



For Immediate Release
February 16, 2010

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CAC Trustees Approve \$1.35 Million in Special Initiative Grants Funds Will Support Creative Workforce Fellowship Program and July Celebration on Public Square

Trustees of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) have approved a \$1.1 million grant to the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture (CPAC) to continue support of the innovative Creative Workforce Fellowship Program. This is the second CAC award for this program; it will assure continued funding for the prestigious fellowship through 2012. An earlier award, made by CAC in 2008, has funded two fellowship cycles, providing one-year stipends to forty individual artists in the performing and visual arts. This unique fellowship program's primary purpose is to support Cuyahoga County's creative workforce and provide an environment that nurtures creativity and innovation.

Karen Gahl-Mills, the newly-named executive director of CAC who took the group's reins on February 1, 2010, acknowledged the grant not only as a bold investment in individual artists but also as an investment with meaningful implications for the region as a whole. "This community has done something important: by putting public money into the cultural sector, you have clearly demonstrated that the arts are not 'extra'—they are central to maintaining a healthy and vibrant community." Indeed, the highly competitive fellowship program, to which more than 400 individuals applied in 2009, is considered a prized resource by the local creative community and key to building the region's capacity to sustain the impact—and continued growth—of the region's creative workforce.

The Creative Workforce Fellowship grant was one of two Special Initiative grants approved by CAC trustees at their February 10, 2010 meeting. Trustees also approved continued support of the Cleveland Orchestra's *July Star Spangled Spectacular* concert on Public Square with a grant of \$250,000. The annual celebration, a free outdoor concert featuring the Cleveland Orchestra and followed by fireworks, is believed to be the single largest public art event in Cuyahoga County, typically drawing more than 70,000 people to downtown Cleveland.

Gahl-Mills commended the board's decision, while underscoring its broader significance. "This summer's *Spectacular*, the twenty-first, represents a unique opportunity for CAC to invest in a celebration that is for so many in this community, a treasured rite of summer." She continued, "CAC funds belong to the citizens of Cuyahoga County. By allocating these funds to an event that is by its very nature public and inclusive, our trustees have demonstrated their abiding commitment to ensuring that the residents of Cuyahoga County—westsiders and eastsiders, families, and people of all ages—are able to access and enjoy this community's world-class arts and cultural assets."

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The meeting provided Gahl-Mills with the opportunity to reflect publicly on her first ten days on the job at CAC—and to share the priorities she has identified for her first one hundred days, chief among them a dedication to listening to and building relationships with all of CAC’s constituents. Gahl-Mills explained, “This board has challenged me to help write the next chapter in CAC’s story. To do that effectively, I need to understand the challenges and opportunities faced by our community, both the community of artists and cultural institutions and the community at large. Imagining our next chapter will require extraordinary clarity of purpose, dedication to stewardship, and an innovative spirit, so that we can see beyond the good work that we have done and look ahead to what we will need to do to sustain an environment where our arts and cultural assets can continue to thrive.”

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture makes grants using public funds to support the arts and cultural assets that enrich Cuyahoga County and the lives of its citizens. Since 2007, CAC grants have delivered in excess of \$48 million to more than one hundred Cuyahoga County organizations and programs, helping to secure CAC’s place among the nation’s largest sources of local public support for the arts. Detailed information on CAC grantmaking including the group’s *2009 Report to the Community* is available online at <http://www.cacgrants.org>.

In 2010, CAC trustees will meet the second Monday of each month at 3:00 PM in the Second Floor Board Room of the Ideacenter at Playhouse Square. Members of the public are welcome to attend all regular board meetings. A schedule of upcoming meetings follows this release and is posted on the CAC website.

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Board of Trustees 2010 Meeting Schedule

All meetings are held in the Second Floor Board Room of the Idea Center at Playhouse Square and are scheduled for 3 p.m.

Monday, March 8
Monday, April 12 (Annual Meeting)
Monday, May 10
Monday, June 14
Monday, July 12
Monday, September 13
*Monday, October 18
Monday, November 8
Monday, December 13

*Note: October meeting is the third Monday due to the Columbus Day holiday.

ANNUAL RECORDS COMMISSION MEETING

Second Floor Board Room of the Idea Center at Playhouse Square

Monday, September 13, 2:30 p.m.