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## **NORTHERN STAGE EXCEEDS CAMPAIGN FOR NORTHERN STAGE FUNDRAISING GOAL**

White River Junction, Vermont -- On Monday May 9, 2016, Eric Bunge, Managing Director of Northern Stage Theater Company, announced to a crowd of supporters gathered in the Byrne Theater of the Barrette Center for the Arts that the organization had officially exceeded the fundraising goal for its "Campaign for Northern Stage: New Home, Bright Future."

According to Bunge: "Our Board set a goal to reach \$9 million by May 31, 2016. These funds were to cover the \$7.5 million cost of building our new home and to raise an additional \$1.5 million to create a strong financial foundation for the company. However, in February, an anonymous donor offered a quiet goal to staff – if we could achieve \$9 million before May 31, 2016, we would receive an additional \$215,000. As of May 11, 2016, we have raised \$9,015,000 allowing us to unlock that challenge gift, bringing our total to \$9,230,000."

Board Chair Janet Miller Haines added, "We are deeply grateful to all of those who supported us in this effort. The generous gifts we have received, and the incredible dedication and energy of our staff, Board, and campaign volunteers, have been overwhelming."

Director of Development and Campaign Manager Amanda Rafuse stated, "We have been honored to receive more than 550 gifts from individuals, foundations,

and organizations. Their faith in Northern Stage and confidence in our ability to achieve our mission of 'changing lives, one story at a time' is humbling and gratifying."

The Campaign for Northern Stage is co-chaired by Cynthia and Ray Barrette and Linda and Rick Roesch, all long-time supporters of Northern Stage. Mrs. Barrette stated, "Ray and I are very proud to have taken a leading role in this campaign. This beautiful new home for Northern Stage has long been our dream for the community. The entire process went smoothly and was a pleasure to be part of."

Breadloaf Corporation provided design and construction services for the Barrette Center for the Arts in consultation with Theatre Projects Consultants and Akustiks Sound Design. The new facility provides an intimate 240-seat theater with a modified thrust stage; a spacious lobby with a concessions area, coat rooms, and ample restroom facilities; modern facilities throughout the building include a hearing assist system, an elevator to the second-floor lobby, and accessible seating in both the first and last row of the theater; energy efficiencies throughout the building; and a backstage rehearsal/classroom and production support area. The new theater has ground floor access, an attractive frontage with a public green-space, a safe and convenient drop-off area, and ample parking in the town lot located directly behind the theater.

In the recently closed 2015-16 season, Northern Stage's first in the Barrette Center for the Arts, the company saw nearly 30,000 patrons attending 6 mainstage productions – a 26% increase in attendance over the previous season. More than 4,800 people utilized low cost access including \$15 Student Anytime Tickets and \$20 Tuesday tickets. Northern Stage's education programs

for students of all ages have grown by 30% this season, and myriad collaborations with area organizations are currently underway.

Campaign Co-Chair Linda Roesch made reference to the many ways the seeds planted by the Campaign for Northern Stage are already bearing fruit. "With this Campaign, we envisioned a bright future that includes not just a new home, but more efficient production shops, improved space for our education programs to thrive, and the ability to develop and explore exciting new collaborations and artistic opportunities. Already, we are seeing these goals achieved."

Northern Stage's Producing Artistic Director Carol Dunne says she is inspired by the endless possibilities created by the completion of the Campaign for Northern Stage. "It is difficult to find words to convey my immense gratitude to our donors. The Barrette Center for the Arts has inspired our artists to go beyond the expected and give Upper Valley audiences the thought provoking, uniquely imagined theater that they desire. I look forward to working with our amazing staff to exceed our patrons' hopes and dreams on-stage and off."

*Northern Stage is a regional non-profit professional theater that seeks to change lives, one story at a time. Based in the Upper Valley of the Connecticut River, Northern Stage brings national and area talent together on an intimate stage in diverse classic, contemporary, and new plays and musicals. Northern Stage has offered over 100 productions in its 18-year history, and annual attendance is over 25,000.*

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