

# ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

Molly Smith Artistic Director Edgar Dobie Executive Director Zelda Fichandler Founding Director

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**MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR BELOVED PHILANTHROPIST, SCIENTIST & THEATER LOVER  
DR. JAYLEE MONTAGUE MEAD  
TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 8 AT 6:30 P.M.  
AT ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER**

(Washington, D.C.) The life and incomparable influence of Dr. Jaylee Montague Mead will be celebrated with a memorial service and reception in her honor Monday, October 8, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. at Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater (1101 Sixth St., SW). Jaylee and her late husband, Gilbert Mead, were steadfast supporters of the arts and humanities, and Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater bears their family name as a testament to their generosity.

"We hope the Mead Center will overflow with joy and love during this celebration in a way that befits our extraordinary Jaylee, who has without a question forever changed this community," reflects Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith. "Jaylee was a gift to us all and her legacy will endure with each new curtain and in every person moved by her ebullience and generosity."

Dr. Jaylee Montague Mead was one of the first professional women to be hired by NASA. During her 33-year tenure at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, she served as mathematician, staff astronomer and assistant chief of the Laboratory for Astronomy & Solar Physics. She established the Goddard Astronomical Data Center, a computerized data bank of stars and galaxies to aid astronomers in determining whether the objects they were viewing from space missions had already been identified, or were being discovered for the first time.

While at Goddard, Jaylee discovered its Music and Drama Club (MAD), where her appreciation and understanding of musical theater deepened. There she met fellow scientist and kindred spirit, Gilbert Mead. Gilbert participated in MAD as a musician, while Jaylee led the group administratively and as a performer. Jaylee and Gilbert's passion for musical theater led them to become patrons of and donors to many Washington area performing arts organizations.

She and Gilbert established the Mead Family Foundation in 1989 and became Arena Stage trustees in 1992. Together they were the recipients of numerous awards for their philanthropic efforts, including the 1995 Patron of the Arts Award from the Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington, the Washington Post Award for Distinguished Community Service in 1996, and the Mayor's Award for Excellence in Service to the Arts in 1998. They were recognized as Washingtonians of the Year in 1999 and in 2010 received the Outstanding Philanthropist award by the Association of Fundraising Professionals. Jaylee was named an Arena Stage Life Trustee in 2006, and in 2011, theatreWashington honored her with the Helen's Star Award for her extraordinary support of theater in Washington.

Jaylee is survived by her sister Mary Watts, three stepchildren, two nieces, a great nephew and the generations of Washingtonians who will benefit from her and Gilbert's immense generosity to the cultural life of our city.

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