FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ROBERT MANN, Juilliard String Quartet Founder and First Violinist for 52 Years Honored on Both Coasts

USC THORNTON SCHOOL OF MUSIC and the
MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Announce a gift of $6 Million by ALFRED and CLAUDE MANN
Violinists' brother and his wife pledge unprecedented gift to create
endowed chairs at Los Angeles and New York schools

January 24, 2011 – In a move that is unprecedented in the music world, two endowed chairs have been created in honor of Robert Mann, the Juilliard String Quartet’s founder and first violinist for fifty-two years. USC Thornton School of Music Dean Robert Cutietta and Manhattan School of Music President Robert Sirota announce the creation of the Robert Mann Chairs in Strings and Chamber Music, established at the two institutions by a combined gift of $6 Million by Alfred and Claude Mann. In academia, endowed chairs are among the highest honors that can be paid to an individual’s accomplishments. They are used not only to honor an esteemed individual but also to attract future faculty of prestige who want to be associated with such legendary figures.

In acknowledging the Manns’ gift, Manhattan School of Music President Robert Sirota said, “We are deeply honored by this transformative and generous gift acknowledging Robert Mann, arguably the most influential figure in chamber music of our time. We are grateful that Alfred and Claude Mann have chosen to create endowed chairs in Robert Mann’s name at both Manhattan School of Music and the USC Thornton School of Music. We are also fortunate that Robert Mann will be the first holder of the endowed chair bearing his name.”

At the University of Southern California, this new endowed chair will join three other chairs that already exist to honor legends of the string world: Jascha Heifetz, Gregor Piatigorsky, and Alice and Eleonore Schoenfeld. These four faculty all taught at the school and had chairs named for them by admirers over the years. “We are so excited and honored to add Robert Mann’s name to this impressive list to act as an inspiration to our students” remarked Dr. Robert Cutietta, Dean of the USC Thornton School of Music. “Robert and his wife Lucy, stand as a testament to what can be accomplished when talented people devote their lives to music in an uncompromising search for excellence.”

Currently, the Jascha Heifetz Chair in Violin is occupied by Midori Goto, the Gregor Piatigorsky Chair in Violoncello by Ralph Kirshbaum, and the Alice and Eleonore Schoenfeld Endowed Chair in String Instruction by Alice Schoenfeld. An international search is underway to find an individual who can rightly occupy the new Robert Mann Chair in Strings and Chamber Music. Thornton School of Strings
Chair Midori Goto added, “It is a tremendous honor to have a new endowed chair in our department, particularly in light of the musicians for whom this chair is named. Bobby Mann has represented the highest standards in musicianship and pedagogy for many generations of established and aspiring musicians. He has inspired many of us through his expertise and performances, as well as through his nurturance of many other great musicians. Having his name associated with us in such a significant way is a great motivation for us (both faculty and students) to continue forward in thriving for excellence.”

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About Alfred Mann

About their gift, Alfred Mann states, “I am very proud of Robert Mann who was truly the premier chamber musician of the 20th century. After winning the Naumburg Award and serving in the Army he founded the Juilliard String Quartet which became the foremost chamber quartet in the world. After leading that group for 52 years Robert has retired to a life of playing, composing, teaching and conducting. Claude and I are delighted to bestow this gift in his honor.”

An American entrepreneur and philanthropist, Alfred E. Mann is the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board of Mannkind Corporation, a pharmaceutical manufacturer specializing in diabetes and cancer therapy; founder and Chairman of Second Sight, a biomedical company making a retinal prosthesis; founder and Chairman of Bioness, a company devoted to applying electrostimulation for functional neural defects; founder and Chairman of the Board of Quallion, LLC, a company producing high reliability batteries for medical products and for the military and aerospace industries; Chairman of Stellar Microelectronics, an electrical circuit manufacturer for the medical, military and aerospace industries; and founder and patron of the Alfred Mann Foundation.

In 1956, Alfred Mann founded Spectrolab, an electrooptical systems company and the first of his aerospace companies. Shortly thereafter he founded Heliotek, a semiconductor company that became a major supplier of solar cells for spacecraft. Among other accomplishments, his companies provided the electrical power for more than 100 spacecraft and constructed one of the lunar experiments. Mr. Mann left those companies to found Pacesetter Systems, which focused on cardiac pacemakers, a company he sold in 1985, managed until 1992 and which is now the major part of St. Jude Medical. He went on to establish MiniMed which is now owned by Medtronic to make insulin pumps and continuous glucose sensors. Then he established Advanced Bionics whose neuroprosthetics division was acquired by Boston Scientific in 2004 and the cochlear implant division which was acquired by Sonova in 2009.

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About Robert Mann

Robert Mann has been a driving force in the world of chamber music for more than sixty years. As founder and first violinist of the celebrated Juilliard String Quartet for fifty-two years, as well as a soloist, composer, teacher and conductor, Mr. Mann has brought a refreshing sense of adventure and discovery to chamber performance in this country. He is, in the words of Richard Dyer of The Boston Globe, “one of the country’s most admired and deeply loved musicians.”

Born in Portland, Oregon in 1920, Mr. Mann began studying violin when he was eight, and at age 13 was accepted into the class of Edouard Hurlimann, concertmaster of the Portland Symphony. In 1938, he moved to New York City to enroll in The Juilliard School, where he studied violin with Edouard Dethier, composition with Bernard Wagenaar and Stephan Wolpe, and conducting with Edgar Schenkman. Mr. Mann won the prestigious Naumburg competition in 1941. At the invitation of Juilliard’s president, William Schuman, Robert Mann formed the Juilliard String Quartet in 1946, and served as the ensemble’s first violinist until his retirement from the quartet in 1997. The quartet, which celebrated its Golden Jubilee during the 1996-97 season, had played approximately 5,500 concerts and performed more than 500 works including some 75 premieres. Its discography includes recordings of more than 100 compositions.

Mr. Mann has composed more than 30 works for narrator with various instruments that he performs with his wife, the actress Lucy Rowan; several have been recorded on the Peter Bartok and Musical Heritage labels. He has also composed an Orchestral Fantasy performed by Dimitri Mitropoulos, concertmaster of the Portland Symphony. In 1938, he moved to New York City to enroll in The Juilliard School, where he studied violin with Edouard Dethier, composition with Bernard Wagenaar and Stephan Wolpe, and conducting with Edgar Schenkman. Mr. Mann won the prestigious Naumburg competition in 1941. At the invitation of Juilliard’s president, William Schuman, Robert Mann formed the Juilliard String Quartet in 1946, and served as the ensemble’s first violinist until his retirement from the quartet in 1997. The quartet, which celebrated its Golden Jubilee during the 1996-97 season, had played approximately 5,500 concerts and performed more than 500 works including some 75 premieres. Its discography includes recordings of more than 100 compositions.

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Each summer, at the invitation of Seiji Ozawa, Mr. Mann attends Japan’s Saito Kinen Music Festival as conductor, teacher and performer. He is on the faculties at Manhattan School of Music and Juilliard, and has served as president of the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation since 1971. On February 12, 2011, as founder of the Juilliard String Quartet, Mr. Mann along with the JSQ, will be honored by the Grammy Awards with The Recording Academy’s Lifetime Achievement Award. At the age of 90 years, Robert Mann is gratefully still actively performing, composing, teaching and conducting.

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About the USC Thornton School of Music

The USC Thornton School of Music brings together a stellar faculty chosen from a broad spectrum of the music profession and musically gifted students from around the globe. Founded in 1884, and today the oldest continually operating cultural institution in Los Angeles, the Thornton School consistently ranks among the top one percent of the nation’s music schools and conservatories. Graduates of the school attain positions with major orchestras, ensembles, recording studios and music industry firms and perform on stages and in studios around the world.

Blending the rigors of a traditional conservatory-style education with the benefits of studying at a leading research university, the Thornton School offers students a thorough music education in a real-world context. Located at the center of Los Angeles, the school is the collegiate partner of choice for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Opera, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the GRAMMY Foundation and The Recording Academy, to name a few.

In addition to their work with these ensembles, Thornton students are a constant presence in local classrooms, reaching out to the next generation of musicians through music education and appreciation courses. With its faculty, its students, its events and its work, the Thornton School is one of the most important cultural resources in Los Angeles.

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About the Manhattan School of Music

Manhattan School of Music is a preeminent international conservatory of music, granting bachelor of music, master of music, and doctor of musical arts degrees. Established in 1918 by pianist and philanthropist Janet Daniels Schenck, the School is dedicated to the personal, artistic and intellectual development of its students, who range from the precollege through postgraduate level. Offering both classical and jazz training, Manhattan School of Music trains students in performance and composition and provides a core curriculum in music theory, music history, and the humanities. Students come from all over the world, drawn by a rigorous program that reflects the highest standards of musical heritage, and by the faculty, which includes some of the world’s best-known artists. Manhattan School of Music contributes to the city’s musical life through an active community outreach program and with concerts and performances that are recognized as some of the finest events in New York’s musical calendar. Manhattan School of Music’s alumni are active in every aspect of contemporary musical life. Many are among the most distinguished artists performing in concert halls, opera houses, and on jazz stages throughout the world today.

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