PRESS RELEASE: Immediate

FROM: Mississippi Humanities Council

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**Telling Project Comes to Jackson**

JACKSON – The Mississippi Humanities Council is partnering with New Stage Theatre to bring a production of the Telling Project to the Jackson community. The production, *Telling: Central Mississippi*, will take place in conjunction with the National Endowment for the Humanities’ “Standing Together” veterans’ initiative.

The acclaimed Telling Project gives veterans and their family members the opportunity to go on stage to speak about how service affected their lives. The performance-based project has brought veterans’ stories to the stage in 28 cities and 14 states and now is coming to the Jackson/Meridian area.

The project’s goals are to ease veterans’ transitions back into civilian life, to allow communities to benefit from the skills and experience the veterans bring home, and to foster a level of understanding that will deepen a community’s connection to its veterans, to itself, and to its place in the nation and the world.

“We are thrilled to be partnering with the Mississippi Humanities Council and to be working with these veterans to help tell their stories here at New Stage. The experiences that these veterans are willing to share with us are deeply moving, and we hope that the Jackson community will be able to hear these accounts and have a greater appreciation for their experiences,” said New Stage Theatre Artistic Director Francine Reynolds.

*Telling: Central Mississippi* will feature five veterans and veteran family members from the Jackson area. The cast includes veterans who served in Iraq, Afghanistan, and one who served in Guam during peacetime, as well as a family member who shares the story of her uncle, a World War II soldier who was killed in action. The cast includes Sonny Evans (Raymond), Peggy Gouras (Vicksburg), Troy D. Morgan, Jr. (Brookhaven), Ken Oswalt (Madison) and T.C. Rollins (Jackson). *Telling: Central Mississippi* is directed by Reynolds with assistance from Kerri Courtney Sanders (Brandon) and New Stage Education Director Chris Roebuck (Ridgeland).

“The Telling Project gives us a unique opportunity to understand and celebrate the experiences of our military veterans. These veterans are giving us the extraordinary gift of sharing their stories, it is our responsibility to hear them,” said Mississippi Humanities Council Director Stuart Rockoff.

Each of the participants were interviewed by Telling Project staff member Max Rayneard in early 2015, who turned their interviews into a script for the production. Since then, the cast has been rehearsing with staff at New Stage Theatre in preparation for the Jackson performances. *Telling: Central Mississippi* is sponsored, in part, through a grant from Entergy, Inc.

*Telling: Central Mississippi* will take place at New Stage Theatre Friday, August 7 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, August 8 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, August 9 at 2:00 p.m. with all stage performances free and open to the public. For more information, visit [www.newstagetheatre.com](http://www.newstagetheatre.com) or contact New Stage Theatre at 601-948-3533.

For more information about the national Telling Project, visit <http://thetellingproject.org/>.

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