



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 15, 2015

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**Blue Star Theatres Program for Military Families
Reaches 136 Participating Theatres in 35 States:
*Virginia Stage Company Event to Feature Readings and Performances***

New York, NY – Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, and Blue Star Families, the country’s largest chapter-based military families non-profit organization, are pleased to announce that 136 theatres in 35 states have now joined the **Blue Star Theatres** program. In a partnership between TCG and Blue Star Families, with leadership support from MetLife Foundation, Blue Star Theatres supports a variety of theatre offerings to military personnel and their families across the United States. This initiative recognizes the profound contributions of service families and seeks to build stronger connections between theatres, military families, and their communities through unique programming, special discounts, and more.

On Saturday, September 19th, a Blue Star Theatres event will be held at 4:30pm ET at Virginia Stage Company at The Wells Theatre, located at 108 East Tazewell Street, Norfolk, VA. This event will include remarks by **Penny Bolden**, senior advisor for strategic partnerships, Blue Star Families; **Teresa Eyring**, executive director, TCG; and **Patrick Mullins**, interim artistic director, Virginia Stage Company. This event for military families will include performances of: *Peter and the Wolf*, by Sergei Prokofiev, adapted for the stage by CORE Theatre Ensemble, performed by the U.S. Army TRADOC Woodwind Ensemble; and *The Selfish Giant*, based on a story by Oscar Wilde, adapted for the stage by Ron Newman. Both performances are appropriate for students in grades PreK-3. Learn more and RSVP for the event [here](#).

“What began with 22 participating theatres has blossomed into a national movement to honor our service members and veterans,” said **Teresa Eyring**, executive director, TCG. “Through our Blue Star Theatres grant program and events like this, we celebrate the power of theatre to give back to the military families who have given so much.”

TCG and Blue Star Families connect theatres with local bases and military families, and develop and disseminate best practices for engaging with deployed personnel, veterans, and service families. The Blue Star Theatres grant program supports projects that can include talk-backs, outreach programs, sponsored tickets, performances, playwriting workshops, readings or workshops that focus on military themes and service, and more. The deadline for the next round of the Blue Star Theatres grant program is September 18, 2015. For more information about the Blue Star Theatres grant program, visit: <http://www.tcgcircle.org/category/blue-star-theatres/>.

“Programs like Blue Star Theatres connect our local military and civilian communities, and offer families fun and enriching activities to enjoy together,” said **Kathy Roth-Douquet**, CEO, Blue Star Families. “We are excited about the growth of the program thanks to the generous support of the MetLife Foundation, and the contributions of TCG and the growing number of theatres across the country.”

One hundred and thirty-six TCG Member Theatres have signed on to participate in Blue Star Theatres. To find the full list, visit: <http://www.tcg.org/advocacy/bluestar/map.cfm>.



Blue Star Families is an international nonprofit network of military families from all ranks and services, including guard and reserve, dedicated to supporting, connecting, and empowering military families. With our partners, Blue Star Families hosts a robust array of morale and empowerment programs including Books on Bases, Blue Star Museums, Operation Honor Corps, Blue Star Careers, and Operation Appreciation. Blue Star Families also works directly with the Department of Defense and senior members of local, State, and Federal government to bring the most important military family issues to light. Collaborating with fellow nonprofits, community advocates, and public officials, Blue Star Families raises awareness of the challenges and strengths of military family life and works to make military life more sustainable. Our worldwide membership includes military spouses, children, parents, and friends, as well as service members, veterans, and civilians. To learn more about Blue Star Families, visit them at <http://www.bluestarfam.org/>, and on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/BlueStarFamilies>), Twitter (<https://twitter.com/BlueStarFamily>) and Pinterest (<http://www.pinterest.com/bluestarfam/>).

MetLife Foundation was created in 1976 to continue MetLife's long tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. Today, the Foundation is dedicated to advancing financial inclusion, committing \$200 million over the next five years to help build a secure future for individuals and communities around the world. MetLife Foundation is affiliated with MetLife, Inc, a leading global provider of insurance, annuities and employee benefit programs, serving 90 million customers. Through its subsidiaries and affiliates, MetLife holds leading market positions in the United States, Japan, Latin America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. For more information, visit www.metlife.org.

Virginia Stage Company is Southeastern Virginia's leading theatre destination, serving an audience of over 70,000 annually both at the Wells Theatre and throughout the community. With a renewed commitment to acting locally and an expanded education and community engagement program, VSC is dedicated to connecting Hampton Roads by enriching the lives of its citizens and building artists and audiences for the future.

For over 50 years, **Theatre Communications Group** (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre. TCG's constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to nearly 700 member theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 12,000 individuals nationwide. TCG offers its members networking and knowledge-building opportunities through conferences, events, research and communications; awards grants, approximately \$2 million per year, to theatre companies and individual artists; advocates on the federal level; and serves as the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute, connecting its constituents to the global theatre community. TCG is North America's largest independent publisher of dramatic literature, with 14 Pulitzer Prizes for Best Play on the TCG booklist. It also publishes the award-winning *American Theatre* magazine and ARTSEARCH®, the essential source for a career in the arts. In all of its endeavors, TCG seeks to increase the organizational efficiency of its member theatres, cultivate and celebrate the artistic talent and achievements of the field and promote a larger public understanding of, and appreciation for, the theatre. www.tcg.org.

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