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Noted playwright, director, and actor Leigh Fondakowski to visit campus this week

*Summary: All students, especially theatre and English majors, are invited to attend the events scheduled with the well known writer of *The Laramie Project*.*

(April 5, 2010)-The University of Minnesota, Morris Theatre and English Disciplines will host Leigh Fondakowski, playwright, director, and actor, on campus this week. Well known for her work with *The Laramie Project*, Fondakowski's visit is sponsored by the Twin Cities campus through the Institute for Advanced Study Imagine Fund Guest Speaker series. Theatre and English majors and minors are particularly encouraged to attend, but all students are invited to participate in the events scheduled with the distinguished campus guest.

The writing process will be the topic of Fondakowski's talk on Thursday, April 8, 2010, from 2 until 3:30 p.m. in the McGinnis Room, Briggs Library. She will visit the Fundamentals of Acting class on Friday, April 9, 2010, from 10:30 until 11:30 a.m. in the Black Box Theatre, Humanities Fine Arts.

Fondakowski served as head writer for *The Laramie Project*, the docudrama about the killing of Matthew Shepard and its effects on Laramie, Wyoming. The Morris campus was among the first wave of university mountings of this play when in 2002 the Theatre Discipline produced the play with community partners. It was directed by Ray Schultz, associate professor of theatre arts, and designed by Tap Payne, professor of theatre arts, and Merlin Peterson, set designer from Terrace.

A member of Tectonic Theatre Project since 1995, Fondakowski is an Emmy nominated co-screenwriter for *The Laramie Project* adaptation for HBO. Her latest work, *The People's Temple*, has been performed under her direction at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Perseverance Theater, and The Guthrie Theater, and received the Glickman Award for best new play in 2005.

Photo courtesy of Berkeley Repertory Theatre

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