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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

LowellArts! announces \$35,500 in MCACA Minigrants

LOWELL, MI – Through the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) Minigrant Program, LowellArts! awarded **\$29,500** for **ARTS PROJECTS** to fourteen local arts and cultural organizations and **\$6,000** for **PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** to four organizations.

LowellArts! serves as one of nineteen regional regranting agencies for the MCACA. The region covered includes the following seven counties: Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo and Osceola. After much deliberation, the MCACA Minigrant Panel came to a consensus on how to distribute the **\$35,500**.

LowellArts! received twenty grant applications for **ARTS PROJECTS**, with a total of **\$67,511** in requests and **\$29,500** awarded. Organizations could request up to \$4,000 for locally developed, high quality arts and cultural projects, which are special opportunities to address local arts and cultural needs and increase public access to arts and culture. These grants support a broad range of artistic expression from all cultures through projects which preserve, produce or present traditional or contemporary arts and culture and arts education.

The following organizations received ARTS PROJECTS awards:

ORGANIZATION	COUNTY	GRANT AWARD
Arts Center of Newaygo County	Newaygo	\$2,000
Arts in Motion Studio West Michigan	Kent	\$2,300
Big Rapids Festival for the Arts	Mecosta	\$4,000
Grand Rapids Film Festival	Kent	\$1,500
Ionia Area Arts Council	Ionia	\$2,000
Kent Vocational Options	Kent	\$1,850
Lake Michigan Academy	Kent	\$1,850
Lowell Area Schools	Kent	\$2,000
Mecosta Area Committee	Mecosta	\$2,000
Morton Township Library	Mecosta	\$4,000
Remus Area Historical Society	Mecosta	\$2,500
Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce	Kent	\$2,000
Sparta Celtic Heritage Festival	Kent	\$1,500

In addition, LowellArts! received four grant application for **PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**, with a total of **\$6,000** in requests and **\$6,000** awarded. Organizations could ask for up to \$1,500 to assist nonprofit arts organizations and arts professionals acquire services or skills to strengthen the administrative infrastructure of the organization to do business in Michigan.

The following organizations received PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT awards:

ORGANIZATION	COUNTY	GRANT AWARD
Grand Rapids Ballet Company	Kent	\$1,500
Rockford Area Arts Commission	Kent	\$1,500
St. Cecilia Music Center	Kent	\$1,500
West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology	Kent	\$1,500

ARTS PROJECTS summary:

Arts Center of Newaygo County

Funding to support a summer residency by the Satellite Collective composed of 18 artists from around the country specializing in various artistic fields including modern dance, ballet, choreography, music, poetry and visual arts culminating in a performance at the Dogwood Center in Fremont. Youth from around Newaygo County will be actively involved observing and participating in the workshops of the residency and attend the final performance.

Arts in Motion Studio West Michigan

Come to Know Me is the title of a play that will be designed and performed by individual actors and artists with disabilities to engage the audience in understanding living with a disability. All aspects of the production will be developed by a team of artists, disabled and non-disabled, from Arts in Motion Studio West Michigan

ArtWorks – Big Rapids

Artworks will host a six week summer art camp program with the theme *Time Travel: Art Through the Ages* highlighting a specific period in history each week. The objective of the camp is that each camper will understand and broaden their knowledge of the symbolism, status and stories of each time period with a focus on the architecture/sculptures of the time, materials used and the purpose/theme of that period.

Big Rapids Festival for the Arts

At the month-long Big Rapids Festival for the Arts in February, FestLabs will be offered twice a week as laboratories of creativity. These labs are intended to be hands-on, interactive learning opportunities, facilitated by experts in specific fields including Language Arts, Visual Arts, Music/Movement & Dance, Art History & Architecture, Nature & Wildlife, and Technology & Social Media. Labs are free, open to the public and are designed for specific age groups, offering many arts educational opportunities for the community.

Grand Rapids Film Festival

By partnering with area colleges and universities, The Grand Rapids Film Festival will bring filmmakers and film enthusiasts to downtown Grand Rapids to participate in unique film screenings and educational opportunities. The goal of the Festival is to stimulate and perpetuate the creative talent of aspiring and professional filmmakers while engaging the community and reinforcing the benefits of filming in the State of Michigan. Additional aims include: providing a

platform for filmmakers to express their voice through cinematic arts and connect them to publishers and distribution opportunities; offering education workshops for students, professors, and professionals to grow in their craft; and connecting film enthusiasts to great films.

Ionia County Area Arts Council

The Ionia County Area Arts Council will sponsor a free seven-week *Rock the Port Summer Concert Series* at the Lake Odessa Village Park Pavilion. The concert series will feature a variety of styles of music by musicians from Michigan.

Kent Vocational Options

Kent Vocational Options serves young adults who live with life-long developmental or cognitive disabilities. Students will be engaged in a variety of creative art processes and will learn work, life, and social skills that will prepare them for life beyond school in order to give them the self-confidence to try new things and to succeed. Over the course of the school year students rehearse and have an opportunity to perform in small productions culminating in the Spring Fine Arts Program.

Lake Michigan Academy

The grant funding would be used to assist in the purchase of Orff percussion instruments for the music education program for children with learning disabilities. Orff instruments are especially suited for educating learning disabled students by providing a musical experience consisting of listening, moving, and analyzing – all benefiting their development as a learner.

Lowell Area Schools

In February Lowell's community theatre group, the Thebes Players, will present school day performances of the *Princess and the Pea* for Lowell Area Schools 1350 elementary school students. Actors in this production include youth and adults. A performance for the public will also be offered.

Mecosta Area Committee

Mecosta Area Committee will present *Music On the River*, a ten-week free outdoor summer concert series held in the Village of Mecosta at Bromley Park. The concert series will feature a variety of styles of music by musicians from Michigan.

Morton Township Library

The library will be presenting one hour performances featuring 15 different Michigan artists for free performances for children, teens and adults. The artists will be performing for the children's summer reading program, the teen summer reading program and the adult humanities programs.

Remus Area Historical Society

The Remus Area Historical Society will lead a collaborative effort to create a Quilt Trail for cultural tourism. Over nine months, the Society, working with at least five community partners, will produce at least ten quilt boards that reflect local traditions and history and are mounted onto public buildings, barns, fences, homes and businesses in Mecosta County, connecting the Trail to other counties along the M-20 and M-66 corridors.

Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce will present *Concerts in the Park*, a ten-week free outdoor summer concert series held in Rogers Park. The concert series will feature a variety of styles of music by musicians from Michigan.

Sparta Celtic Heritage Festival

This Celtic Heritage Festival in August will celebrate the Irish, English and Scottish cultures. It is designed to expose people of all ages and economic backgrounds to a variety of Celtic music, dance and entertainment opportunities to learn about the Celtic heritage.

PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT summary:

Grand Rapids Ballet Company

Two staff members of the Grand Rapids Ballet Company will attend the annual Dance USA Conference. Through this experience they will gain knowledge in their field as it pertains to non-profit dance organizations. They will also have a chance to network with their peers throughout the United States.

Rockford Area Arts Commission

Rockford Area Arts Commission will engage the services of Parrish Consulting to determine the readiness and community positioning to meet the challenge of expanding private annual and major gift support for the organization. Included in the Fundraising Operational Assessment are reviews of Board of Directors involvement, infrastructure for philanthropy and philanthropic practice.

St. Cecilia Music Center

St. Cecilia Music Center will hire a website developer to update and upgrade the current website to provide easier access to information about SCMC and allow donors, sponsors, foundations and the general public easier access to information about the organization.

West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology (WMCAT)

The entire WMCAT Teen Arts teaching and administrative team will participate in a two-day professional development experience provided by professionals from Walker Art Center and Intermedia Arts.

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With the closing of the Arts Council of Greater Grand Rapids in 2012, the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs chose LowellArts! to administer the MCACA Minigrant program for this region of Michigan. The staff and board of directors of LowellArts! are honored to provide this service for the seven county area.

Begun with a grassroots effort in 1977, LowellArts! has grown in its 37 year history, in part as a result of receiving grants from the MCACA. Today LowellArts! offers a full calendar of gallery exhibitions, theatre and music performances and community arts events and festivals in the greater Lowell area. LowellArts! greatly appreciates the efforts of other local arts organizations to foster the arts in their community.

LowellArts! MISSION is to *connect regional artists and audiences through the visual and performing arts*. LowellArts! VISION is for *our community to be a vibrant hub for the arts, bringing audiences and artists together in quality environments*. LowellArts! encourages the understanding, appreciation and importance of the arts in the schools and communities we serve and provides opportunities for expression and enjoyment of the arts to all segments of these communities.