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***For Immediate Release***

**Televised Awards Show Honoring Difference Makers in the Mid-South Airs December 10**

**Memphis, Tennessee, December 4, 2018** - The SPARK Awards 2018 will air Monday, December 10 from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on WKNO/Channel 10. The fifth annual televised awards show honors and celebrates the efforts of individuals, nonprofits, corporations, and schools, in 13 different categories, who are igniting change and making a positive impact in the Greater Memphis community. The SPARK Awards is produced in partnership by WKNO-TV and cityCURRENT.

Back in August, the public was invited to freely cast nominations in each of the 13 categories, as an opportunity to recognize and help publicly thank the organizations and individuals who are leading by example and making a difference in the Mid-South. The categories cover individuals of different ages (youth, college student and adult), nonprofits and corporations of various sizes, then education with a school, teacher, and education leader award. There is also a Legacy Award to honor someone's efforts and impact over the course of many years or a lifetime. Nominations were accepted from 8:00 a.m. on August 1, 2018 to 5:00 p.m. on August 31, 2018.

Once the nomination phase ended, all nominations were provided to the Midtown Memphis Rotary Club, who served as the independent judges for the awards show. No preference or weighting was given to multiple nominations for the same individual or organization. The criteria for judging was based on taking a leadership role in initiatives or efforts that better the Greater Memphis community, volunteerism, and impact.

“The SPARK Awards grew from the success of our monthly show, The SPARK, which is now in its sixth year on WKNO,” notes Jeremy C. Park, president of cityCURRENT, host of The SPARK, and producer of The SPARK Awards. “With both shows our goal is simple: to spotlight the good taking place in our city and how we can become a SPARK to make an even larger difference and to help more people.”

Park adds, “Our belief is that we need to see the good that takes place each and every day, so we understand there is good in this world and in our city, and that by showcasing the good, the people and organizations working hard, the lessons learned and how to get involved, we can inspire more

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people to join in the effort. The SPARK Awards, being publicly nominated, allows us to find, honor and celebrate even more of our hometown heroes, who do good each and every day, yet don't seek out attention; so, it truly is a special opportunity for us to all work together to inspire our city."

"One of the things public television does best," said Michael J. LaBonia, WKNO President and CEO, "is to put a spotlight on positive achievement. This is exactly what both our monthly television series, The SPARK, and our annual televised awards show, The SPARK Awards, do. The SPARK Awards is all about honoring those who truly make the Mid-South a great place to live, work, and play."

Winners in each category will be announced and featured during the televised awards show on Monday, December 10 at 8:00 p.m. on WKNO/Channel 10. Viewers will have the chance to learn more about each of the honorees during short 3-minute interviews that highlight their community efforts and celebrate their service. The special will be available online at [wkno.org](http://wkno.org) and on [cityCURRENT.com](http://cityCURRENT.com) after the broadcast.

The SPARK Awards is an extension of the WKNO-TV series, The SPARK, a monthly 30-minute show, hosted by cityCURRENT president Jeremy C. Park, about business and community leaders who are fueling change and giving back to the Mid-South.

Major funding for The SPARK and The SPARK Awards is provided by Lipscomb & Pitts Insurance, Data Facts, and Champion Awards & Apparel. Additional funding is provided by Christian Brothers University, SRVS, My Town Movers/My Town Roofing/My Town Miracles, United Way of the Midsouth, and Mueller Industries. A co-production of WKNO and cityCURRENT, The SPARK airs the third Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. on WKNO/Channel 10. Event support for The SPARK Awards was provided by Nolan Audio Video Solution and Mahaffey Tent & Event Rentals.

### **About cityCURRENT**

cityCURRENT is a privately-funded catalyst for the Mid-South. A team of partner businesses, comprised of some of the largest and most influential employers in the world to mid-size and smaller firms, have come together to align resources and underwrite the cost of more than 150 free events each year, along with an array of philanthropic initiatives and positive-oriented media to enrich and engage our community. For more info: [www.cityCURRENT.com](http://www.cityCURRENT.com).

### **About WKNO**

WKNO is a non-profit, private foundation serving the Mid-South for more than 60 years. An important community resource, WKNO uses the power of non-commercial public broadcasting to provide the Mid-South with quality educational and cultural programs that inform, entertain, and inspire. For more information: [wkno.org](http://wkno.org)

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