

**For Immediate Release**

**The Women's Foundation of Colorado Announces Special Guest Misty Copeland,  
New Live-Interview Format for Annual Denver Luncheon**

*Copeland Broke Through Racial, Economic, and Body Image Barriers to Become American Ballet Theatre's  
First African American Principal Dancer in Company's 75-Year History*

**DENVER (June 2, 2016)** – The Women's Foundation of Colorado (WFCO) announced today that Principal Ballerina Misty Copeland will be the special guest at its [Annual Denver Luncheon](#) on **September 21, 2016**. In 2015, Copeland made headlines and broke barriers when she became the first African American woman promoted to principal dancer for the renowned American Ballet Theatre (ABT) in the company's 75-year history.

"Misty danced right through the racial, economic, and body image barriers that keep many women from pursuing their dreams and reaching their full potential," said Lauren Y. Casteel, president and CEO of WFCO. "Despite messages that she did not fit the mold of a traditional ballerina, she persevered and has become a symbol of hope, possibility, and perseverance for women everywhere. We believe all girls and women have the right to feel hopeful about their futures and there's no one better than Misty to look to for inspiration."

Recent highlights from Misty Copeland's career include:

- Soaring to new heights as the first African American female principal dancer at American Ballet Theatre
- Debuting on Broadway as Ivy Smith/Miss Turnstiles in the critically acclaimed show, *On The Town*
- Starring in the PBS documentary "A Ballerina's Tale" on her historic rise to principal dancer
- Making the *TIME* 100 list and being named a *Glamour* Women of the Year honoree
- Inspiring a new Barbie doll in the "Sheroes" collection that honors female heroes who break boundaries
- Becoming the face of Under Armour's women's collection

WFCO's Annual Denver Luncheon has become a community showcase of icons, ideas, and stories, and draws nearly 2,000 supporters to build a movement for Colorado women and girls to reach economic self-sufficiency. The event has featured keynote speakers, including journalists Soledad O'Brien and Lisa Ling; actresses America Ferrera and Geena Davis; and tennis great Martina Navratilova; however, the 2016 luncheon will feature a live interview with Copeland.

Buying a luncheon ticket, table, or sponsorship supports WFCO's ongoing granting, research, public policy, and valued community partners. Working together with its partners, WFCO is creating systemic change for women and girls in Colorado through access to education, livable wages, pay equity, economic stability, high-quality child care and family planning, community leadership and philanthropy training, and training pathways for careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math).

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## **About the 2016 Annual Denver Luncheon**

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| <b>Who:</b>             | The Women's Foundation of Colorado with special guest Misty Copeland  |
| <b>Luncheon Chairs:</b> | Colleen LaFontaine and Joanne Posner-Mayer  |
| <b>Honorary Chairs:</b> | Cile Chavez, Arlene and Barry Hirschfeld, Mary Jarvis, Carrie Morgridge, Natalie Lynn Rekstad, and Tina Walls |
| <b>What:</b>            | Fundraiser to support the economic self-sufficiency of Colorado women and girls                               |
| <b>When:</b>            | Wednesday, Sept. 21, 2016 / 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  |
| <b>Where:</b>           | Colorado Convention Center, Mile High Ballroom  |
| <b>Attendance:</b>      | 2,000+ guests expected  |

Tables and sponsorships from \$2,500 can be purchased now at [www.wfco.org](http://www.wfco.org). A limited number of individual tickets will go on sale soon at [www.wfco.org](http://www.wfco.org).

Many thanks to our corporate partners: Lead Gift Sponsor [DaVita Healthcare Partners](#); Platinum Sponsors [MillerCoors](#), [Western Union Foundation](#), and [Xcel Energy](#); Gold Sponsors [CBS4](#) and [Comcast](#); and Silver Sponsors [FirstBank](#), [Noble Energy](#), and [Women With a Cause](#).

### **About The Women's Foundation of Colorado**

WFCO is the only community foundation in Colorado focused on women and girls achieving economic self-sufficiency. Through collective philanthropy, we create opportunities and remove barriers by investing in research, advocating for systemic changes, partnering with nonprofits, and creating opportunities for donors to connect their philanthropy with positive community outcomes for women and girls.

In 2015, The Women's Foundation of Colorado granted more than \$1.2 million to dozens of agencies in communities across the state. Since 1987, WFCO has invested more than \$14.2 million in Colorado communities.

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