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**THEATRE ESPRESSO PRESENTS**  
**THE NINE WHO DARED: CRISIS IN LITTLE ROCK**

**Boston, Mass.** – What is the effect of racial segregation on society? What sacrifices are made by people who dare to confront systemic discrimination? How can civic engagement help to challenge social injustices? On September 4, 1957, Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus ordered the National Guard to prevent nine African American students from enrolling in previously all-white Central High School. Legal experts agreed that Faubus, by using the armed forces of a state to oppose the federal government, had launched the most critical challenge to the Constitution since the Civil War. This play is the second project for *The Boston Youth Initiative for Theatre and Civic Dialogue*. Students from the [your school] \_\_\_\_\_ will be among the first to participate in this interactive performance – in role as members of the Little Rock community. **For further information about *The Nine Who Dared* please contact Managing Director, Derek Nelson at (617) 899-1635 or [dstonenelson@aol.com](mailto:dstonenelson@aol.com)**

***About The Nine Who Dared***

Theatre Espresso's drama presents multiple points-of-view and encourages the student audience to think through the ethical and philosophical questions raised by the implementation of the Supreme Court's 1954 ruling in *Brown vs. Board of Education*. Once enrolled at Central High School in 1957, the nine African American students faced daily harassment, but were trained not to react to the barrage of insults and abuse. After months of being tormented, one of the students decided to fight back and was expelled from school. Minniejean Brown's act of defiance sets the stage for Theatre Espresso's production of *The Nine Who Dared*. In role as citizens of Little Rock, the student audience questions key players, debates the issues, and determines whether the remaining eight should return to school immediately or wait until the violence has subsided. By participating in the drama and post-show discussion, students draw connections between the events in Little Rock and contemporary issues of school integration and social justice, race relations and educational reform.

***About Theatre Espresso***

Theatre Espresso creates, produces, and performs interactive dramas that bring history to life for students, in order to foster a generation of critical thinkers and true citizens. Since 1992, Theatre Espresso has toured its educational dramas to schools, museums, libraries, and courthouses throughout New England. Inspired by the highly successful Theatre-in-Education teams of Great Britain and by the belief that drama is a potent teaching tool, Theatre Espresso's work challenges students to make critical judgments, explore social relationships, reflect on the role of law and human rights in our society, and question accepted truths about the history of America. These plays confront students with complex situations—based on actual historical events—that provoke a variety of opinions and solutions. Justice Stephen G. Breyer of the U.S. Supreme Court said of

Theatre Espresso's work: "[Their] object is to have students understand, in a dramatic way, the history of law in this country and the role the judicial system has played in our history. This kind of thing will make them treasure what we have. I'd like to see it expanded." [*The New York Times*, 6/9/04] Please visit Theatre Espresso on the web at [www.TheatreEspresso.org](http://www.TheatreEspresso.org).

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