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Baltimore Center Stage Announces the Appointment of Seven Trustees

Baltimore, MD February 9, 2022— Baltimore Center Stage (BCS) has announced the appointment of seven new members to its Board of Trustees. The seven new additions began with **Sheela Murthy** and **Dr. Bayinnah Shabazz** who were named in September. They are now joined by an additional five, **Rob Furlong, The Reverend Kobi Little, Dawn Moore, Letieri R. Schnor,** and **Ben Yannuzzi**— bringing the board to a total of 44 members. Each candidate brings a unique contribution to the Baltimore philanthropic community; their additions are necessary and invaluable to the equitable wealth and development of the Baltimore Center Stage community.

Board of Trustees Sandy Liotta said, "This exciting slate of new board members represents a deepening of who Baltimore Center Stage has always been. We have long championed a goal of "access for all" to our theater, and these new board members offer perspectives that help expand our definitions of access beyond just free tickets or Mobile Unit productions to also include values of civic contribution to our communities and more. I am thrilled to officially welcome them to our BCS family!"

"The BCS Board of Trustees is mission-critical to our work. Each of these new board members has already shown up for BCS and the arts in a variety of ways, and they'll join a dedicated group of community leaders whose volunteer service is moving the needle here in Baltimore and beyond. When I stop to consider the constellation of people stewarding this organization right now, I can't help but smile out loud," said **Artistic Director Stephanie Ybarra**.



These additions to the board are a direct reflection of the mission and vision at Baltimore Center Stage. Selecting Board members who value and understand the necessity of conscientious oversight will be pertinent to the theater's future successes.

Rob Furlong is a partner and member of the equity research team at Brown Advisory. He has served in various investment management roles for more than two decades. He currently lives in Baltimore with his wife and two daughters and spends most of his free time reading, cooking, or bike riding.

Rob has received degrees in Economics and Finance from York College of Pennsylvania, and the University of Baltimore.



The Reverend Kobi Little is a global citizen, strategic advisor, public policy advocate and faith leader—he is the dean of Justice Chapel. Little serves as president of the Baltimore NAACP and is a past vice president and political action chairman of the Maryland State Conference of the NAACP. He is the CEO of Community Partnerships for Public Health- International, a visiting fellow at the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University, and a member of the Strong Future Maryland advisory council as well as the Maryland Attorney General's hate crimes working group.

Little is currently exploring the theory and praxis of the prophetic ministry tradition and their implications for democracy building, justice advocacy and equity advancement.

Little's work has been highlighted in national and international media and he is a frequent lecturer for academic, corporate, and religious audiences in the US and abroad.

His recent works include advocacy on government accountability, consumer protection, elections during the pandemic, police reform and civilian oversight of law enforcement, worker protections and fair wages, health equity, education policy, fair election financing, energy and environmental justice, democracy strengthening and eliminating white supremacy and structural inequity.

Reverend Kobi Little is a graduate of Paul Laurence Dunbar High School and Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. He pursued graduate studies in theology and pastoral care at Selma University and the University of Alabama at Birmingham.





Dawn Moore Has more than 20 years of leadership experience in intergovernmental relations, non-profit work, corporate partnerships, community organizing, fundraising and campaign strategy. She has held positions in the highest levels of state government and non-profit organizations, and throughout her career, Moore has decidedly only worked in positions that have allowed her to “give back” to the community through service and philanthropy.

Dawn began a career in government and politics accepting a position with the Office of the Secretary of State, serving as Special Assistant to the Secretary in the Community and Intergovernmental Relations Division before quickly being promoted to Director of that division. During her tenure, the First Lady of Maryland bestowed her with the prestigious “*Twentieth Century Women in Government*” leadership award.

As a result of Moore’s strong community ties and her work in state government, Moore was brought on by former Lieutenant Governor of Maryland, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend to be her Senior Policy Advisor for Women, Work, and Family Issues. Dawn created and launched Townsend’s Statewide Work Life Balance Initiative, eventually becoming Townsend’s regional Field Director during the 2002 Gubernatorial Election—working with local elected and community leaders to produce a record-breaking voter turnout of residents in Prince George’s County.

Dawn established Young Professionals for O’Malley Brown (YPOMB)— a volunteer fundraising committee created to raise funds from supporters throughout the state between the ages of 25 and 45 years old. In less than one month she surpassed the campaign’s goal for the group of \$50,000 and raised \$100,000.

Since returning to the City of Baltimore in 2012, Dawn has turned her philanthropic focus toward non-profits and local grassroots organizations that work on educational attainment, veterans issues, families and community development. She is a graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park, holding a degree in Government and Politics and a certificate in Women’s Studies.

Sheela Murthy is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, public speaker, and an internationally recognized U.S. immigration lawyer.

She is the President/CEO of the Murthy Law Firm, the world's pre-eminent U.S. immigration law firm. The firm has satellite offices in Seattle and affiliate offices in Chennai, Hyderabad, and Mumbai, India.

The Firm represents a wide range of clients, including Fortune 500 companies, mid-size and small companies, entertainers, entrepreneurs, physicians, researchers, and many others pursuing both employment-based and family-based immigration options. The firm's website, Murthy.com, is the most visited law firm website in the world.

Sheela and her husband, Vasant Nayak, co-founded the MurthyNAYAK Foundation in 2001, a nonprofit organization dedicated to working on socially transformative projects designed to improve the lives of women, children, and immigrants, both in her birth country, India and in her adopted country, the U.S.



Letieri R. Schnor is a Project Manager for the PNC Charitable Trusts. She currently serves on the Vestry of Old St. Paul's Church in Baltimore. Letieri holds a master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Howard University.

She is passionate about theatre and the Arts and enjoys traveling and cooking

Dr. Bayinnah Shabazz has served as the Medical Director of the IDF Dialysis Center in Glen Burnie. She is a nephrologist – affiliated with Mid-Atlantic Nephrology Associates.

Bayinnah received her MD from Temple University, and completed her internship at Episcopal Hospital, residency at MedStar Harbor Hospital, and fellowship at University of Maryland Medical Center.

Known for her colorful collection of hats, Bayinnah is also an avid world traveler, a wonderful cook, and loves to sing.



Ben Yannuzzi is a wealth advisor for Truist Bank. He has worked with Truist and its predecessor, BB&T, since 2010.

Ben received his BA in English and History from St. Mary's College of Maryland and was one of the College's Lannan Fellows for 2008- 2009. He received his MA in Writing from Johns Hopkins University with a focus on poetry and poetry in translation. With the partnership of JHU SAIS student, Hahn Kim, Ben completed a literary translation of *Sky, Wind, Stars, and Poetry*, a book of poems by Korean poet Yoon Dong Ju, for his thesis portfolio.

Serving as a trustee would be Ben's first such role for an organization of Center Stage's stature and impact. He has served in several elected officer roles for a small non-profit sailing club, including two years as the Treasurer. Ben has a strong interest in Theater, and the creative arts in general.

He currently lives in Annapolis, MD with his wife Kelsey, and their two year old son, Charlie.

For more information, to schedule interviews, and for other media related inquiries please contact the Communications office. For general information, please visit www.centerstage.org or call the box office at 410.332.0033. For press inquiries, please contact Vinnessa James at Vinnessa@JRMConsultancy.com.

About Baltimore Center Stage

Baltimore Center Stage is a professional, nonprofit institution committed to entertaining, engaging and enriching audiences through bold, innovative and thought-provoking classical and contemporary theater. Named the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage has steadily grown as a leader in the national regional theater scene. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Kwame Kwei-Armah OBE and Managing Director Michael Ross, Baltimore Center Stage is committed to creating and presenting a diverse array of world premieres and exhilarating interpretations of established works.



Baltimore Center Stage believes in access for all—creating a welcoming environment for everyone who enters its theater doors and, at the same time, striving to meet audiences where they are. In addition to its Mainstage and Off-Center productions in the historic Mount Vernon neighborhood, Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations among a global audience through digital initiatives, which explore how technology and the arts intersect. The theater also nurtures the next generation of artists and theatergoers through the Young Playwrights Festival, Student Matinee Series and many other educational programs for students, families, and educators.

