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LowellArts! announces \$38,000 in MCACA Minigrants for Fiscal Year 2016

LOWELL, MI – Through the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) Minigrant Program, LowellArts! awarded **\$30,000** for **ARTS PROJECTS** to twelve local arts and cultural organizations and **\$8,000** for **PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** to seven organizations.

LowellArts! serves as one of the regional regranting agencies for the MCACA for the counties of Barry, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo and Osceola. .

In Fiscal Year 2016 LowellArts! received twenty grant applications for **ARTS PROJECTS**, with a total of **\$64,012** in requests and **\$30,000** 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 twelve organizations received ARTS PROJECTS awards:

ORGANIZATION	COUNTY	GRANT AWARD
ADAPT Theatre Company	Kent	\$2,800
Croton Township Library	Newaygo	\$2,880
Greenville Area Community Center	Montcalm	\$3,200
Montcalm Community College	Montcalm	\$3,200
Morton Township Library	Mecosta	\$3,000
Newaygo Area District Library	Newaygo	\$3,200
Newaygo County Council for the Arts	Newaygo	\$3,200
Newaygo County Museum and Heritage Center	Newaygo	\$1,900
Portland District Library	Ionia	\$ 420
Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce	Kent	\$2,600
West Michigan Bluegrass Music Association	Kent	\$3,000
West Michigan Blues Society	Kent	\$ 600

In addition, LowellArts! received seven grant application for **PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**, with a total of **\$8,715** in requests and **\$8,000** awarded. Organizations could ask for up to \$1,500 to support a variety of nonprofit organizational and individual needs, which strengthen the capacity of the organization. These dollars can be used to attend conferences, workshops, seminars or to hire short-term consultants.

The following seven organizations received PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT awards:

ORGANIZATION	COUNTY	GRANT AWARD
Artists Creating Together	Kent	\$1,500
Arts Rockford	Kent	\$1,500
Grand Rapids Ballet	Kent	\$1,306
Grand Rapids Public Museum	Kent	\$1,069
Greenville Area Community Center	Montcalm	\$1,125
West Michigan Center for Arts and Technologies	Kent	\$1,500

ARTS PROJECTS summary:

ADAPT Theatre Company

ADAPT Theatre Company's grant award will be used to present the theater production of LINES: The Lived Experience of Race 2016. It will be the inaugural production of ADAPT Theatre Company. The production presents the experiences of widely diverse individuals in West Michigan. This project includes student workshops and interactive audience elements. It welcomes members of all demographics to engage in the artistic expression and discussion of race issues as they impact our community. The funding will be used for the production of high-quality materials that aim to create discussion and participation in this live theatre event. These include a short video, Spanish radio ads and posters.

Croton Township Library

Croton Township Library's grant award will be used to bring artists to the area that would not otherwise be accessible to this community. It will expand the knowledge and entertainment base of the attending participants, giving them cultural benefits that aren't currently available within this area. It will also give them new knowledge and interests about the area in which they live with certain presentations.

Greenville Area Community Center

Greenville Area Community Center's grant award will be used for the "Inspiring Performing Arts Series" of four plays for youth ages 5-18. It will provide these youth with the opportunity to gain on-stage and technical theater experience and to provide the public with affordable, family friendly performing arts opportunities to enhance their cultural awareness and improve quality of life.

Montcalm Community College

Montcalm Community College's grant award will be used for the "Carmina Burana Community Project". The community effort will include performers from the MCC Philharmonic, the MCC Alumni and Friends Choir, the Greenville High School Orchestra and Choirs, and the Flat River Dance Company. Other local area musicians and dancers will also be encouraged to join the production, which will take place at the GHS Performing Arts Center. This production will present the entire cantata as well as its history and meaning to a large audience, helping to both preserve the work and educate the audience and performers about a piece so many have heard in so many venues, but may not realize its greater significance.

Morton Township Library

Morton Township Library's grant award will support a "Summer Reading Program" with fourteen public performances for all children from pre-school through high school. Performances include theater, magic, music, puppetry, and a lecture series. Not only do the performers encourage reading, they bring the arts and humanities to this rural area. The project also includes programs for adults.

Newaygo Area District Library

Newaygo Area District Library's grant award will support cover the cost of artists for the "Summer Reading Program" and art classes for both children, teens and adults. Eleven artists will provide art instruction and productions including a lecture series, music, dance, puppetry, theater, and a master mime.

Newaygo County Council for the Arts

Newaygo County Council for the Arts' grant award will support "Golden Arts" program providing meaningful opportunities for creative expression for older adults at four different locations in rural Newaygo County. Through art instruction designed for the older learner, adults age 60+ will become more art-involved and socially engaged. Utilizing local artists and NCCA staff, as well as coordinating with current programming for seniors in the county, art education classes through "Golden Arts" will lead to a high quality of life for the county's senior population.

Newaygo County Museum & Heritage Center

Newaygo County Museum & Heritage Center's grant award will support an award winning Native Artist, Ron Paquin. Paquin is an accomplished birch bark canoe maker and basket maker, and elder of the Sault Ste.

Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. He will build a traditional cedar bark wigwam out of previously harvested materials in the gallery of the museum. The process will be open to the public and the structure will become part of the Museum and Heritage Center's Native American exhibit. He will teach a three-hour birch bark tray workshop to 15 students. Other Native artists will also provide demonstrations and workshops.

Portland District Library

Portland District Library's grant award will support "Portland Creates!", an art contest devised to encourage people of all ages in the community to explore their inner artist. Children, teens, and adults will submit artwork to be on display at the Portland District Library. It will be displayed for one month, during which time members from the community will vote on their favorite piece from each age category. At the end of the contest, the library will host a reception for the participants and their families where the winners will be announced. The winning works of art will then be displayed at the library for the community to view.

Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce

Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce's grant award will support a summer of music including "Concerts in the Park", a 10 week summer music concert series in Rogers Park, "Thursday Street Fest", "The Sparta Celtic Fest", and the newly formulated "Michigan Apple Fest".

West Michigan Bluegrass Music Association

West Michigan Bluegrass Music Association's grant award will support the JuneGrass 2016 Bluegrass Music Festival in Lowell the last weekend of June 2016.

West Michigan Blues Society

West Michigan Blues Society's grant award will support their "Blues in The Schools" program, a free arts and education live music performance that educates students about the blues genre as well as the cultural and historical context surrounding the blues. Through an interactive performance program, kids learn about the origins of this uniquely American art form and its influence on most modern music genres.

PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT summary:

Artists Creating Together

Artists Creating Together's grant award will support the further education for two core employees. The Executive Director and Development Director will attend two separate trainings at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. Each training session develops leadership in fundraising and management, giving opportunity for ACT to expand programs. A stronger fundraising and management base will enable ACT to reach more people with disabilities each year through arts and cultural experiences.

Arts Rockford

Arts Rockford's grant award will support hiring Fidelis Resource Partners to provide fundraising and organizational consulting to strengthen the ability of Arts Rockford to meet its mission. A stronger Arts Rockford can address its long term needs more appropriately including operating a facility that exceeds the excellence the community has come to expect from its presence, programs and services in Rockford.

Grand Rapids Ballet Company

Grand Rapids Ballet Company's grant award will support the costs associated with hosting a one-day staff and board professional development workshop.

Grand Rapids Public Museum

Grand Rapids Public Museum's grant award will support the museum's curator, Andrea Melvin attendance at the Costume Society of America's Midwest Regional Symposium in Madison, Wisconsin. The goal of this professional development opportunity is to attend the symposium in preparation for the 2016 symposium which will be organized by Andrea Melvin and hosted by the Grand Rapids Public Museum.

Greenville Area Community Center

Greenville Area Community Center's grant award will support the hiring of a professional consultant to create Light and Sound Training Guides and to provide extensive training to key technical staff on the operations of the theater lighting and sound systems to use it to its fullest capability to benefit the public and theater patrons.

West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology

West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology's grant award will send ten teaching artists and staff to a two-day workshop on "Implementing and Extending Design Thinking in Education" with the Henry Ford Learning Institute. WMCAT's pedagogy is grounded in design thinking, leading urban teens through this process to affect social change through the arts. Professional development in this area will prepare our staff to create higher impact for their students during the 2015-16 program year.

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**LowellArts!** begun with a grassroots effort in 1977 and has grown in its 38 year history, in part as a result of receiving grants from the MCACA. Today LowellArts! offers a full calendar of gallery exhibitions, theater 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.