



Media Contact:
Anali Alegria, Communications Associate
aalegria@fords.org or (202) 639-1586

Ford's Theatre
511 Tenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004
www.fords.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 10, 2019

Ford's Theatre Presents ***Stand Up: Be Heard***

Thursday, May 23, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Students from Rockville High School and Arlington Career Center **Perform Original Speeches on the Ford's Theatre Stage**

Washington, D.C. — On **Thursday, May 23, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.**, local high school students take to the historic Ford's Theatre stage to deliver original speeches in ***Stand Up: Be Heard***, an annual celebration of oratory as part of the Ford's Theatre education programs. The performance features students from **Rockville High School** (Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland) and **Arlington Career Center** (Arlington Public Schools, Virginia).

The one-hour program features speeches reflecting the issues that matter most to the students. Topics include one student's experience wearing a hijab, a reflection on coming out as gay, experiences as a first-generation immigrant, and much more.

Tickets for the event are free and available in advance at www.fords.org and the day of the event at the Ford's Theatre box office (511 Tenth Street, NW).

Throughout the 2018-2019 school year, these students have been working with their classroom teachers and with Ford's Theatre teaching artists to hone their public-speaking and speechwriting skills. ***Stand Up: Be Heard*** and the Ford's oratory programs seek to highlight the importance of oratory integration into English-Language Arts and history curricula. Inspired by President Lincoln's oratory, this approach to teaching and learning focuses on the power of the spoken word, throughout history and today.

"By studying great orators throughout history including President Lincoln himself, students begin to understand what makes a speech powerful and apply the same skills and strategies to their own public speaking," said **Associate Director for Arts Education Cynthia Gertsen**. "It is incredible to see this year's students use their oratory skills to speak about the social issues and subjects that matter most to them. Every year I look forward to ***Stand Up: Be Heard*** because it truly demonstrates how students can use public speaking to engage in their communities and advocate for change they believe in."

Ford's Theatre education programs are supported by Lead Education Sponsor **BP America**. This program is also made possible in part by the **Institute of Museum and Library Services**.

Ford's Theatre Society

One of the most visited sites in the nation's capital, Ford's Theatre reopened its doors in 1968, more than a hundred years after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Operated through a partnership between Ford's Theatre Society and the National Park Service, Ford's Theatre is the premier destination in the nation's capital to explore and celebrate Abraham Lincoln's ideals and leadership principles: courage, integrity, tolerance, equality and creative expression.

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 theatre-going public have recognized Ford's for the superior quality of its artistic programming. With works from the Tony-nominated *Come From Away* and the 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. 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. Under the current leadership of Board of Trustees Chairman **Phebe N. Novakovic** and through the lens of Lincoln's leadership and legacy, Ford's today endeavors to advance Lincoln's "unfinished work" with programs and performances that cultivate empathy, encourage dialogue and bridge divides in our American life.

For more information on Ford's Theatre and the Ford's Theatre Society, please visit www.fords.org.

#FordsOratory

Ford's Theatre on Twitter and Instagram: @fordstheatre
Ford's Theatre Education on Twitter: @fordsedu
Ford's Theatre on Facebook: www.facebook.com/fordstheatre

###