hammer was instrumental in guiding the Rep during its early years of growth and development, and he encouraged the new company to serve the community with quality theatrical productions and educational programs. He promoted a strong partnership between the Rep and Lincoln High School, a performing arts magnet school, which remains active today.

Phil Hammer was a key participant in the San Jose Rep's fundraising efforts to secure private sector support for the project to go with the Redevelopment Agency investment. He served on the community task force that reviewed the theater's design and represented the interests of producers, performers, audiences, and the downtown.

“The leadership, dedication, and skill demonstrated by Susan and Phil Hammer were essential factors in the company's growth and the success of our new downtown home,” said San Jose Rep board president Chris Worrall.

San Jose Rep Home Renamed “Susan and Phil Hammer Theatre Center”

3-3-3

“On behalf of the company and the community we serve, we are delighted to express our gratitude to the Hammers by naming this building, and we are deeply honored to have their names on our marquee.”

Before becoming Mayor of San José in 1991, Susan Hammer had long experience working directly on behalf of community arts organizations. She was a founding boardmember of the San José Museum of Art and fought successfully to preserve its downtown historic landmark building. Her advocacy of arts and culture continues today as a founder and the current president of Cultural Initiative Silicon Valley.

San Jose Rep was founded in 1980, produced its first season at the Montgomery Theater in 1981, and soon became one of the fastest growing theatres in the United States. In November 1997 the Rep raised the curtain in its new theater on Paseo de San Antonio to rave reviews and enthusiastic public response.



The facility’s dramatic architectural design and intimate auditorium allow for excellent acoustics and sight lines for theatregoers. With a growing audiences and exciting performances, the Rep’s accomplishments have become a matter of great pride for all of San José.

“The Hammers continue to be an inspiration to us, and we are richer for their vision and commitment to the arts,” said Timothy Near, artistic director for San Jose Rep. “Together Susan and Phil are tireless in promoting the importance of thriving arts enterprises in the cultural and economic life of San José.”

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