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**OLNEY THEATRE CENTER TO RECEIVE \$11 MILLION GRANT FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND TO CONTINUE CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS**

**Olney, MD — April X, 2022 — Olney Theatre Center** will receive an \$11 million grant from the State of Maryland for its “Staging the Future” capital campaign which will bring major renovations and enhancements to the official “State Summer Theatre of Maryland.” This is in addition to a previous allocation of \$4.5 million, bringing the State’s total investment in the capital project to \$15.5 million. The grant allows the 84-year-old institution to move forward with plans to renovate the 1938 Original Theatre, expand the theatre’s production and educational spaces, make essential improvements to the artist and patron experience, and complete a planned enhancement of the Root Family Outdoor Stage. Olney Theatre recognizes the remarkable leadership of District 14 representatives, including Senator Craig Zucker, and Delegates Anne Kaiser, Eric Luedtke, and Anne Kaiser, who advocated for and led the efforts to secure the State’s investment in this capital project grant.

Said Senator Zucker, “The investment in Olney Theatre Center’s capital campaign demonstrates the state’s commitment to Maryland’s Official Summer Theatre, a cultural treasure that emanates great State pride.” The funding, which has bipartisan backing, “is, in effect, catch-up money for decades when Olney Theatre should have received greater capital support for its facilities that are home to countless artistic, community and educational programs used and enjoyed by residents from all over Maryland.”

“We are thrilled and fortunate to receive this funding and are incredibly grateful to Senator Zucker and Delegates Kaiser, Luedtke, and Queen for championing the importance of Olney Theatre Center to our state legislators, our community, our county, and indeed, to the entire region,” said Debbie Ellinghaus, Olney’s managing director. “This critical funding along with the \$14.5 million already raised from public and private sources, brings us significantly closer to meeting the demands of the ‘Staging the Future’ capital campaign. As is the case all over the world, the costs for a project on this

scale have escalated since we began the campaign four years ago and now, with this new transformational grant, we have the opportunity to accomplish the entirety of the project and build a sustainable future for Olney Theatre Center for the Arts. The state funding is a tremendous vote of confidence in Olney Theatre, and recognition of our value and impact in the region. With so many operating challenges for our industry in the wake of the pandemic, ‘Staging the Future’ will provide critical facility improvements to help Olney Theatre reimagine its model to better serve our community in a post-pandemic world.”

Since launching the “Staging the Future” campaign, Olney Theatre has spent \$6 million to renovate the Mulitz-Gudelsky Theatre Lab, expand its parking facilities, and upgrade the lighting and sound systems in its spaces. They now seek to raise an additional \$6.5M to complete the project over the next three years, bringing the total Capital Campaign goal to \$32 million.

## **ABOUT OLNEY THEATRE CENTER**

### **Mission**

Olney Theatre Center for the Arts produces and curates theatrical performance for the diverse audiences in our community, and educates, learns from, supports and inspires a more inclusive generation of theater-makers.

### **Vision**

We strive to become an arts and culture powerhouse, redefining the American regional theater movement by cultivating and sharing the creativity of our community.

### **History**

Founded in 1938 as a summer playhouse, Olney Theatre Center (OTC) now produces world and American premieres of plays and musicals, and reimaginings of familiar titles year-round; presents the work of leading companies and artists; tours nationally and locally; teaches students of all ages; and mentors a more inclusive generation of theatremakers. For more than 8 decades, OTC has brought impactful theater performance and education to our community, helping to grow the vibrancy and vitality of our home in the Washington, DC region.

Over the years, some of the biggest names in theater and film have appeared on our stages, including Tallulah Bankhead, Helen Hayes, Jessica Tandy, Hume Cronyn, Bob Fosse, Phillip Bosco, Eve Arden, Eva Gabor, Burl Ives, Jose Ferrer, Carol Channing, Olivia d’Havilland, Tony Randall, Paulette Goddard, Dorothy and Lillian Gish, Jane Seymour, Anne Revere, Frances Sternhagen, Arthur Treacher, James Broderick, Olympia Dukakis, Sir Ian McKellen, Marica Gay Harden, John Colicos, Uzo Aduba, Alan Cumming, Cheyenne Jackson, Robin de Jesus, Wilson Jermaine Heredia, among many, many others.

Olney Theatre is now the cultural anchor of a rapidly changing region and serves one of the most diverse, best educated, and wealthiest counties in the country. Situated on the unceded land of the Piscataway-Conoy people, the Olney area was once a rural farming community with a unique Quaker heritage. Now the area is occupied by every kind of family that makes up 21st Century America, along

with major corporations, shopping districts, civic associations, non profit organizations and a diverse collection of houses of worship. Montgomery County's 1 million residents play a dynamic role in the Baltimore-Washington corridor, and are a driving force behind the region's creative economy.

Olney Theatre Center employs 40 full time staff, 20 part-time positions, 26 early career apprentices and players, and more than 400 professional artists annually. The Theatre intends to continue expanding to better meet the needs of our community.

For more information, please visit [olneytheatre.org/history](http://olneytheatre.org/history)

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