



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Cheryl Knauer
410-568-8808
cknauer@nevinspr.com

MARYLAND WOMEN'S HERITAGE CENTER OPENS IN BALTIMORE
"ADDING HERSTORY TO HISTORY TO TELL OURSTORY"

The First Comprehensive State-Based Center and Museum of Its Kind in the United States Honoring Maryland's Historical and Contemporary Renowned Women and Girls inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame, as well as the Unsung Heroines

**Permanent Home for the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame Including
More Than 150 Renowned Maryland Women**

Located at 39 West Lexington Street, Admission to the Center is Free and Hours of Operation are Tuesday – Saturday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Beginning on Saturday, June 19

A Special Invitation-Only Grand Opening Celebration is Tuesday, May 25 at 10:30 a.m.

BALTIMORE – The Maryland Women's Heritage Center, the first comprehensive state-based center and museum of its kind in the United States, is set to open its initial home in Baltimore.

A special invitation-only grand opening celebration is **Tuesday, May 25, at 10:30 a.m.**, at the Maryland Women's Heritage Center located at 39 West Lexington Street at the corner of Lexington and Liberty Streets. Admission to the Center is free, and hours of operation are Tuesday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., beginning on **Saturday, June 19**.

Established to preserve the past, understand the present, and shape the future by recognizing, respecting, and transmitting the experiences and contributions of Maryland women and girls of diverse backgrounds and regions, the Maryland Women's Heritage Center honors Maryland's historical and contemporary renowned women and girls who have been inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame, as well as the Unsung Heroines who have shaped their families and communities.

The Center serves as a resource clearinghouse for information about Maryland women and a gathering place to hold workshops, forums, and other special events, including a forum to address issues impacting girls, women, and their families. In conjunction with the Maryland Women's Heritage Center's "Pauline Menes Public Service Leadership Fund," created in memory of Pauline Menes, a pioneer in the role of women in politics and the longest continuously serving state delegate in Maryland, the Center expects to help in developing leadership by girls and women.

Located in the former Baltimore Gas & Electric Building, this initial space has been donated by David Hillman, CEO of Southern Management Corporation.

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A permanent site is expected to not only highlight the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame and the Unsung Heroines, but also feature continuing and changing exhibits about individuals, organizations, events, and special topics; a place to convene meetings and conferences; an interactive, state-of-the-art student learning center; a resource and reference library; a women's history archive; displays of arts and crafts; dramatic, musical, and dance performances by or about Maryland women and girls; dialogues and seminars on women's issues; space for special events and receptions; and a gift shop with art, literature and unique gifts by Maryland women. It will also serve as a community-based forum to gatherings to study and act upon issues of importance to Maryland girls and women, their families and communities.

According to Jill Moss Greenberg, Executive Director of the Maryland Women's Heritage Center, "As a national first, we hope that this will serve as a model that can be replicated and adapted by other states to honor the girls and women in their states."

The Maryland Women's Heritage Center is an outgrowth of the Maryland Women's History Project, which began in 1980 as a collaborative venture between the Maryland Commission for Women and the Maryland State Department of Education. Each year, packets of materials were developed and distributed to schools, libraries and other organizations, throughout the State of Maryland for use during Women's History Month in March. In 2003, the "Maryland Women's Heritage Trail" was created in conjunction with local historical associations and Commissions for Women identifying more than 150 Maryland sites where women had made unique contributions.

As the home of the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame, the Maryland Women's Heritage Center provides a place to learn more about the women who have been inducted into the Hall of Fame and their historic accomplishments. Established in 1985 by the Maryland Commission for Women and the Women Legislators of Maryland, the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame formerly consisted of a plaque displayed in the Maryland State Law Library in Annapolis, Md., and an online summary of each woman through the Maryland State Archives, in addition to an annual induction ceremony in March during Women's History Month.

Many of the women who have been inducted into the Hall of Fame and who are highlighted at the Center are "firsts" and "founders" from throughout the state, including Margaret Brent, the first woman to ask for the right to vote, Harriet Tubman, a runaway slave who helped lead other slaves to freedom, Mary Lemist Titcomb, creator of the bookmobile and the first chartered county library in the nation, Henrietta Szold, founder of adult education for immigrants in the United States, Billie Holiday, a legendary female African-American jazz musician, Rachel Carson, "mother" of the modern environmental movement who is best known for her book, "Silent Spring," which she wrote while living in Silver Spring, Md., and many more. A complete list is available at www.mdwomensheritagecenter.org/maryland-womens-hall-of-fame.

In addition, the Maryland Women's Heritage Center is actively seeking nominations of Maryland women and girls to be featured as Unsung Heroines who have played significant roles often behind-the-scenes, serving anonymously, without recognition and praise. A submission form is available online at www.mdwomensheritagecenter.org/unsung-heroines, as well as at the Maryland Women's Heritage Center.

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The Center's Executive Board is comprised of three First Ladies of Maryland—Frances Hughes Glendening, who also serves as President; Kendel S. Ehrlich; and Katie Curran O'Malley—in addition to Shoshana S. Cardin, renowned nationally as the “First Lady of Volunteers,” and Nancy S. Grasmick, Maryland State Superintendent of Schools. Other Maryland business and civic leaders make up the remaining members of the Executive Board and Board of Directors.

An Honorary Board consists of renowned Maryland women, including Helen Delich Bentley, former congresswoman and first woman director of the U.S. Maritime Commission, Dominique Dawes, Olympic champion, Barbara A. Mikulski, United States Senator, Cokie Roberts, author and political commentator, and Nora Roberts, international best-selling author of mystery and romance novels. Lucille Clifton, former Maryland Poet Laureate, is an emeritus member (deceased). [The Center has established the Lucille Clifton Fund for Women in the Arts to honor women in the arts, with particular emphasis on girls and women of color and those working for social justice.]

Further leadership of the Maryland Women's Heritage Center is drawn from throughout the state and region consisting of women's organizations, the local commissions for women, and various organizations for women and girls. Partner organizations of the Center include the Maryland Commission for Women, Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland State Education Association, Girl Scouts of Central Maryland, YWCA Greater Baltimore Area, Center for Transnational Women's Issues, and School Girls Unite. Media partners are MPT, WomanTalk Live, “On Purpose Woman,” “Focus on Women Magazine,” “The Women's Journal” and “Southern Maryland Women.”

For more information about the Maryland Women's Heritage Center, call 410-767-0675 or visit www.MDWomensHeritageCenter.org.

Editor's Note: To attend the grand opening celebration or arrange a tour or any interviews about the Maryland Women's Heritage Center, please contact Cheryl Knauer at cknauer@nevinspr.com or 410-568-8808.

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