

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 3, 2021

CONTACT: Jane Cox / Governors State University / 773-973-7736 x235

EMAIL: jcox1@govst.edu

CenterTickets.net

CHICAGO'S WTTW-TV TO AIR SWEET HOME CHICAGO -- CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF ALLIGATOR RECORDS ON SEPTEMBER 10 AND SEPTEMBER 12

**Filmed at Governors State University
Center for Performing Arts**

Chicago PBS station WTTW will broadcast Sweet Home Chicago -- Celebrating 50 Years of Alligator Records on Friday, September 10 at 9:30 p.m. CT, and on Sunday, September 12 at 12:30 p.m. CT. Find more information about the broadcast here. The concert was filmed live in March of 2021 on Governors State University's Center for Performing Arts' stage to the empty 1171 seat house as part of the 25th anniversary season.

The filmed concert features roof-raising performances from label stars Billy Branch and the Sons of Blues, Grammy-nominated vocalist Shemekia Copeland, slide guitarist Lil' Ed Williams, and guitarist and songwriter Toronzo Cannon. Alligator Records president Bruce Iglauer appears as emcee.

The Center collaborated with GSU's award-winning Digital Learning and Media Design Department with Uriah Berryhill serving as the director and GSU students Zhamarr Thompkins, Tiyen Simmons, and Jamin Sims operating cameras under Joshua Young and Berryhill's supervision and direction.

The seed of the concert sprouted pre-COVID at a diner in Andersonville, when Center for Performing Arts' Director Lana Rogachevskaya and Alligator Records founder Bruce Iglauer explored how to celebrate their upcoming institutional birthdays and share their passion for the blues with a larger Chicago community. This conversation re-emerged in 2020 with an additional goal of employing Chicago artists, while serving blues fans from all over the globe.

Rogachevskaya says, "Blues is a feeling. A musical genre with origins in American slavery and Jim Crow, its continued popularity is in its universal appeal. Communally held and lived through, blues uplifts, nourishes, and sustains the human soul. Sweet Home Chicago Blues participants will feel the healing power of blues sounds and stories while being together."

Alligator Records, founded in 1971 by Iglauer, is home to some of the world's foremost blues and roots rock talent and is regarded by fans and the media alike as the top contemporary blues record label in the world. On June 18, 2021, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot declared "Alligator Records Day" throughout the city via official proclamation. This is the same day Alligator Records--50 Years of Genuine Houserockin' Music (a 2-LP or 3-CD set) was released.

Rolling Stone says, "Prestigious, scrappy independent blues label Alligator Records has reached dizzying heights in celebrating the blues." From classic Windy City artists like Hound Dog Taylor and "Queen of The Blues" Koko Taylor, to next generation legends Lil' Ed Williams and Billy Branch to contemporary stars including Toronzo Cannon and Shemekia Copeland,

Alligator's discography reads like a who's who in modern blues history. Legendary artists including Lonnie Brooks, Luther Allison, Johnny Winter, Albert Collins, James Cotton, Rick Estrin, Elvin Bishop, Charlie Musselwhite, Michael "Iron Man" Burks, The Holmes Brothers, Mavis Staples, Marcia Ball and rising stars Selwyn Birchwood and Christone "Kingfish" Ingram are just some of the blues immortals who have recorded groundbreaking music for the label. Now, at 50 years old, Alligator is still committed to discovering great new talent, proving that the passion, soul and redemptive power of blues and roots music is alive and well.

Throughout its 25-year history, many blues artists have grace the Center's stage: Buddy Guy, B.B. King, Eddie Clearwater, Jimmy Burn, Eddie Shaw, Zora Young, Demetria Taylor, Jamiah Rogers, Tail Dragger, Billy Branch, Howard Levy, Sugar Blue, Corky Sigel, Melody Angel, Lurrie Bell, Chicago Ladies Sing the Blues collective, and more.

Sweet Home Chicago -- Celebrating 50 Years of Alligator Records is co-produced by Governors State University's Center for Performing Arts and Department of Digital Learning and Media Design with the generous support from the Illinois Arts Council, First Midwest Bank, and WDCB 90.9 fm.

###