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**Basketball Great Earvin “Magic” Johnson and Golden State Warriors’ Rick Welts in Conversation at University of San Francisco**

*NBA Greats to Discuss Sports, Entrepreneurship and Giving Back at Oct. 18 Silk Speaker Series Event*

SAN FRANCISCO (Oct. 2, 2017) — Earvin “Magic” Johnson Jr., chairman and CEO of Magic Johnson Enterprises and National Basketball Association legend, will speak with Rick Welts, president and chief operating officer of the Golden State Warriors, at the University of San Francisco on Wednesday, Oct. 18, at 6 p.m. in the War Memorial Gym at the Sobrato Center.

Johnson, a three-time NBA Most Valuable Player, will address USF’s community of students, faculty and guests about the business behind basketball and how athletics helped him cultivate a “winning spirit” beyond the court. Welts, a 40-year veteran of the NBA and leading voice in the league, will moderate the discussion.

The conversation is part of the 2017-18 USF Silk Speaker Series, which brings international thought leaders in business, finance and global issues to USF’s campus.

“We are thrilled to be hosting this amazing Lakers/Warriors duo — Magic and Rick — at USF,” said Jeff Silk, a USF alumnus who co-founded the series with his wife, Naomi. “This conversation will be one of a kind — and it will be great for students and alumni to hear Magic and Rick’s perspective on the intersection of business and sports.”

As chairman and CEO of Magic Johnson Enterprises (MJE) and chairman and founder of the Magic Johnson Foundation, Johnson has focused his post-athletic career on serving ethnically diverse, historically disadvantaged communities. With estimated assets of $1 billion, MJE invests in products and services that aim to increase the social and economic strength of urban neighborhoods. In 2017 Johnson announced a new investment fund that will focus on building infrastructure in the United States, including the redesign and rebuilding of LaGuardia airport in New York.

The Magic Johnson Foundation, founded in 1991, provides educational scholarships, leadership programs and “empowerment centers” to disadvantaged youth and their families across the United States. In addition to its focus on improving college access and digital literacy, the foundation is known for its extensive work in HIV/AIDS education and prevention.

“Magic’s monumental success in basketball and as an entrepreneur is matched by a powerful drive to make the world a better place,” said Elizabeth Davis, dean of the USF School of Management. “Magic’s work with and investment in underserved communities and in AIDS education is testament to the values we aim to instill in each of our students here at USF — encouraging them to ‘change the world’ from here and use their strengths toward the greater good.”

Additionally, Johnson is co-owner of MLB’s Los Angeles Dodgers, WNBA’s Los Angeles Sparks and MLS’ Los Angeles Football Club, and president of basketball operations for the Los Angeles Lakers.

Welts is currently in his fifth season as president and chief operating officer of the Golden State Warriors and oversees all business-related operations for the Warriors, including the team’s development of a new sports and entertainment center in San Francisco’s Mission Bay neighborhood. Prior to joining the Warriors in October 2011, he spent nine years with the Phoenix Suns, serving as president and chief executive officer for his two last seasons.

Now in its second year, the Silk Speaker Series has featured speakers including Dr. Myron Scholes and Dr. Robert Merton, Nobel laureates in economic sciences; Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple, Inc.; and Dr. Condoleezza Rice, 66th Secretary of State, among others.

For more information about tickets for the event, see: <http://rsvp.usfca.edu/magic>

Journalists interested in covering the Oct. 18 event must register by Oct. 17 by contacting Jennifer Kriz at (415) 422-2697 or jkriz@usfca.edu. Video recording of the event is limited to 3 minutes of b-roll. No audio will be allowed. **Only registered members of the media will be admitted.**

**About the USF Silk Speaker Series**

Funded by a transformational gift to the University of San Francisco by investment expert Jeff Silk ’87 and his wife Naomi, the USF Silk Speaker Series brings international thought leaders in business, finance and global issues to USF’s campus. Learn more about the Jeff & Naomi Silk Speaker Series at [www.usfca.edu/news/Silk-Speaker-Series](https://www.usfca.edu/news/Silk-Speaker-Series).

**About the University of San Francisco**

The University of San Francisco is located in the heart of one of the world’s most innovative and diverse cities and is home to a vibrant academic community of students and faculty who achieve excellence in their fields. Its diverse student body enjoys direct access to faculty, small classes and outstanding opportunities in the city itself. USF is San Francisco’s first university, and its Jesuit Catholic mission helps ignite a student’s passion for social justice and a desire to “Change the World from Here.” For more information, please visit [usfca.edu](https://www.usfca.edu/).