

## Press Release

MEDIA CONTACT: Diane Daniel, Publicist, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences (CLASS)  
(510) 885-3183, [diane.daniel@csueastbay.edu](mailto:diane.daniel@csueastbay.edu) Jan. 7, 2007

### **CSUEB Theatre Professor Wins Two National Awards**

Cal State East Bay Assistant Professor of Theatre and Dance Eric Kupers is still a little star struck following a one-week whirlwind tour of New York City that culminated in receiving a Princess Grace Fellowship on the same stage as persons from Julliard, the American Ballet Theatre, the Merce Cunningham Dance Company and schools of similar acclaim, as well as filmmaker George Lucas, who received a special achievement award.

Simultaneously, Kupers was one of 60 recipients of a coveted Multi-Arts Production (MAP) grant that he will use when co-producing a performance with his company, Dandelion Dancetheater, for the San Francisco International Arts Festival (IAF) May 9-25 at CELLspace. Dandelion will share the stage with Company Y of Madrid of Spain, and Mayday Dance Company of Montréal, Canada.

This is the first time a California State University, East Bay (CSUEB) professor has received either of these two national honors, according to Thomas Hird, theatre and dance chair.

"These awards are a sign that Kupers is on track for earlier success than we ever expected," said Hird.

"I'm honored," said Kupers, of the awards. "Now the work begins."

Kupers believes in the power of dance for everyone, regardless of size, shape, body types, or physical abilities. His CSUEB "Dance for All Bodies and Abilities" class, now in its second year on the Hayward campus, welcomes all, even those in wheelchairs, such as some of his students from Oakland's Clausen House.

Long a collaborator with Axis Dance Company – world pioneer of accessible contemporary dance – Kupers dreams of spearheading the nation's first Bachelor of Arts degree or Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in physically integrated dance at Cal State East Bay.

Now in his second year as a Cal State, East Bay professor, Kupers is creating a partnership with Cabrillo College, in Aptos, that bridges the community college's adaptive physical education and adaptive dance students to upper division work at CSUEB.

The \$10,000 Princes Grace award, plus money from the Zellerbach Family Fund and CSUEB Faculty Grants, will help create "Spinal Fluid," an unconventional dance work that can withstand cast replacements among performers with widely diverse abilities/disabilities.

Kupers hopes some of the pieces created with the \$15,000 MAP funds for the IAF will also perform on the Hayward campus, as well as in Los Angeles (summer 2008) Canada and Spain (2009) and beyond.

Francisco in August 2007. *Photo by Morgan Stetler*