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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **WEDU HOSTS AN UNPRECEDENTED TOWN HALL MEETING ON CAREGIVING WITH LOCAL EXPERTS AND VALUABLE RESOURCES**

**Tampa, FL** – Many, if not most, of us will be both in our lifetimes – caregiver and the cared-for. We may slip into these roles so gradually that we scarcely realize it. Caregiving affects each and every one of us, and in an unprecedented two-hour special Town Hall Meeting, WEDU will examine the caregiving challenge and will help provide answers and possible solutions through a moderated discussion with a diverse group of experts live from the WEDU studios. ***And Thou Shalt Honor: A WEDU Town Hall Meeting*** will air **Thursday, May 15th from 8-10 p.m.** with encore broadcasts on May 22nd from 1-3 p.m. and on May 25th from 5-7 p.m.

In ***And Thou Shalt Honor: A WEDU Town Hall Meeting***, viewers will be enlightened and motivated through audience testimony and local debate on the eldercare issue. Through the discussions from national and local professionals, the WEDU broadcast will deliver answers, solutions, “best-practices,” and local resources that can address questions and concerns about caregiving. More than 100 audience members, who are directly involved in some aspect of caregiving, will be invited to ask questions and share their stories and experiences with Town Hall Meeting host **Cathy Unruh** and a panelist of 12 industry experts including **Doug Beach**, Secretary of Florida’s Dept of Elder Affairs; **Maureen Kelly**, President & CEO, West Central Florida Area Agency on Aging; **Liz Barlowe**, President, FGCMA - Florida Geriatric Care Managers Association and **Lori Parham**, [Florida] State Director for AARP.

“Florida’s 1.7 million family caregivers face formidable challenges in caring for frail loved ones,” said Lori Parham, AARP’s Florida state director. “AARP is pleased to help make this WEDU broadcast and the televised Town Hall meeting possible.” Parham said that AARP is working on a multi-year initiative to improve elder care in Florida. “Too many family caregivers find it hard to navigate the long-term care system, hard to find good information on quality of care, and hard to get financial help,” said Parham. “This Town Hall meeting will help get important conversations started on improving Florida’s system for caring for frail loved ones.”

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During the live broadcast, viewers will also be encouraged to ask questions; telephone help lines will be open and manned with knowledgeable senior-care practitioners prepared to assist callers with their questions or refer them to local organizations that specialize in the field. Additionally, WEDU is accepting questions, in advance of the broadcast, at [wedu.org/caregiving](http://wedu.org/caregiving).

***And Thou Shalt Honor: A WEDU Town Hall Meeting*** is based on the acclaimed two-hour national PBS program *And Thou Shalt Honor*, hosted by actor Joe Mantegna, which documents caregiving – a new stage in our cultural development. While the dramatic increase in the number of caregivers in our society can be a result of the success of medical technology, it also represents a breakthrough in our growth as an extended family. [The national program can be seen on WEDU Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup> from 8-10 p.m.] The insightful 80-page [And Thou Shalt Honor The Caregiver's Companion Workbook](#) is available for reference and download at [wedu.org/caregiving](http://wedu.org/caregiving).

The most recent program in a lengthy list of accomplished and award-winning local productions by WEDU, the ***And Thou Shalt Honor: A WEDU Town Hall Meeting*** will serve as a catalyst to develop ongoing community coalitions - who work to promote services for families who assume caregiving responsibilities and advocate for improved policies at local levels. "WEDU has been a source for educational information and valuable local resources since its inception 50 years," said Richard [Dick] Lobo, President & CEO of the local PBS station. "Caregiving is an important issue to every one of us and WEDU is proud to have put this special Town Hall Meeting together to create eldercare awareness in our community," Lobo said. Resources on local caregiving and more information about this broadcast can be found at [wedu.org/caregiving](http://wedu.org/caregiving).

Based in Tampa, WEDU is west central Florida's primary PBS station serving 16 counties including Hillsborough; Pinellas; Sarasota; Manatee; Pasco; Polk; Citrus and Hernando. Recently awarded its third consecutive four-star rating by Charity Navigator, WEDU is financially supported by its local members and community partners, and provides the highest quality education, information, and entertainment programming on local, national, and international levels through multiple media disciplines including on-air broadcasting and online experiences.

For more information about WEDU programming, special events, outreach efforts and community partnerships visit [wedu.org](http://wedu.org) or call 800.354.9338.

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A complete list of ***And Thou Shalt Honor: A WEDU Town Hall Meeting*** panelists is attached.