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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2019 Frederick Speaker Series Lineup Announced

FREDERICK, MD, July 26, 2018 — Entering its seventh year, the Frederick Speaker Series has developed a reputation for bringing world-class speakers to the Frederick community. The 2019 lineup includes; Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, Ronan Farrow, actress and LGBT advocate, Laverne Cox, actor and literacy advocate, Levar Burton and international bestselling author, Neil Gaiman. All series events are held at the Weinberg Center for the Arts.

Tickets for all four speakers will go on sale to Weinberg Center members on Thursday, August 9 at 10:00 AM and to the general public on Thursday, August 16 at 10:00 AM. Tickets may be purchased online at weinbergcenter.org, by calling the Weinberg Center Box Office at 301-600-2828, or in person at 20 W. Patrick Street in Frederick, Maryland. For more information about becoming a Weinberg Center member and gaining early access to tickets, please visit weinbergcenter.org/support#membership.

A separately-ticketed meet-and-greet reception will take place immediately following each presentation. These exclusive events provide a chance for fans to meet the speakers, take pictures, and obtain autographs. All proceeds from the meet-and-greet receptions will benefit children's programs at Frederick County Public Libraries.

Ronan Farrow | Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 7:30 PM

Born in 1987 to actress Mia Farrow and filmmaker Woody Allen, Ronan Farrow achieved early notoriety as a child prodigy, skipping grades and starting college at age 11. He is a Yale Law School educated attorney and a member of the New York Bar. He also attended Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. Farrow served as a State Department diplomat in Afghanistan and Pakistan and reported to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton as the United States' first special advisor for global youth during the Arab Spring revolutions. He has served as an expert witness before the U.S. Congressional Human Rights Caucus. As an NBC News anchor and investigative reporter, Farrow founded and fronted the "Undercovered" series on "The Today Show," combining traditional reporting with innovative crowd-sourced story selection. Farrow has written about human rights and foreign policy for The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Wall Street Journal and other publications. His exposé of Harvey Weinstein in The New Yorker helped kickstart the #MeToo movement and earned him a Pulitzer Prize for Public Service in 2018. He also received the Point Courage Award in 2018 for his continued advocacy for the LGBTQ community.

Laverne Cox | Wednesday, April 3, 2019 at 7:30pm

Laverne Cox is an Emmy-nominated actress and Emmy-winning producer best known for her work on the critically acclaimed Netflix original series "Orange is The New Black." She is the first transgender woman of color to have a leading role on a mainstream scripted television show. In 2017 she starred in "Doubt," a CBS legal drama. The show was the first broadcast series featuring a transgender series regular character played by a transgender actor. Cox's work as an actress and advocate landed her on the cover of Time magazine as well as an Emmy nomination for "Outstanding Guest Actress in a Comedy Series." She continues to break boundaries and make history with accolades including back-to-back SAG Awards for "Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series," a Critic's Choice nomination for "Best Supporting Actress" and consecutive NAACP Image Award nominations for "Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series." She earned a Daytime Emmy Award for her groundbreaking documentary "Laverne Cox Presents: The T Word," exploring the lives of seven transgender youth across the country. Cox was one of Glamour magazine's 2014 Women of the Year and was named one of the Top 50 Transgender Icons by The Huffington Post.

Levar Burton | Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 7:30pm

As both an actor and literacy advocate, Levar Burton has captured the admiration of both his audiences and his industry peers for three decades. He continues to enjoy rare longevity in the entertainment business. Burton launched his acting career as Kunta Kinte in the landmark television series "Roots," which landed him on the cover of Time magazine at the age of 19. Shortly thereafter he achieved further global acclaim as Chief Engineer Geordi LaForge in the "Star Trek: The Next Generation" television series and feature films. From 1983 until 2009 he was host and producer of the beloved Peabody Award-winning PBS children's series "Reading Rainbow." He recently reimagined the iconic series through his company RRLidz. The all-new Reading Rainbow app is the number one educational app on iTunes, delivering hundreds of quality books and video field trips to hundreds of thousands of children. In 2014, Burton was at the helm of a record-shattering Kickstarter campaign that will soon bring Reading Rainbow home and school versions to the web. He has received 12 Emmy Awards, a Grammy and five NAACP Image Awards. Burton continues to produce, act and direct in addition to being an advocate for literacy and education.

Neil Gaiman | Thursday, May 9, 2019 at 7:30pm

A self-described "feral child who was raised in libraries," Neil Gaiman devoured the works of authors like C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Edgar Allen Poe, and more at an early age. He began his writing career in England as a journalist then moved onto writing books and comics. His groundbreaking, award-winning series "Sandman" became the first comic ever to receive a literary award, the 1991 World Fantasy Award for Best Short Story. Gaiman writes books for readers of all ages, including picture books for young readers. His books are genre works that refuse to remain true to their genres like his award-winning gothic horror work "Coraline," originally deemed too frightening for children. He has authored many New York Times bestsellers including "Nowhere," "Smoke and Mirrors," "Stardust," "American Gods" and "Fragile Things." "American Gods" has been released in an expanded tenth anniversary edition and there is an HBO series in the works. "The Graveyard Book" received numerous awards and made Gaiman the first author ever to win both the Newberry Medal and the Carnegie Medal with the same book. He wrote the screenplay for the original BBC TV series "Neverwhere," "Mirrormask" and co-wrote the script to Robert Zemeckis's "Beowulf."

ABOUT THE FREDERICK SPEAKER SERIES

Since its inception in 2013, the Frederick Speaker Series has featured notable personalities such as Cal Ripken Jr., General Colin Powell, Tom Brokaw, George Takei, Bill Nye, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Ted Koppel and Dr. Temple Grandin.

Presenting sponsors this season include the Weinberg Center for the Arts and Frederick County Public Libraries.

ABOUT THE WEINBERG CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The Weinberg Center for the Arts is one of the region's premier performing arts presenters, offering film, music, dance, theater, and family-focused programming. Located in the historic Tivoli movie theater in downtown Frederick, Md., the Weinberg Center strives to ensure that the arts remain accessible and affordable to local and regional audiences alike. Weinberg Center events are made possible with major support from the City of Frederick, the Maryland State Arts Council, Plamondon Hospitality Partners, and other corporate and individual donors.

Photos available upon request.