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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 16, 2021

D.C., Maryland, Virginia and Montana High School Students Develop Podcasts as Part of Ford's Theatre Oratory Program

**Initial episodes of *Stand Up, Be Heard: The Podcast* showcase
student oratory skills and uplift student voices on
critical social issues including mental health, the death penalty.**

Podcasts available for free streaming on www.fords.org

Washington, D.C. – Ford's Theatre announced that seven high school classrooms in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia and Montana are developing a series of student podcasts for release on www.fords.org as part of their work with the Ford's Theatre Oratory program. The initial projects for *Stand Up, Be Heard: The Podcast* include a three-episode series from each classroom. The first podcast episodes are now available for free streaming at <https://www.fords.org/for-teachers/programs/oratory/stand-up-be-heard-the-podcast>.

Guided by regular contact with Ford's Theatre Teaching Artists and applying elements of the Ford's Theatre Approach to Oratory, the podcast projects encourage students to develop interview skills and story arc, and apply persuasive techniques of ethos, pathos and logos found in Aristotle's Rhetorical Triangle.

"Our podcast projects not only elevate themes and issues that local students find meaningful but provide a real-world application for oratorical skills outside of a speech podium," said **Ford's Theatre Associate Director for Arts Education Cynthia Gertsen**. "Especially in this time of continued virtual education, these projects have enhanced creative collaborative work and provided an outlet for students to speak truth to topics they find meaningful."

Select podcast topics include the impact of the pandemic on student mental health, the inequity of the death penalty, LGBTQIA issues and more. In June, Ford's Theatre Education will host a culminating virtual event celebrating the completion of each podcast series and the students' participation.

Ford's Theatre Oratory

Reflecting Abraham Lincoln's legacy, the Ford's Theatre Oratory Approach offers easy-to-implement tools that educators can apply to help students develop public-speaking skills and find their own powerful voices. Applied techniques accomplish multiple curricular goals, from analyzing great historical speeches, to writing persuasive speeches, to speaking more effectively, to listening and critiquing constructively. The program provides a structure for all students to learn and cultivate effective speaking, building students' skills and confidence in speaking and their understanding of effective persuasion. For more information on Ford's Theatre Oratory programs, visit <https://www.fords.org/for-teachers/teaching-oratory>.

Ford's Theatre education programs are supported by **Bloomberg Philanthropies, BP America, Centene Charitable Foundation, D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Ford Motor Company Fund, The Hearst Foundations, Institute of Museum and Library Services, National Park Service and Visa Inc.**

Ford's Theatre Society

The Ford's Theatre Society was founded under the guidance of executive producer Frankie Hewitt, who, during her 35-year tenure, established Ford's as a living, working theatre producing performances that highlighted the diversity of the American experience. Since the arrival of Paul R. Tetreault as Director, critics and the theatregoing public have recognized Ford's for the superior quality of its artistic programming. With works from the Tony-nominated *Come From Away* and nationally acclaimed *Big River* to the world premieres of *Meet John Doe*, *The Heavens Are Hung In Black*, *Liberty Smith*, *Necessary Sacrifices*, *The Widow Lincoln* and *The Guard*, Ford's Theatre is making its mark on the American theatre landscape. For its accomplishments, the organization was honored in 2008 with the National Medal of Arts. For more information, visit www.fords.org. In the past decade, the mission of Ford's Theatre Society expanded to include education as a central pillar. This expansion led to the creation and construction of the Center for Education and Leadership, which opened in February 2012. Currently, under the leadership of Board Chairman Phebe N. Novakovic, Ford's Theatre Society is advancing the unfinished work of Abraham Lincoln by creating a vibrant, accessible Ford's Theatre campus that cultivates civic discourse, supports our nation's educators and engages the community with our history.

#FordsOratory

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