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GEVA THEATRE CENTER NAMES 2017 LEGACY AWARD RECIPIENT

***Dr. Dawn Lipson honored for her dedication and service to the
Northeast's most attended regional theatre.***

Rochester, N.Y., June 14, 2017 – One of the highlights of Geva Theatre Center's calendar is the annual Director's Forum Dinner, a gala event recognizing the theatre's major donors. Part of the program for this event, held at the end of each season, is the presentation of the Legacy Award to honor an individual or individuals who have demonstrated exemplary service and made a meaningful impact on the life and longevity of the forty-five-year-old cultural institution.

At this year's function on June 12, **Artistic Director Mark Cuddy** and **Executive Director Christopher Mannelli**, with Past Board Chair and former Legacy Award recipient **Linda Cornell Weinstein**, presented the Legacy Award to someone whose dedication to the theatre exemplifies this honor. **Dr. Dawn Lipson** has been a member of the Director's Forum Giving Circle since 2003 and made a significant gift to the Front & Center Capital Campaign that led to the construction of the Mezzanine level and the Lipson Lounge. She has been the co-producer of a number of productions on the Wilson Stage and is the Honorary Wilson Stage Season Producer for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 Seasons. Both Dawn and her late husband, Jacques, included a planned gift in their wills. Dawn has maintained a remarkable commitment to Geva as a member of the Board of Trustees since 2009. She served on the Front & Center Campaign Council, the Summer Curtain Call Committee and currently serves on the Development and Strategic Planning Committee.

"Dawn Lipson has been a passionate advocate, funder, and strategic thinker for Geva Theatre Center over the past decade," said Geva's Artistic Director **Mark Cuddy**. "She has done so even as she has contributed generously to other non-profit arts organizations as Rochester continues to defy the odds and sustain first-class cultural institutions for our community. Her legacy is visible and long lasting at Geva, and we will strive to uphold her tremendous faith in our mission."

In accepting the award, **Dawn Lipson** said, “Geva Theatre Center is an extraordinary place. It provides the community with amazing productions that go beyond great entertainment. The productions inspire the exchange of ideas, glimpses into experiences the patron has not lived, and creates an atmosphere of positive interaction. To play a small part in some of that is a privilege I cherish and is extremely rewarding.”

Previous Legacy Award recipients include Suzanne Gouvernet, Emily Neece and Alan Ziegler, Peter Messner, Derek and Janice Chapman, Patrick Fulford, Helen Berkeley, Linda Cornell Weinstein, Ron and Donna Fielding, Tom and Nan Hildebrandt, Nannette Nocon, Herbert Rees, Robert and Blanche Saltzman, Annabelle and Henry Martin, Jean Gordon Ryon, and Jack Kraushaar, among others.

Dr. Lipson was presented with this coveted award, designed by local artist Nancy Gong. The stunning glass piece is designed as a “Blessing Scroll,” the intention of which is to wish and remind the recipient of good things in life – good fortune, good health, longevity, long-life, happiness and auspiciousness.

The Director’s Forum is the group of donors who contribute \$1,500 or more each year to Geva’s Annual Fund. Membership in the group brings donors closer to the art and grants them exclusive access to behind-the-scenes discussions and events with Geva’s national-level artists, including rehearsal visits, private cocktail receptions, backstage tours, conversations with the creative team and entrance to the exclusive Lipson Lounge. For information on joining this group, contact Geva’s Development Office at (585) 420-3013.

Attached Photo: Artistic Director Mark Cuddy, Dawn Lipson and Executive Director Christopher Mannelli. Photo by Goat Factory Media.

GEVA THEATRE CENTER

Founded in 1972, Geva Theatre Center is a not-for-profit, professional theatre company dedicated to creating and producing professional theatre productions, programs and services of a national standard. As Rochester’s leading professional theatre, Geva Theatre Center is the most attended regional theatre in New York State, and one of the 25 most subscribed in the country, serving up to 160,000 patrons annually, including more than 16,000 students.

The 522-seat Elaine P. Wilson Stage is home to a wide variety of performances, from musicals to American and world classics. The 180-seat Ron & Donna Fielding Stage is home to Geva’s own series of contemporary drama, comedy and musical theatre; Geva Comedy Improv; Geva’s New Play Reading Series and the Hornet’s Nest - an innovative play-reading series facilitating community-wide discussion on controversial topics. In addition, the Fielding Stage hosts visiting companies of both local and international renown.

Geva Theatre Center offers a wide variety of educational, outreach and literary programs, nurturing audiences and artists alike. Since 1995, the organization has been under the artistic direction of Mark Cuddy.

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