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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GUTHRIE THEATER REPORTS BALANCED BUDGET IN 2018–2019 FISCAL YEAR

**Theater boasts an increase in individual donors and subscribers
and an ongoing commitment to accessibility**

James L. Chosy elected Chair of Board of Directors

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(Minneapolis/St. Paul) — At its 2019 annual meeting today, the Guthrie Theater (Joseph Haj, artistic director) reflected upon the artistic and financial successes of its 2018–2019 Season, which ended on August 31, 2019. In a season that featured a world premiere by Pulitzer Prize winner Lynn Nottage, as well as six female directors and many diverse casts who expanded our storytelling through unique voices and perspectives, the theater achieved an operating surplus of \$23,984 on a \$27.8 million budget and saw an increase in both the number of donors and subscribers supporting the organization,

demonstrating continued financial health. The number of Guthrie donors grew to 6,591 in the 2018–2019 Season, marking an increase of 8% over the previous year. In addition to seeing an increase in its donor base, the Guthrie also increased its total number of subscribers to 17,922.

Artistic Director Joseph Haj stated, “I believe the Guthrie is at its best when it is many things to many people, and the strides we made during the 2018–2019 Season to enhance our artistry, reflect our values and connect with the community were remarkable. This steadfast commitment to growth in these areas makes me proud to lead this incredible organization and serve our community.”

“The Guthrie continues to operate from a strong financial position,” remarked Managing Director James Haskins. “In addition to returning a surplus this past season, we saw an increase in both the number of donors and subscribers who create such a vital foundation for our fiscal health. We are grateful to our audiences and community for their ongoing support of our work on and off the stages.”

The total attendance in the 2018–2019 Season was 353,392. Of that number, 84,770 patrons (24%) utilized free or subsidized tickets, maintaining the Guthrie’s commitment to accessibility with a significant focus on K–12 students. Furthering its pursuit of equity, diversity and inclusion, the Guthrie held its first relaxed performance — designed for patrons, families and students who may benefit from a more relaxed and judgment-free theatergoing experience — during *A Christmas Carol* in November 2018. Although relaxed performances are open to all patrons, they are intentionally modified to accommodate patrons with sensory and vestibular sensitivities, anxiety, dementia, autism spectrum disorders, learning differences or challenges attending the theater.

The Guthrie Education Network continued to expand its reach beyond the Twin Cities, embedding Guthrie teaching artists in Cloquet High School to build programming. As a whole, Guthrie teaching artists spent 2,500 hours in 10 Minnesota public schools.

While the Guthrie’s overall FY 2019 budget was lower than FY 2018, this reduction was planned, as the theater programmed nine rather than 10 mainstage productions in the 2018–2019 Season. This translated to a 13% reduction in the number of performances and an 11% reduction in total attendance.

The 2018–2019 Season closed with 29 productions and 528 performances across three stages. The mainstage season opened with *Frankenstein – Playing With Fire*, which celebrated the 30th anniversary of Barbara Field’s Guthrie-commissioned script and the 200th anniversary of Mary Shelley’s iconic novel. This was followed by the classic farce *Noises Off* and then the Guthrie’s 44th production of *A Christmas Carol*. At the top of 2019, the theater opened Lauren Yee’s *The Great Leap*. Next, director Lavina Jadhvani put an inclusive spin on Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*. Haj directed his own adaptation of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and Mary Zimmerman returned to the Guthrie to direct her stunning *Metamorphoses*. *Guys and Dolls* attracted audiences to the thrust stage from across the region, and the season concluded with the world premiere of *Floyd’s*, a Guthrie commission by two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Lynn Nottage, which was extended by one week due to the terrific interest and support by the community.

Concurrent to its mainstage productions, the Guthrie curated a season of local and national presentations in the Dowling Studio. As part of the Level Nine Series, the Guthrie celebrated queer voices with a festival of performances. Split Britches’ *Unexploded Ordnances (UXO)* confronted theatergoers’ notions of politics, aging and desire; Martha Graham Cracker’s *Lashed But Not Leashed* charmed audiences with drag-cabaret crooning; and Ryan J. Haddad’s *Hi, Are You Single?* explored the intersection of romance and disability in the gay dating scene.

In addition to these three projects, the Guthrie welcomed four local companies and artists to present a broad range of theatrical work on Level Nine, including PRIME Productions, Interact Theater, Full Circle Theater and local artist Patrick Scully.

At its annual meeting, the Guthrie Board of Directors elected officers: **James L. Chosy** (executive vice president and general counsel, U.S. Bancorp) was elected chair; **Martha Goldberg Aronson** (former executive vice president and president of global healthcare, Ecolab, Inc.) was elected past chair; **Joseph Haj** (artistic director, Guthrie Theater) was elected director; **Audrey Lucas** (senior partner, McKinsey &

Company) was elected treasurer; and **Jennifer Reedstrom Bishop** (chair, Gray Plant Mooty Health Law & Nonprofit Organizations Practice Group) was elected secretary.

The following individuals were reelected to the Board for a second three-year term: **Susan Allen** (founder and principal, BrandImpact Consulting); **Peter Brew** (chief technology officer and co-founder, StatBridge, LLC); and **John A. Knapp** (shareholder, Winthrop & Weinstine).

Y. Marc Belton (founder, Wisefellows Consulting); **Jennifer Melin Miller** (principal consultant, JMM Consulting); and **Kenneth Spence** (former executive vice president and general counsel, Travelers) will return to the Board. In addition, five new directors were elected for one three-year term at the theater's May 28, 2019, Board meeting: **Linda N. Hanson** (president emerita, Hamline University); **W. Thomas McEnery** (executive vice president, corporate affairs, and chief marketing officer, Change Healthcare); **Irene Quarshie** (vice president, global supply chain and logistics, Target); **Ann Rainhart** (chief operating officer, Briggs and Morgan); and Senator **Julie A. Rosen** (Minnesota state senator, District 23).

THE GUTHRIE THEATER (Joseph Haj, artistic director) was founded by Sir Tyrone Guthrie in 1963 and is an American center for theater performance, production, education and professional training, dedicated to producing the great works of dramatic literature and cultivating the next generation of theater artists. Under Haj's leadership, the Guthrie is guided by four core values: Artistic Excellence; Community; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; and Fiscal Responsibility. The Guthrie produces a mix of classic and contemporary plays on three stages and continues to set a national standard for excellence in theatrical production and performance, serving more than 350,000 patrons annually. In 2006, the Guthrie opened a new home, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel, located on the banks of the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Open to the public year-round, it houses three state-of-the-art stages, production facilities, classrooms, full-service restaurants and dramatic public lobbies. guthrietheater.org

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