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*** **PRESS RELEASE** ***

Mayor Fulop Announces 89 Artists and Arts Organizations Awarded First Allocation of Jersey City’s Arts & Culture Trust Fund Grants

Awardees receive upwards of \$25,000 to Expand Arts Education and Programming; Arts & Culture proven to Boost Local Economic Assets, Create Jobs, and Stimulate Growth

JERSEY CITY - Mayor Steven M. Fulop joins **City Council members** and the **Arts and Culture Trust Fund Committee** to announce the first round of critical grant funding through Jersey City’s Arts and Culture Trust Fund - a sustainable funding source directly benefiting local artists and arts organizations to help them grow and thrive. With this first allocation of funding, **nearly \$900,000 in total grants will provide significant support to 89 artists and arts organizations throughout Jersey City, including youth and community programming.**

“Jersey City’s investment in the arts is an investment in our entire community. The short- and long-term social, educational, and economic impacts generate a wide range of opportunities for our residents and businesses,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “We recognized the need for sustainable funding early on, and Jersey City voters understood the magnitude of our burgeoning arts community, so it is especially exciting to award these much-needed grants to so many talented artists and arts organizations so that they can further expand their positive influences in our society.”



Investing in the arts has proven to significantly boost educational attainment, create jobs, attract further investments, stimulate the local economy, among many other communal benefits. The first round of Arts and Culture Trust Fund grants include opportunities for programming, arts education, and general operating support.

“The Educational Arts Team is honored to receive an award from the Jersey City Arts Relief Fund. This award will allow us to offer our Family Literacy and arts education programming to more children,

specifically from low-income communities, who might not otherwise have access to the arts,” said **grant recipient Cynthia Renta, Executive Director of The Educational Arts Team**. “Through our evidence-based arts and education programming, developed over five decades of service to the Jersey City community, we bring joy, play, and healing to the community while also impacting students’ academic achievement and social-emotional development.”

The allocation of the State’s first-ever municipal Arts and Culture Trust Fund includes grants worth upwards of \$25,000 in the following categories:

- 38 Program Grant Awards
- 8 Arts Education Grant Awards
- 23 Operating Grant Awards
- 20 Individual Artist Fellowship Grant Awards

“This is a historic moment for our arts community, one that we’ve been working towards for several years. To be able to announce these grants to help Jersey City’s arts programming and creative artists, ranging from novice to expert, is truly a milestone that brings us closer to seeing the City’s vision as a regional arts and culture hub become a reality. From our Artist in Residence initiative to the fast-growing Mural Arts Program to the Jersey City Art & Studio Tour (JCAST) and everything in between, Jersey City continues to expand a wide range of critical arts initiatives for the betterment of the entire community,” added **Christine Goodman, Director of Jersey City’s Department of Cultural Affairs**.



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Mayor Fulop spent two years working closely with the Jersey City Arts Council to lobby state legislators to implement the mechanisms that would allow for long-term arts funding. Jersey City was first to take action when the state bill was signed into law by the Governor in December 2019, allowing municipalities to implement an Arts and Culture Trust Fund.

“The Arts and Culture Trust Fund Committee is proud to support a diverse group of organizations, art programs, and artists,” said **Angelica Sanchez, Arts and Culture Trust Fund Committee Member**. “We believe supporting artists is important and necessary for all citizens.”

"We formed the Jersey City Arts Council less than six years ago to address the need for support of the arts. The building of the Jersey City Arts, Culture Trust Fund has been a years-long collaboration between the Jersey City Arts Council, Mayor Fulop, the Office of Cultural Affairs, the arts community, and the people of this thriving City. It was quite moving to see the list of so many awardees who have been wholeheartedly contributing to our cultural landscape for years. The JCAC congratulates all awardees as well as the tireless Jersey City Arts and Culture Trust Fund Committee, and looks forward to the continued growth of this exceptional granting program," said **Heather Warfel Sandler, Co-founder of the Jersey City Arts Council**.

The Arts Trust Funds received strong support from voters in November 2020 to implement an annual tax not to exceed two cents (\$0.02) per one-hundred dollars of assessed property value. The Trust generates approximately \$1 million in annual revenue for arts and cultural programs, which is quadruple the amount of what all of Hudson County receives from the State each year.

“We have worked hard in recent years with our local arts organizations and artists to establish Jersey City as a regional arts and culture destination, attracting investments, jobs, tourism, businesses, and so much more as our arts community continues to strengthen and prosper. We are also moving forward on major projects that will further build upon these efforts, including Centre Pompidou x Jersey City and the Loew’s Theatre historic renovations. I have no doubt that Jersey City will soon be the number one destination for arts, entertainment, employment, and so much more,” concluded Mayor Fulop.

All media inquiries should be directed to Kimberly Scalcione at KScalcione@icnj.org.