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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**KRAVIS CENTER SALUTES INVALUABLE VOLUNTEERS DURING ANNUAL CELEBRATION**  
***Thank-you dinner honors service of more than 500 volunteers at the performing arts center***

**(WEST PALM BEACH, Fla.)** More than 600 volunteers and guests put on their finest “Rat Pack Revival” attire for the Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts’ Volunteer Salute sponsored by Jane Mitchell. The annual thank-you dinner is known for its imaginative themes and fun surprises, and this year stood out with its Las Vegas casino décor. Awards were presented for Student Volunteer of the Year, Rookies of the Year, Usher of the Year and Volunteer of the Year.

“Tonight is all about our volunteers and we want to recognize and thank each of you for all you do,” said Maureen Gardella, Director of Guest Services. “Your time and efforts are an invaluable part of the Kravis Center experience. Currently more than 550 of you help with many aspects of our operation and we could not do this without you. Over half of our volunteers have been here 10 years or more. We appreciate your loyalty and the fact that you take pride in representing the Kravis Center. Our staff is proud of you and we thank you for your time, efforts and donations.”

Gardella then acknowledged Board members in attendance, including Founding Board Chairman Alexander Dreyfoos, current Board Chairman Michael Bracci, immediate past Board Chair and current Vice Chair Jane Mitchell, past Board Chairman William Meyer, and Board members Penny Bank and Sherry Barrat. She also acknowledged CEO Judith Mitchell, CFO Kyle Ruge and COO Jim Mitchell.

With a mission to enhance the quality of life in Palm Beach County by presenting a diverse schedule of national and international artists and companies of the highest quality, as well as offering comprehensive arts education programs, it takes a diverse group of volunteers to keep the Kravis Center running smoothly.

Lauryn Owen was awarded the Student Volunteer of the Year award by Education Assistant Miranda Hawkins. Ms. Owen was recognized for going above and beyond in all she does: helping with administrative tasks, assisting the teaching artists in the classroom, leading group activities and even covering the roles of absent students during rehearsals. “One of her strongest assets as a volunteer, in my opinion, is her ability to connect with the students,” said Hawkins. “It’s clear to see that she cares for them, and that they care for her.”

The Rookie of the Year award went to husband and wife, Stuart and Elizabeth Patt. “This year’s winners have shown a unique ability to handle unforeseen situations and, in the process, made our job easier,” said Paul Kaufman, Event Manager. “They have generously donated time for ushering shows as well as helping in other departments, all while working in a professional and efficient manner with a welcoming and friendly face.”

Event Manager Karole Cooney presented the Usher of the Year award to Andrea McNally, noting that she was receiving this award for her dedication, positivity, excellent customer service skills, a thorough knowledge of the Kravis Center and a willingness to help. Cooney said “She carries out her duties with ease and she accepts all of her assignments willingly and enthusiastically. When she is assigned to a position, we know the job will be well done.”

Kravis Center CEO Judith Mitchell presented the prestigious Volunteer of the Year award. “Each year the Volunteer of the Year Award goes to a volunteer who has demonstrated outstanding dedication and commitment to the Kravis Center. This year’s award goes to a volunteer that I have had the pleasure of working with from our very first season. Extremely knowledgeable about the Center, she is an asset when interacting with guests and is always helpful and courteous to them. An excellent representative of the Kravis Center, she has always been, and continues to be, a vital part of our operation and I am pleased to announce that the 2018 Volunteer of the Year Award goes to Rita Greiner.”

Volunteers and their guests were treated to a very special dinner by Catering by The Breakers at the Kravis Center. After the awards presentation, the volunteers danced the evening away to ‘60s “Rat Pack” cover music performed by musicians and Legends Radio hosts, Jill and Rich Switzer.

The Kravis Center is located at 701 Okeechobee Blvd. in West Palm Beach and is a not-for-profit performing arts center whose mission is to enhance the quality of life in Palm Beach County by presenting a diverse schedule of national and international artists and companies of the highest quality, by offering comprehensive arts education programs, by providing a Palm Beach County home for local and regional arts organizations to showcase their work and by providing an economic catalyst and community leadership in West Palm Beach, supporting efforts to increase travel and tourism to Palm Beach County.

For general information about the Kravis Center or to inquire about volunteer opportunities, please visit the Kravis Center’s website [kravis.org](http://kravis.org) or call 561.651.4294. Follow the Kravis Center on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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