

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **The Echo Foundation's 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Award Gala Features General Wesley Clark and Honors Local Civic Leaders**

*Jim and Mary Lou Babb To Receive 2012 Award Against Indifference*

**CHARLOTTE, N.C. (August 8, 2012)** – In a bipartisan celebration of our nation's democratic principles, The Echo Foundation kicks off the DNC with its 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Award Gala Monday, September 3, honoring national and local luminaries who embody the Echo mission.

General Wesley Clark, former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, Europe and member of the Clinton Global Initiative Energy & Climate Change Advisory Board, will deliver the night's keynote address entitled "Courageous Leadership in Turbulent Times." Local civic leaders Mary Lou and Jim Babb will receive the 2012 *Echo Award Against Indifference*. The award honors Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents who exemplify Echo's dedication to promoting human dignity, justice and moral courage through positive, effective action for humankind. The Babbs are being recognized for their service to Charlotte's educational, cultural and philanthropic institutions.

"General Wesley Clark, through his distinguished service to the United States and around the globe, embodies the Echo mantra, 'What Can One Person Do,'" said Stephanie Ansaldo, president of The Echo Foundation. "It is an honor to host this great American, and we look forward to sharing his extraordinary example of courage, leadership and personal responsibility with those gathered in Charlotte on the eve of the Democratic National Convention."

An integral part of the foundation's 2012 Election Year Series titled, "We the People. The Voices and Vision of Democracy," the program starts at 6:00 p.m. in the Knight Theater,

430 South Tryon Street, followed by a gala reception and exhibit opening of “One America, One American” at *The Charlotte Observer*, 600 South Tryon Street. Tickets (\$250 per person, or Echo Society memberships, packages and corporate sponsorships ranging from \$1,000 and up) are available by calling 704.347.3844.

### **About General Wesley Clark**

General Wesley Clark is a businessman, educator, writer and commentator. Now retired as a four star general, Clark served 38 years in the United States Army. In his last assignment as Supreme Allied Commander Europe, he led NATO forces to victory in Operation Allied Force in the Kosovo War.

Today, he serves as chairman and CEO of Wesley K. Clark & Associates, a strategic consulting firm, and chairs numerous groups and corporate boards. He has authored three books and has received many military decorations and honors. His awards include the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart and honorary knighthoods from the British and Dutch governments.

### **About The Echo Award Against Indifference**

The Echo Award Against Indifference honors members of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community who work “... with an eye towards peace, a heart filled with compassion and a voice against indifference, in order to remind our community of its highest ideals.” Past recipients include philanthropists, corporate executives and community leaders: Hugh McColl, Jr., Sandra and Leon Levine, former Charlotte Mayor Harvey Gantt, Patricia Rodgers, Howard “Smoky” Bissell, the late Dr. Dean Colvard, Stuart Dickson, the late Alan Dickson, Sally Dalton Robinson, the late Sister Mary Thomas Burke, Bishop George Battle, Jr., the late Joseph B. Martin, and Ferguson, Stein, Chambers, Gresham & Sumter, P.A., the first integrated law firm in North Carolina.

### **About Mary Lou and Jim Babb**

The Babbs are well known for their many contributions to educational, cultural and charitable institutions in the Charlotte community. Jim has spent the entirety of his career working in broadcast communications with wide impact in state and national business circles. He's the past president and CEO of Jefferson-Pilot Communications and Outlet Communications and currently he's executive vice president and chief operating officer of Bahakel Communications, Ltd. He is a former member of the University of North Carolina Board of Governors.

Mary Lou is the former chair of the board of trustees of the Mint Museum and served as interim director of the museum. She co-founded The Woman's Impact Fund in 2003, which helps women reach their monetary giving potential while meeting community need. Both are active on several advisory boards and have received countless honors for their work in the community.

### **About “We The People. The Voices and Vision of Democracy.”**

A three-part series that builds on past Echo successes, “We the People. The Voices and Vision of Democracy.” includes the *15<sup>th</sup> Annual Echo Award Gala*, a *Photojournalism Project* and the *Footsteps Global Initiative: Youth Engage!*. This series brings together elected officials and business leaders from across the country in celebration of renowned humanitarians whose work responds to the question, “What can one person do?” With events and programs designed to engage the leaders of tomorrow, Echo leverages this historic opportunity presented by the DNC and RNC to teach and celebrate the best that America stands for: freedom, opportunity and self-determination.

### **About The Echo Foundation**

The Echo Foundation was founded in 1997 to carry on the message Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel brought to Charlotte that year – a call to action for human dignity, justice and moral courage. Through comprehensive education programs, Echo equips individuals with moral and intellectual tools necessary to create positive change in their local and global communities. The Echo mission, “... to promote justice and inspire hope through education, creative acts of service, and the development of leadership for a more

humane world” is realized through five core initiatives: *Voices Against Indifference*, *Footsteps Global Initiative*, *Books Beyond Borders*, *Forum for Hope* and *Living Together in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. The Echo Foundation has hosted 24 humanitarians and world leaders and served over 730,000 students in the US, Europe and Africa. For more information, please visit [www.echofoundation.org](http://www.echofoundation.org), [www.echofoundationphoto.org](http://www.echofoundationphoto.org) or [www.inthefootstepsofeliewiesel.org](http://www.inthefootstepsofeliewiesel.org).

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