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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Misty Copeland and Brooklyn Mack Are Coming to Columbia**

*Columbia Classical Ballet and Columbia City Ballet Join Forces for Ballet Fundraiser*

**January 20, 2016 – Columbia, S.C.** - Columbia Classical Ballet and the Columbia City Ballet have joined forces to bring Misty Copeland and Brooklyn Mack to the City of Columbia for a special fundraising luncheon that will work to benefit both ballet companies.

The two companies have a long history with the region and each other, and before now haven't been known to work together this formally or prominently.

"This is a monumental moment for our ballet companies. We want to better educate our community about why ballet is so important, and Misty Copeland and Brooklyn Mack are coming here to help convey that message," said Lee Lumpkin, Chairwoman for the Columbia Classical Ballet. "Both of our companies bring something very special to this city, and this luncheon will be a celebration of what we've accomplished over several decades and also help us look to the future."

"This fundraiser is about the impact the Ballet has had on our community over the years," said William Starrett, Executive and Artistic Director for Columbia City Ballet. "Both of us have had significant funding losses over the past years and we are struggling to continue the tradition of ballet and the standard our audiences have come to cherish and expect here in Columbia."

Columbia Classical Ballet has had a particularly difficult season. The October floods hit them hard with the total loss of their home dance studio. On top of that, Pavlovich has experienced some health issues, having a heart attack shortly after the flooding.

"Brooklyn is like a son to me, and he was very concerned after the flood," said Radenko Pavlovich, Artistic Director for Columbia Classical Ballet. "He wanted to give back to us and help us anyway he could."

Brooklyn Mack had performed with Copeland in a historic performance of Swan Lake for Washington Ballet earlier in 2015. He used his relationship to ask Copeland if there was an interest in helping support Pavlovich and the Columbia Classical Ballet. Without hesitation, she wanted to help, but there was one stipulation. Copeland didn't want to leave Columbia City Ballet out of the mix because of previous discussion about their commitment to diversity and how combined efforts can have a positive impact on the community.

"The joint fundraiser event was Misty's idea, and we think it is a great idea," said Lumpkin.

"We felt we would have a bigger impact working together, and only together could we bring Misty and Brooklyn here for one event, to benefit us all," said Starrett.

Both companies are hosting the joint fundraiser and both parties will split the costs and proceeds 50/50. The luncheon will be held on March 15, 2016 and though still in the planning process, will feature a Q&A with Misty Copeland and Brooklyn Mack and a VIP reception.

"We are still working on all of the details and will get them out as soon as we have everything confirmed," said Lumpkin.

"We are excited to be working together to help promote something we both love so very much," said Starrett. "We couldn't be happier or more excited to be able to bring this event to our region."

For more information or if you are interested in a sponsorship or table at this event, please contact Alana Jordan at [alana@bigeyedbird.com](mailto:alana@bigeyedbird.com).

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