

31st ANNUAL BONFILS-STANTON AWARDS HONOR THREE COLORADO LEADERS WITH \$35,000 CASH REWARD

*Architect Curtis Fentress, Philanthropist Merle C. Chambers and Children's
Hospital Colorado Named as 2016 Honorees*

DENVER, CO (May 2, 2016) – Bonfils-Stanton Foundation believes that Colorado is a state where creativity thrives, where patrons and civic leaders see the arts as key to a healthy community, and where the arts are integrated with science, medicine and other areas of our society. On May 13 at the Grand Hyatt Denver, they will recognize and honor three Colorado leaders at their 31st Annual Awards Luncheon.

The honorees make significant contributions in the fields of Arts, Community Service, and Science and Medicine. This year's honorees will receive a \$35,000 cash reward and the chance to continue to inspire others and build stronger communities through their work.

“For the first time, the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation has linked all three of its awards to our philanthropic focus on arts and culture,” says Bonfils-Stanton Foundation President and CEO Gary Steuer.

Architect Curtis Fentress, FAIA, RIBA is this year's **Arts Award** honoree. The architectural works of Curtis Fentress have transformed the skylines of cities around the world, and host over 500 million visitors annually. Mr. Fentress is driven by his fascination with large scale public projects and making civic buildings more humanistic. He is a pioneer in sustainability, integrating strict sustainability objectives with practical, real-life solutions. In Colorado, he designed the now iconic Denver International Airport, as well as such other significant civic buildings as Mile High Stadium, Colorado Convention Center, Ralph L. Carr Colorado Judicial Center, 1999 Broadway, and the Jefferson County Government Center.

A few of his national and international projects include the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Washington D.C.; the Sanford Consortium of Regenerative Medicine research facility in La Jolla, California; the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson, Wyoming; Incheon International Airport in South Korea; the 65-story Arraya Tower in Kuwait; and the new Tom Bradley International Terminal at LAX. Mr. Fentress has been honored with the highest distinction in the field of public architecture, receiving the Thomas Jefferson Award from the American Institute of Architects. Fentress designs have been recognized with more than 500 awards and accolades for excellence. He is a master at creating beautiful buildings that are also brilliantly functional and authentically connected to their place.

The **Community Service Award** goes to **Merle C. Chambers**, who pioneered women's leadership in the oil and gas industry as one of only a few women CEOs in a male-dominated industry and was the first woman inducted into the Rocky Mountain Oil & Gas Hall of Fame. She founded Chambers Family Fund to support the early care and education of children,

women's economic self-sufficiency, and justice, equality and opportunity. Merle devotes considerable time to philanthropy as President and Board Chair of the foundation. She defines her philanthropic philosophy as "seeking upstream solutions," explained by this parable: "One day a woman was walking along a river and was astonished to see women struggling in the water. She noticed people pulling the drowning women out of the river. The woman thought for a moment, then ran upstream to find out why the women were falling in the water in the first place and to do something about it."

Merle also believes that arts and culture institutions are important in creating and sustaining a vibrant and livable community, inspiring civic pride and providing educational and engaging experiences. For more than three decades, she has supported numerous arts organizations in Denver and her current priority is building a new home for Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art. Her support is not only an investment in the future of Kirkland Museum, but also furthers the development of the vibrant Golden Triangle Neighborhood and Denver's nationally important art scene.

Bonfils-Stanton Foundation is honored to present **Children's Hospital Colorado** with the **Science, Medicine and the Arts Award** for their many arts programs they offer their patients. At Children's Hospital Colorado, the arts play an essential role in healing - serving as medicine for the spirit, and offering opportunities for reflection and inspiration.

Through the Ponzio Creative Arts Therapy program, cutting edge art, music, dance/movement and yoga therapies allow children and their families to heal their body, mind, and spirit.

Additionally, Children's Colorado infuses art throughout its facilities with its permanent collection of public art. The bright colors, intricate shapes and hidden paths of terrazzo floors are diversions for visitors as they enter the vibrant, art filled atrium. The art immediately helps relax and delight parents and caregivers, sick children and siblings who may be going through an enormously stressful time. The hospital has a noteworthy collection of over 400 original artworks including several outdoor sculptures that showcase local and regional artists. The Frederic C. Hamilton Gallery, with its rotating exhibitions by local artists, offers respite, reflection, and inspiration to families during their hospital stay.

Performing arts events, more than 90 each year, include performances from the Colorado Ballet and Opera Colorado. Through their collaborative partnership with the Denver Art Museum, cultural and artistic opportunities come directly into the hospital setting, further enriching the lives of hospital team members and visitors alike.

"We are thrilled to be honoring the great contributions of a Colorado creative, architect Curtis Fentress; a community leader who incorporates support of the arts into her broad and deep investment in our community, Merle Chambers; and the many programs at Children's Hospital of Colorado that integrate the arts into their renowned work healing sick children and supporting their families," says J. Landis Martin, Chairman of the Board, Bonfils-Stanton Foundation.

FOR THE MEDIA: Since 1984, Bonfils-Stanton Foundation has announced the honorees at the luncheon – until now. This year, they’re giving Colorado media members the opportunity to reveal the winners and tell their phenomenal stories. There are so many story angles to work with – from featuring the 31st Annual Awards Luncheon event on your website or newscast to telling a story on one of our three amazing honorees. Contact Erica Boniface with Bonfils-Stanton Foundation to get interviews booked and a story in the works:

Erica@ColoradoMediaNetwork.com or call **303-717-8246**. Wish to cover and attend the luncheon? RSVP to this e-mail by Friday, May 6.

About the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation:

At Bonfils-Stanton Foundation, we believe that extraordinary arts and leadership are key to building a vibrant Colorado. Every day, we strategically invest in imagination and innovation, because cultivating the creative spark is vital to making our community an exciting place where people want to live, work and thrive. Since its founding, the Foundation has distributed over \$63 million in charitable contributions. Learn more on at bonfils-stantonfoundation.org.

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