



news release

Contact: Diane Steinert, Communications Coordinator
330-677-4549 or dsteinert@WesternReservePublicMedia.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Western Reserve PBS's NewsNight Akron panel to choose 2008 Akron Newsmaker of the Year

Winner to be named during special broadcast on Friday, Jan. 9

KENT, Ohio — Monday, Jan. 5, 2009 — Tune in to Western Reserve PBS's **NewsNight Akron** on Friday, Jan. 9 at 9 p.m. to find out who will win the 2008 Akron Newsmaker of the Year award. The award recognizes the greater Akron individual whose work has had the most significant news impact during the past year.

Nominees for the 2008 award are as follows:

- Alex Arshinkoff, chair of Summit County Republican Party, for surviving a coup attempt within the Summit County Republican Party while also being ousted from the Summit County Board of Elections
- LeBron James, star forward of the Cleveland Cavaliers, for helping lead the U.S. Olympic basketball team to a gold medal at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing
- Don Plusquellic, mayor of Akron, for his plan to leverage the city's sewer system into college scholarships for Akron high school graduates
- Russell Pry, Summit County executive, for a string of successes in leading the county during his first full year in the position
- Ralph Regula, retiring congressman in the U.S. House of Representatives, for his 36 years of service to the community and for his many accomplishments while in office

-more-



Following what has traditionally been a spirited debate, the winner will be chosen by **NewsNight Akron**'s panelists, including host Eric Mansfield of WKYC-TV, Ed Esposito of Rubber City Radio Group, Steve Hoffman of the Akron Beacon Journal and freelance journalist Jody Miller. An encore presentation of the program will air on Saturday, Jan. 10 at 5 a.m.

About NewsNight Akron

NewsNight Akron airs every Friday night at 9 p.m. on Western Reserve PBS and offers spontaneous, lively, in-depth discussions about issues that affect the lives of people in greater Akron. Hosted by Eric Mansfield, WKYC-TV3 evening news coanchor, **NewsNight Akron** features a roundtable discussion with a panel of local journalists that covers both breaking news stories on topics such as education, the community and local business, as well as ongoing subjects including elections and major news stories. Serving as regular panelists on the show are Steve Hoffman, political writer at the Akron Beacon Journal; Jody Miller, Western Reserve PBS reporter; and Ed Esposito, Joe Jastzremski and Larry States, all of whom are members of the Rubber City Radio Group news staff.

About Western Reserve Public Media

Western Reserve Public Media (formerly PBS 45 & 49) is owned and operated by Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a private, nonprofit corporation and consortium of Kent State University, The University of Akron and Youngstown State University. A trusted community resource, Western Reserve Public Media uses the power of commercial-free television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire. Western Reserve PBS, a service of the organization, is the only broadcast television service that reaches all of northeast Ohio. It is available to 1.8 million households and 4.4 million people in the Cleveland and Youngstown designated market areas. In an average week, over 500,000 households tune in. Through funding from eTech Ohio, Western Reserve Public Media provides K-12 educational technology training and instructional television programming to 21,500 educators and 256,700 students in eight Ohio counties. For more information about the organization, visit www.WesternReservePublicMedia.org or call 1-800-554-4549.