Media Contact:
Anali Alegria, Communications Associate
(202) 434-9543 / aalegria@fords.org

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 25, 2018

FORD’S THEATRE PRESENTS
SEVENTH-ANNUAL
NATIONAL ORATORY FELLOWS PERFORMANCE
May 7, 2018

EVENT FEATURES
24 STUDENTS and 26 TEACHERS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Washington, D.C. – Ford’s Theatre Society holds its seventh-annual National Oratory Fellows Performance on Monday, May 7, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. Twenty-four students from grades 5 through 8 and 26 teachers from Arizona, California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas will perform original and historical speeches in honor of Lincoln on the historic Ford’s Theatre stage.

Tickets for the May 7 oratory event are free and available in advance on the Ford’s Theatre website (www.fords.org) and from the Ford’s Theatre box office (511 Tenth Street NW) on the day of the event.

Participating students were selected by their teachers in combination with recommendations from Ford’s Theatre Teaching Artists, as part of their classroom’s participation in the Ford’s Theatre National Oratory Fellows Program.

During the weekend prior to the performance, students and teachers will take master classes, visit national memorials and museums, and attend the musical The Wiz at Ford’s Theatre.

“By drawing on Abraham Lincoln’s legacy and example as an orator, we can show students and educators across the country the power of public speaking and lifting one’s voice,” said Ford’s Theatre Director of Education and Interpretation Sarah Jencks. “The National Oratory Fellows program works to build not only student’s public-speaking and performance skills, but also citizenship and leadership skills.”

Participating Students
Students performing on Monday, May 7, are: Belinda Miguel and Anna Walburger (Newport Beach, CA); Justin Whipple and Mya Zontok (Morris, CT); Anna Bailly, Bridget Bleakley, Grace Martin and Kaitlyn Olson (Wichita, KS); Natalie Ayala, Giana Ceballos, Melissa Prolaz and Jarom Seeley (Kuna, ID); Favour Ijaola and Valerie Mejia (Bowie, MD); Lindsey Langdon and Sophia Nkwocha (Omaha, NE); Tehya Long
and Abigail Morse (McGraw, NY); Rynia Cade and Ayeeannah Million (Toledo, OH); Summer Bartholomew and Kiera Tran (Denver, PA); Amalia Kenny and Elias Kurtz-Papadopoulos (Washington, DC).

National Oratory Fellows

This year’s National Oratory Fellows: Lauren Baxter (Denver, PA), Mike Buchanan (Wallace, NE), Stacey Callaway (Midland, TX), Lindsey Charron (Newport Beach, CA), Giani Clarkson (Washington, DC), Darrin Comstock (Omaha, NE), Barbara Connery (Morris, CT), Joyce Erb-Appleman (Bowie, MD), Caitlin Goodwin (Central, NY), Leah Greenglass (Washington, DC), Georgette Hackman (Denver, PA), Wally Hames (Kuna, ID), Dave McIntire (Wichita, KS), Krista McKim (Rockville, MD), Joseph Moneymaker (Smithland, KT), Alexandra Navarro (Mesa, AZ), Kathryn Notarpole (Mesa, AZ), Amber Obert (Kuna, ID), Angelo Parodi (Washington, DC), Karen Richey (Elk Grove, CA), Benjamin Rivers (Wichita, KS), James Rossi (Hagerstown, MD), Kelly Rowland (Toledo, OH), Jason Rude (New Hampton, IA), Jeff Weary (Independence, MO) and Melissa Woodward (Independence, MO). Debra Buggs (Landover, MD), Jennifer Erdtmann (Independence, MO), Angela Hambleton (Lafayette, CO) and Catherine Plumb-Sperry (Independence, MO) also participated the Oratory Fellows program this year.

The Ford’s Theatre National Oratory Fellows program builds and strengthens teachers’ skills to use public speaking and performance as teaching and learning strategies in the classroom. Through video-conferencing, Ford’s Theatre Teaching Artists conduct multiple virtual classroom visits to work with students throughout the school year. Participating teachers began the year with a two-day professional development retreat with Ford’s Theatre education staff and Teaching Artists at Ford’s Theatre. These sessions focused on how teachers can use the study of oratory in their classrooms to develop students’ speaking, writing and leadership skills, in addition to deepening their knowledge and understanding of great American orators including Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.

Ford’s Theatre education programs are supported by Lead Education Sponsor BP America with additional support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Comcast NBCUniversal, Phillips 66 and the National Park Service.

Schools and teachers interested in learning more about the National Oratory Fellows Program should visit www.fords.org/for-teachers/programs/oratory/national-oratory-fellowship/.

Ford’s Theatre Society

Since reopening in 1968, more than a hundred years after President Abraham Lincoln’s assassination, Ford’s Theatre has celebrated Lincoln’s legacy and explored the American experience through theatre and education. Under the leadership of Director Paul R. Tetreault, Ford’s Theatre has been recognized 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. For its accomplishments, the organization was honored in 2008 with the National Medal of Arts. For more information, 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

###