The Merri Dee Foundation Celebrates Legacy & Excellence at Its Inaugural 2026 Awards Ceremony in Honor of Merri Dee



Chicago, Illinois Nov 6, 2026 (Issuewire.com**)** - An evening of elegance, inspiration, and celebration filled Michelle's Ballroom in Chicago on Friday, October 30, 2026, as The Merri Dee Foundation hosted its highly anticipated Inaugural Awards Ceremony in honor of the legendary Merri Dee.

The evening brought together distinguished leaders, media personalities, community advocates, family members, and special guests to celebrate individuals whose contributions have made a meaningful impact in their respective fields and communities.

With an atmosphere of sophistication, royal blue and gold décor, a red-carpet experience, and an impressive lineup of honorees, the celebration was a beautiful reflection of the legacy it was created to honor.

The event was hosted by Jasmine Minor, ABC 7 Chicago News Anchor, who guided guests through an evening of recognition, heartfelt tributes, and memorable moments.

Continuing the Legacy of Merri Dee

The Merri Dee Foundation was established to preserve and continue the legacy of Merri Dee, the beloved Chicago broadcaster, philanthropist, community advocate, and humanitarian whose life was dedicated to helping others.

Her philosophy, “If it is to be, then it is up to me,” continues to inspire the foundation’s mission.

Under the leadership of CEO Dr. Julian Wright, grandson of Merri Dee, and with the involvement of board member Dr. Attorney Richard Dee-Wright, son of Merri Dee, the foundation is committed to creating opportunities through scholarships, mentorship, youth and adult development, career-building initiatives, and community outreach.

The inaugural awards ceremony represented more than an evening of awards. It was a statement that Merri Dee’s impact did not end with her passing. Her work, values, and commitment to uplifting others.

Celebrating an Outstanding Group of Honorees

The evening recognized an extraordinary group of individuals for their leadership, accomplishments, and dedication:

● Marseil Jackson – Radio Personality of the Year

● Tia Ewing – Broadcaster of the Year

● Dr. Macquline King – Educator of the Year

● Pastor Kimberly Ray – Faith Leader of the Year

● LT. Govner Juliana Stratton – Inspiration of the Year

● Mable Buckner – Lifetime Achievement Award

● T’Keyah Crystal Keymáh – Icon Award

● Ross Mac – Entrepreneur of the Year Award

Each honoree represented a different area of excellence, but they shared one common characteristic: a commitment to making a difference.

A Musical Performance That Touched Every Heart

One of the evening’s most moving highlights came through a special musical selection by Julia Ann Wright, daughter-in-law of the late Merri Dee.

With an unforgettable voice and a beautiful delivery, Julia Ann Wright performed “Give Us This Day,” bringing a powerful sense of love, grace, faith, and reflection to the celebration.

Her performance was more than a musical selection; it was a heartfelt tribute that honored the spirit of family and the legacy of Merri Dee. It added a deeply personal and emotional moment to an already extraordinary evening, reminding everyone that the most meaningful legacies are carried through love, generations, and memories that continue to inspire.

A Night That Reflected Excellence

The foundation’s inaugural celebration marked an important milestone in its journey toward expanding its community impact and establishing a lasting tradition of honoring excellence.

The Merri Dee Foundation is not simply preserving a name; it is continuing a mission.

As Merri Dee famously believed, “If it is to be, then it is up to me.”

That message remains at the heart of everything the foundation hopes to accomplish.

About The Merri Dee Foundation

The Merri Dee Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in honor and memory of Merri Dee. Its mission is to continue her legacy through community service, scholarships, mentorship, educational opportunities, and programs that empower individuals and families.

For more information:

Website: www.mdeefoundation.com

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