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**Pianist and alumnus Leon Bates
to Lead Workshop
at Settlement Music School, Sunday, Feb. 21**

Philadelphia, PA – The Knowlton Leadership Program of Settlement Music School, designed to enrich the learning experience for all Settlement students and anyone else considering a career in music, is offering a **free workshop on Sunday, February 21, 2pm at Field Hall, Mary Louise Curtis Branch, 416 Queen Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147**. Free parking onsite. This program is generously funded by the Knowlton Foundation, LLC.

The workshop, "**Practice Smart...Not Just Hard,**" will feature Settlement 100 honoree and recording artist Leon Bates who will demonstrate time-tested techniques for learning difficult passages and new pieces more quickly. Students will also learn how to develop the right attitude for long term success and learn how to better organize practice time, an ongoing issue for both students and their parents.

From the New York Philharmonic to the Vienna Symphony to South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic to the *Today Show*, Leon Bates has traveled the world. His repertoire stretches from the Bach and Brahms to Gershwin and Ellington. But Bates is more than just a world-class pianist; he has made education – sharing his gift – a priority, performing up to 50 residencies per year, making it a point to try to expose all children but especially African American children to classical music. "Beethoven should be just as much a part of the African-American experience as anything else," he told *Ebony Magazine* in an interview. Perhaps his generous spirit can be traced back to his own early studies. At age 12 Bates began lessons at Settlement under the late Irene Beck and has come back to Settlement numerous times to perform and hold masterclasses. Among his many awards is the National Endowment for the Arts Solo Recitalists Fellowship Grant and an honorary doctorate from Washington and Lee University. But perhaps Bates' most unique distinction is that he's also a disciplined body builder, which he feels enhances his playing. "The last piece on the program is the one that is the most demanding and dynamic," he told *Ebony*. "You don't want to run out of energy as you are coming to the piece that demands the most from you."

For more information, or to RSVP to this workshop, please contact the Knowlton Leadership Coordinator Kyle Bartlett at (215) 320-2693 or kbartlett@smsmusic.org.

Settlement Music School is the largest community-based school of the arts in the United States, serving 15,000 students each year at six branches in PA and NJ. It provides people of all abilities, age, race and financial means with programs of the highest quality in music and dance to help them achieve their greatest potential and award nearly \$2 million a year in financial aid. Close to 300,000 students have attended Settlement Music School

since 1908. It is the largest employer of musicians in the region, with more than 250 dedicated faculty members, most of whom have advanced degrees.