

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS CONTACT

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**WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS CHILDREN OF THE GOSPEL CHOIR
CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH
THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BAND
IN "SEASON OF HOPE"**

**Free concerts at DAR Constitution Hall
Sat. December 9, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and
Sun. December 10, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.**

(Washington, D.C.) - Washington Performing Arts Children of the Gospel Choir (COTG) joins The United States Air Force Band in "Season of Hope," a free concert celebrating the holiday season on Dec. 9 at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. and Dec. 10 at 3 p.m. at DAR Constitution Hall (1776 D St NW, Washington, D.C. 20006). Tickets are free and available at <https://usafband.ticketleap.com/season-of-hope/details>.

The concert features The United States Air Force Concert Band, Singing Sergeants, and COTG singing timeless renditions of holiday favorites, with an additional performance from the Alexandria School of Highland Dance. Featured selections include "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year," "Christmas (Baby, Please Come Home)" "Winter Wonderland/Don't Worry Be Happy," and "Go Tell it on the Mountain." To conclude the program, a surprise guest (Santa Claus) will join the audience in holiday sing-alongs.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for our young choir members to grow as vocalists as they perform alongside some of the best musicians in the country," **COTG Artistic Director Michele Fowlin** said. "We are excited to join The U.S. Air Force Concert Band for the second, in this festive tradition that brings holiday joy to our community."

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COTG has become a destination choir for D.C.-area students in grades four through 12 who look to develop excellence in artistry and technique as a performance ensemble. Led by Fowlin, the COTG Choir has been featured on NPR's *From the Top* and in performance at the White House, the Inaugural Prayer Services for President Barack Obama, and the National Memorial Service for Nelson Mandela, both at The Washington National Cathedral.

ABOUT THE CHOIR

Formed in 1993, **Washington Performing Arts Children of the Gospel Choir (COTG)** is one of the Washington Performing Arts resident ensembles. Chosen through a competitive audition process, choir members from D.C., Maryland, and Virginia commit to participating in a year of choral training, intensive workshops, and a variety of performances on Washington Performing Arts's main stage and through community events. The COTG program provides opportunities for youth in grades four through 12 and promotes an environment of self-confidence, teamwork, and respect.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Michele Fowlin, the Children of the Gospel Choir have been featured at the White House (with Sara Bareilles at the Canadian State Dinner honoring Prime Minister Justin Trudeau); the Inaugural Prayer Services for President Barack Obama and the National Memorial Service for Nelson Mandela, both at The Washington National Cathedral; with Matthew Whitaker in concert; the Washington Performing Arts Gala with Broadway star Matthew Morrison; the historic Howard Theatre; the U.S. Department of State; and on NBC's *Today*.

ABOUT THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BAND

The United States Air Force Band, led by Colonel Don Schofield, is the Air Force's premier musical organization. Since 1941, the Band has used music to bridge cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic differences to advance international relationships and inspire positive and long-lasting impressions of the U.S. Air Force and the United States of America. The Band honors those who have served, inspires American citizens to a heightened sense of patriotism and service, and connects with the global community on behalf of the U.S. Air Force and the United States of America.

For more information, visit <http://www.music.af.mil/usafband>.

ABOUT WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS

One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has engaged for more than half a century with artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly our stage: for decades, in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, we have presented a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, jazz, international genres, and more. We also have an ever-expanding artistic and educational

presence on the internet, envisioning ongoing opportunities for online connection and community.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with local organizations and other arts institutions. Through events online and in myriad performance venues and neighborhoods, we engage international visiting artists in community programs and introduce local artists to wider audiences. We place a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and education programs.

Our achievements have been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with three Mayor's Arts Awards from the DC Government. We have now embarked upon our second half-century, ever inspired by the motto of our founder, Patrick Hayes: "Everybody in, nobody out."

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