

**For Immediate Release**

**The Women's Foundation of Colorado Announces Academy Award-Winning Actress Octavia Spencer as 2017 Annual Luncheon Special Guest**

*Star of "Hidden Figures" Will Celebrate The Foundation's 30 Years of Helping Women and Girls Reach Their Promise and Potential*

**DENVER** (March 27, 2017) – The Women's Foundation of Colorado (WFCO) announced today that Octavia Spencer, Academy Award-winning actress, is the special guest at its 2017 [Annual Luncheon](#) on September 28, 2017. As a star of "Hidden Figures" and "The Help," Octavia Spencer has emerged as one of America's most beloved and acclaimed actresses. Her roles often portray courageous and intelligent women who boldly overcome societal barriers keeping them from fulfilling their promise and potential.

"The Women's Foundation of Colorado celebrates our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017, and Octavia Spencer is the inspirational luncheon guest we wanted to mark this occasion with us and our supporters," said Lauren Y. Casteel, president and CEO of WFCO. "For 30 years, WFCO has helped Colorado's women and girls reach their promise and potential. Octavia not only plays iconic characters who bravely break through glass ceilings, but personally she also has broken a few barriers of her own."

Spencer currently can be seen in "Hidden Figures" with Taraji P. Henson, Janelle Monáe, and Kevin Costner. The film tells the true story of several African-American women who provide NASA with critical information needed to launch the program's early successful space missions. Through her performance as Dorothy Vaughan, she earned Academy Award, NAACP Image Award, SAG, and Golden Globe nominations. In 2012, she won an Academy Award, BAFTA Award, Golden Globe Award, SAG Award and Broadcast Film Critic's Choice Award for her portrayal of Minny in "The Help."

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WFCO's Annual Luncheon has become a renowned community showcase of icons, ideas, and stories. WFCO will continue the luncheon format it launched last year, in which the special guest is interviewed by Casteel instead of giving a keynote speech. Past luncheon special guests include Misty Copeland, Soledad O'Brien, America Ferrera, Geena Davis, Martina Navratilova, Lisa Ling, Hillary Clinton, and many more.

With 2,300 luncheon guests in 2016, the annual fundraiser has become one of the state's largest gatherings to build resources on behalf of women and girls. The 2017 Annual Luncheon's theme is "Promise to Prosperity: Building on 30 Years of Progress."

Buying a luncheon ticket, table, or sponsorship supports WFCO's ongoing research, public policy, and grantmaking. Working together with dozens of partners throughout the state, WFCO is creating systemic change for women and girls in Colorado by bilding access and dismantling barriers to education; livable wages; equal pay; high-quality child care and family planning; and job training in high-growth industries, such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math).

### **About the 2017 Annual Luncheon**

**Who:** The Women's Foundation of Colorado with special guest Octavia Spencer  
**What:** Fundraiser to advance the economic self-sufficiency of Colorado's women and girls  
**When:** Thursday, Sept. 28, 2017 / 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Colorado Convention Center, Mile High Ballroom  
**Attendance:** 2,300+ guests expected

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

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

WFCO is the only community foundation in Colorado focused on women and girls achieving economic self-sufficiency. In 2016, The Women's Foundation of Colorado granted more than nearly \$1 million to 68 organizations in Colorado and beyond. Since 1987, WFCO has invested more than \$15 million in Colorado communities.

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