

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

Molly Smith Artistic Director Edgar Dobie Executive Producer Zelda Fichandler Founding Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October 28, 2015

ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER
TO HOST FIFTH ANNUAL MILITARY THANKSGIVING
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2015

(Washington, D.C.) Every year hundreds of D.C.-area military families must spend the Thanksgiving holiday away from loved ones. In gratitude for their service, **Arena Stage is inviting wounded warriors, service men and women and their families to a complimentary dinner and performance of the Tony Award-winning musical *Oliver!* at the Mead Center for American Theater (1101 Sixth St., SW) on Friday, November 27.** Arena Stage is working primarily through the USO-Metro to distribute the tickets irrespective of rank. Additional tickets are distributed through the Washington, D.C.-Virginia Medical Center Caregiver Support Program and the Southeast Veterans Service Center. It is anticipated that about 200 service men and women and their families will experience this special event.

The evening will include remarks from **Admiral Michelle J. Howard**, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, **Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton** and **Lawrence Duncan III**, Vice President for Federal and State Government Relations and PAC Affairs at Lockheed Martin for Washington Operations.

“As the Women’s Voices Theater Festival winds down, it is a distinct pleasure to have as one of our guest speakers Admiral Michelle J. Howard, the first woman to achieve the rank of four-star admiral in the U.S. Navy and the first woman and African-American to serve as the Vice Chief of Naval Operations,” shares Arena Stage Executive Producer **Edgar Dobie**. “We are grateful to be able to continue our partnership with our military friends to provide access to theater and companionship at this special time of year.”

The evening will begin with a 5:30 p.m. cocktail reception featuring a performance by military musicians and the presentation of the colors. A seated, three-course dinner will be prepared and served by **Ridgewells Catering** at 6:00 p.m., and guests will enjoy a performance of *Oliver!* at 8:00 p.m.

The event is generously sponsored by **Lockheed Martin**. Additional support is provided by **Northrop Grumman, USAA Real Estate Company, The Coca-Cola Company, GEICO, John and Linda Derrick, Rick and Carol Froehlich, Ellen K. Harrison** and the **David Bruce Smith Foundation**.

Additional sponsorship opportunities are still available. For more information contact Corporate Relations Manager Char Manlove-Laws at cmanlove-laws@arenastage.org or 202-600-4030.

Arena Stage will be partnering with **Cell Phones for Soldiers**, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing cost-free communication services to active duty military members and veterans, to collect used cell phones that evening. For more information, visit cellphonesforsoldiers.com.

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Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, **Lockheed Martin** is a global security and aerospace company that employs approximately 112,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's net sales for 2014 were \$45.6 billion.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays through the American Voices New Play Institute. Arena Stage impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

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