



Media Contact: Dawn Kellogg
Communications Manager
(585) 420-2059
dkellogg@gevatheatre.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Geva Theatre Center honors
Delores Jackson Radney

for her contribution to diversity in the community
and in the arts.

Geva presented Ms. Radney with the 2018 Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award at a performance of The Diary of Anne Frank.

Rochester, N.Y., February 21, 2018 – Delores Jackson Radney was honored with the **2018 Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award** at a performance of *The Diary of Anne Frank* at Geva Theatre Center on **Tuesday, February 20.**

Geva Theatre Center created the award in 2011, which was named in honor of Essie Calhoun-McDavid, Retired Chief Diversity Officer, Director of Community Affairs, Vice President of Eastman Kodak Company and Chair of the 2011 United Way of Greater Rochester Campaign. Ms. Calhoun-McDavid was the first recipient of this award, given annually to a person or organization that promotes and encourages diversity in the arts. Past recipients of this award include Garth Fagan (2012), School of the Arts (2013), Thomas Warfield (2014), Nydia Padilla-Rodriguez (2015), Rachel DeGuzman (2016) and Debora McDell-Hernandez (2017).

Delores Jackson Radney is the founding partner of Kuumba Consultants (founded in 2004), an arts-in-education agency providing arts and cultural programming for schools and youth organizations throughout the region. From 2001 to 2004, Ms. Radney was the theatre resource educator for the Rochester City School District, where she designed drama curriculum to satisfy the New York State Learning Standards in Drama and enhance student understanding in all subject areas. She was a museum educator at the Memorial Art Gallery from 1991 to 2001, where she oversaw family programs and community outreach to underserved audiences.

Ms. Radney was the artistic director of a youth drama troupe, Kuumba Kids, from 1995 to 2005. She is a writer and director of eleven original curriculum-related plays written for classrooms of students. Ms. Radney

created and produced *Our Stories Ourselves: 19th Century Afro Rochester*, an interactive learning resource for school and community learning. The learning resource includes video and audio tools, a photo album and slides of paintings to teach about Rochester's role in the African American freedom movement of the 19th century. *Our Stories Ourselves* is now a permanent part of school resources and is in many RCSD school libraries. *Let's Have Tea*, another school resource guide produced by Ms Radney, is inspired by the sculpture of Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony in Anthony Square and teaches students about both of these powerful leaders with an emphasis on living a peaceful life in a multi-ethnic society. She also serves as an Artist/Educator for Geva Theatre Center's in-school workshops.

An active member of the Rochester Kwanzaa Coalition, Ms. Radney served as the organization's chair from 2000 -2014. She is past President of the Greater Rochester/Antigua and Barbuda chapter of Partners of the Americas.

A graduate of SUNY Geneseo with a B.A. in Dramatic Arts and Communications, Ms. Radney is a 1999 Smithsonian Fellow in Museum Studies and the recipient of the 2001 Partners of the Americas Fellowship in International Development. Ms. Radney is the recipient of a number of arts and cultural grants and awards including a 1998 Special Citation Award from the Arts and Cultural Council of Greater Rochester, the 1999 LINKS White Rose Award for Special Contributions in the Arts, the 2000 Amigas of Latinas Unidas, the 2005 Kuumba Award from the Southwest Neighborhood Association, 2013 UB/EOC Distinguished Alumni Award, the 2015 City of Rochester Black Heritage Pioneer Award, and the 2016 MJS Productions Artist Award

The **Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award** recognizes that art allows for the expression of truths and beliefs and helps us gain an understanding of one another and our world. It further acknowledges that a mixture of cultures stimulates creativity, the sharing of ideas, and the building of a common collective future, which has always been close to Ms. Calhoun's heart.

Geva's Artistic Director **Mark Cuddy** remarked, "At this critical time in our community and in our nation, it is important to recognize those who have committed their lives to making a difference in the arts through their celebration of our diversity. Delores Jackson Radney has been doing such heroic work in Rochester for decades, and is a worthy recipient of this unique award that personifies its namesake, Essie Calhoun-McDavid."

The Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award is designed by local artist **Nancy Gong**, one of America's foremost glass artists. Ms. Gong combines the traditional techniques of stained glass craftsmen and stone

carvers with her own style of creating texture and painting to craft pieces which are coveted by collectors from all over the world. The Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award is a stunning multicolored pyramid of glass.

Attached Photos by imaginé photography:

- 1) Delores Jackson Radney with previous Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award Winners Rachel DeGuzman, Debora McDell-Hernandez, and Nydia Padilla-Rodriguez
- 2) Artistic Director Mark Cuddy and Delores Jackson Radney

**For further information, please contact:
Dawn Kellogg, Communications Manager, (585) 420-2059**

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 516-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 Hornets' Nest - an innovative play-reading series facilitating community-wide discussion on controversial topics. In addition, the Nextstage 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.

ENDS