

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**PERFORMING ARTS STUDIO WEST CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF NURTURING THE
TALENTS OF PERFORMERS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

In 1998, Performing Arts Studio West (PASW) was founded to foster the careers and talents of performers with a wide range of developmental disabilities. By offering a comprehensive performing arts curriculum that includes daily classes in acting, music and dance, the Inglewood, California-based PASW has succeeded in creating high profile careers for its clients and emerged as an unprecedented resource for the Hollywood community.

To see PASW performers in action is to understand the power of the program. One look at the trailer of the recently released feature film "Any Day Now" starring Alan Cumming, and it's clear that the sensitive performance of his co-star Isaac Leyva (an actor with Down syndrome) is, in a word, heartbreaking. On the new FX sitcom, "LEGIT," starring red hot Australian stand-up comedian Jim Jefferies, which debuts Thursday, January 17th, PASW's Nick Daley (a veteran television and film actor with Prader-Willi syndrome) gives a tour de force comedic performance in the recurring role of 'Rodney Jackson.' And later this spring, Luke Zimmerman will complete his 5-year tenure as a regular on the hit ABC Family series "The Secret Life of the American Teenager." He plays Tom Bowman, whose Down syndrome is no match for his indomitable spirit.

John Paizis left behind a successful career as a performer to establish PASW specifically to provide training and employment opportunities to adults with developmental disabilities who wanted to work professionally in entertainment. In the process, he has emerged as "the" expert in the field serving as a contributing writer for Ability Magazine and an on set consultant/acting coach on film projects and television shows featuring PASW actors. "To see our clients succeed is very gratifying," says Paizis. "We open a door of hope for adults with disabilities. Our year round program gives each performer the chance to explore their creativity, test their courage, show their determination and build their self-esteem. The transformations we see are rewarding and inspiring."

Performing Arts Studio West will celebrate its 15th anniversary this year by producing a musical extravaganza fund raiser on Friday, May 3 at the beautiful 500 seat Armstrong Theater in Torrance. The new show is called *Recovered*, a musical and theatrical experience featuring freshly realized versions of popular rock and pop songs performed by singers, dancers and actors with developmental disabilities. Songs will reflect the hearts, minds and dreams of the often marginalized community served by PASW. Among the songs to be performed LIVE are *People Are Strange*, *Creep*, *Dazed and Confused*, *Please Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood*, *Ordinary World*, *Piece of My Heart* and *Thank You (Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin)*.

Film clips, video, audio tracks and further information can be found at <http://pastudiowest.com>

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Media contact: Laurence Cohen (310)980-7788, laurence@tlcmediaworks.com.