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ArtsWave announces availability of African American arts grants and timing for its Truth & Healing Artist Showcase

Cincinnati (June 19, 2023) – In celebration of Juneteenth, ArtsWave, the engine for the region's arts, announces the availability of its next round of \$100,000 in funding to support African American arts organizations, as well as plans for its third annual artist showcase, part of the Black and Brown Artist Program.

ArtsWave's African American arts grants program (known as "the Circle's African American Arts Grants Program"), that opens today, is designed to strengthen the capacity for arts presenting, producing, programming and instruction at organizations led by or predominantly serving Black communities in the Cincinnati region. This program is one of the ways that ArtsWave works to increase the sustainability of organizations that focus on the preservation and advancement of Black arts and culture. Eligible organizations will have a mission related to the African American experience and a majority (51%+) of annual expenditures dedicated to arts and cultural activities.

ArtsWave's donor group of African American philanthropic leaders, the Circle, helps to fund these grants through their donations to the ArtsWave Campaign. Since the program began, more than \$600,000 has been invested in nearly 50 capacity-building projects by Black-led and Black serving organizations. Applications for this funding round will be accepted through July 28, with early submission feedback available June 19 to July 14 for first-time applicants. ArtsWave will host a free webinar to go over the grant program on Wednesday, June 21 at noon. In addition, two free, online grant writing workshops will be provided as an additional resource tool on Thursday, June 29 and Thursday, July 6, both from noon to 1 p.m. More information is available at artswave.org/apply. Recipients will be announced in late August.

ArtsWave is pleased to announce the third annual showcase of new works by 18 of the region's leading Black and Brown artists. The "Truth & Healing Artist Showcase" will be held at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center on July 14-16 and July 30, 2023, with the visual art exhibition in place through September 10, 2023.

This year's Showcase is focused on the themes of healing, rebirth and reconnecting. Projects will explore and build upon the current artistic commentary of health and race and connect it with historical events and visions of a more equitable future. The projects not only represent the African American experience, but also the experiences of those with Mexican, Lebanese, Somali, Argentinian, Zimbabwean, Guatemalan and Indigenous heritage. Artists collaborated with community members and other partners in their projects, so that the larger public could participate in the process of healing, including reconnection and rebirth heritage. This year's showcase features visual art — fashion design, painting and sculpture — along with video documentaries, musical composition, film and podcasts. There are also original musical compositions, theater, dance and multidisciplinary works.

Artists were selected by ArtsWave's panel of community stakeholders in a competitive process for funding last fall. Out of 48 proposals, the [18 artists](#) were determined to best capture the idea of "truth and healing," and each received \$10,000 to execute their project. In addition to financial support for the creation of new art works, the program helps artists develop valuable business and entrepreneurial skills. This year's artists received professional development courses conducted by Wave Pool, plus monthly networking and progress meetings with ArtsWave staff.

The showcase is part of ArtsWave's Black and Brown Artist Program which has funded 67 artists of color with \$742,108 in grants over the past three years. This program is supported by the City of Cincinnati, Macy's, Duke Energy, Fifth Third Bank, the Greater Cincinnati Foundation and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.

A press conference, ribbon-cutting and media tour are planned for the weekend, with information to be released to the media early in the week of July 10.

Both the Circle's African American Arts Grants Program and the Black and Brown Artist Program are key components of ArtsWave's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access plan, "Lifting as We Learn," in which ArtsWave is intentionally increasing resources for Black and Brown arts throughout the region. ArtsWave president and CEO Alecia Kintner notes "With these investments — thanks to donors and partners — ArtsWave has established the two largest annual grant programs dedicated to Black and Brown artists and cultural organizations in the Cincinnati region." To lend your support to these programs, donate at artswave.org/give.

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About ArtsWave:

ArtsWave, the local nonprofit arts agency serving the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky region, is the engine for the arts. Its roots stem back to the late 1920s when the Cincinnati Taft family provided initial investment matched by community support. In the late 1940s, it evolved to become the first united arts fund in the nation and in the mid-1970s, the first organization to initiate workplace giving for the arts. ArtsWave continues to innovate while leading, as illustrated by its No. 1 rank nationally in community arts

fundraising; coordination of a sector-wide Blueprint for Collective Action; piloting of new technologies to maximize arts engagement; and development of resources for the arts. Each year, ArtsWave raises \$11+ million from tens of thousands of donors — corporations, employees, foundations, residents and others — to support more than 150 arts organizations, projects and artists. Donations can be made at artswave.org/give.