FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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MARYLAND HUMANITIES COUNCIL

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Maryland Center for the Book Launches State's First-Ever Statewide Community Reading Program on June 14

One Book Brings Maryland Together to Discuss Race, Class, Education

On Saturday, June 14, 2008 at 11:00 a.m., The Maryland Center for the Book will launch Maryland's first-ever statewide community reading program—One Maryland One Book. The selected book is *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League* (1995) by Ron Suskind. The kickoff will take place at the Enoch Pratt Central Library at 400 Cathedral Street, Baltimore. Katie O'Malley, First Lady of Maryland and Honorary Chairperson for the One Maryland One Book project, will host the celebration, and the subject of the book, Cedric Jennings, will be present as well. The project will bring together diverse people in communities across the state through the shared experience of reading the same book and participating in book-centered discussions and other related programs at public libraries, high schools, colleges and universities, museums, and bookstores. All related programming will take place in August, September, and October.

A Hope in the Unseen chronicles the life of Cedric Jennings, a young man from southeast Washington, D.C., from the tenth grade at Ballou High School through his freshman year at Brown University and the ups and downs he faces during his struggle to make it out of his blighted neighborhood. This nonfiction title was selected not only because it offers the opportunity to discuss important and highly relevant topics such as education, socioeconomics, and distinctions of class, but also because it presents the opportunity to talk about race and race relations in Maryland and in America—a common theme running through the Maryland Humanities Council's programming in 2008. A committee of librarians, educators, authors and bibliophiles made the selection in December from an original list of nearly 100 titles.

As an integral piece of the One Maryland One Book project, approximately 5,000 books will be distributed to public libraries and high schools throughout the state in support of their programming efforts. A free Reader's Guide will be available online starting June 14 at www.onemarylandonebook.org for individuals and book clubs interested in

participating, and print copies will be in public libraries and other locations around the state beginning in July. There is also an accompanying Teacher's Guide for educators planning to use the book in their classrooms this fall. In addition to programs at public libraries around the state, Mr. Suskind and Mr. Jennings will travel across Maryland for school and evening community programs in August, September and October. Mr. Suskind will also be featured at the Baltimore Book Festival. Programs will be listed in the Calendar on the One Maryland One Book website.

One Maryland One Book is coordinated by the Maryland Center for the Book, a program of the Maryland Humanities Council, in partnership with Enoch Pratt Free Library, the Maryland State Department of Education, and the Division of Library Development & Services.

One Maryland One Book is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, LSTA grant funds, through the Division of Library Development & Services, Maryland State Department of Education.

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The Maryland Center for the Book is a program of the Maryland Humanities Council, with satellites at Talbot County Free Library and Washington County Free Library. The Center is one of 50 state affiliates of the Library of Congress Center for the Book.

The purpose of the MCFB is to develop and support programs that promote books, reading, libraries, Maryland writers, and the state's literary heritage.

For more information about One Maryland One Book, the Maryland Center for the Book or the Maryland Humanities Council, call (410) 685-0095.

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