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ArtsWave kicks off its annual community campaign, announces “More Kids, More Arts” Education Challenge and shares results from BLINK®

CINCINNATI (February 10, 2023) — The 2023 ArtsWave Campaign – the largest community campaign in the nation and primary way Cincinnati funds its arts – kicked off its 74th annual campaign today at the Contemporary Arts Center.

The Campaign theme, [“CREATED TO GROW: STRONGER ARTS FOR A STRONGER REGION”](#) is fitting this year, as Cincinnati celebrates its recent news of making the [top 20 most arts-vibrant large metros \(out of more than 900 MSAs\) nationally.](#)

Coming off a banner year of more than 775,000,000 impressions in national media for the arts and Cincinnati's largest event in its history – the projection mapping, mural and lighting event [BLINK® illuminated by ArtsWave – Executive Director Justin Brookhart shared impact results of the event.](#) “From surveyed results, BLINK® attracted attendees from 29 states, the event directly created or supported 1,638 jobs and had a direct economic impact of \$126 million,” said Brookhart.” He adds, “This event is not possible without the support of ArtsWave, our partners, and all the generous donors and supporters that help make it a gigantic, free, public art event. This truly is a ‘nowhere else’ experience.”

ArtsWave President & CEO Alecia Kintner welcomed each of the speakers, including Mayor Aftab Pureval who thanked ArtsWave supporters for their past gifts with an appeal to “join me today in making your gifts to create stronger arts for a stronger region.”

ArtsWave Campaign Co-Chairs Carl Satterwhite, President/Owner of RCF Group, and Scott Robertson, Chairman of RCF Group, announced a community-wide Campaign goal of \$11.7 million to fund 150+ organizations and projects that will create thousands of cultural performances, exhibits and exciting experiences over the next year.

Satterwhite and Robertson have assembled a cabinet of 36 volunteer leaders from an array of business sectors to help secure support from 300 businesses across the region over the next three months.

Robertson announced the “More Arts, More Kids Arts” \$1,000,000 Chairmen’s Challenge for Arts Education, sharing the news that \$427,500 has been raised to date. Beginning this fall, ArtsWave will launch a pilot program to enable 50,000 arts field trips for kids over the next five years, so that all elementary children within Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) can experience the arts. “Arts in schools and field trips to arts venues were among the first things to be cut during the worst of the pandemic,” says Robertson. Satterwhite adds, “This critical funding will kick-start the return of these experiences to organizations like the Contemporary Arts Center’s new Creativity Center, where we are holding this press conference and campaign kick-off. These experiences are so important to kids’ well-rounded education,” Any new gift of \$5,000 or more, or a gift increased by \$5,000 or more, may be designated to fund the “More Arts, More Kids” program.

Today’s event included announcements of various campaign initiatives. A new partnership has been created with Boone County Distillery’s Canvus Cocktails, the official Canned Cocktail of the Cincinnati Bengals; a portion of the proceeds of the Game Day Illustrations poster sales will go to fund the arts through ArtsWave. Also, ArtsWave is partnering with the Cincinnati Reds and FC Cincinnati with tickets and special experiences that will be provided as thank-you gifts to ArtsWave donors. CincyJams, presented by Accenture, the workplace battle of the bands and key fundraiser for the campaign, will return to Hard Rock Café on May 18. Information on these initiatives and how to support the arts can be found at artswave.org.

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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 \$11M+ 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.

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