NEWS FROM TCA: NOVEMBER 2016

Texas Commission on the Arts
Investing in a Creative Texas

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As the days get shorter, some parts of Texas may see snow. The rest of us can enjoy this image of MET*dance* (aka Houston Metropolitan Dance Company) performing "Snow Playground," choreographed by Katarzyna Skarpetowska. Photo by Amitava Shakar.

NEA Adds Fort Hood to the Creative Forces Program

Program Serves US Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families

Recently, at an event held at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE), part of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Department of Defense announced the expansion of their partnership into Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network. The expanded Creative Forces program places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care at ten additional clinical sites, and increases access to therapeutic arts activities in local communities for military members, veterans, and their families. The program is also investing in research on the impacts and benefits of these innovative treatment methods.

Since 2011, this military healing arts partnership has supported creative arts therapies for service members with traumatic brain injury and associated psychological health issues at two military medical facilities in the Washington, DC, area: the NICoE at Walter Reed in Bethesda, and the NICoE Intrepid Spirit-1 at Fort Belvoir in Virginia. The President and Congress recognized the success of the program at these facilities, and believed it could do more. In fiscal year 2016, Congress appropriated a $1.928 million budget increase for the NEA, specifically allocated to expand this military healing arts program.

Creative Forces will extend creative arts therapies to ten additional locations by 2017. The NEA is providing funding for creative arts therapists, including, but not limited to, art and music therapists, creative writing instructors, as well as program support at these locations. Initially, five new clinical sites will join Creative Forces, including Fort Hood in Killeen.

TCA is among the network of state, local, and regional arts agencies and nonprofit partners working with the NEA to develop community-based arts programs that allow patients to continue exploring art practices as part of their healing process. In addition to military service members, these programs will be available for veterans, families, and caregivers to access arts programming.

Prepare for the New Overtime Regulations

Note: this article first appeared in the Performing Arts Alliance's October 26 newsletter, and is reprinted here with their kind permission.

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On **December 1**, updates to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) take effect, increasing the salary threshold for employees entitled to overtime compensation to $47,476/year. The current salary threshold is $23,660/year. Regulations will also automatically update this threshold every three years--beginning in 2020-- based on national wage growth.

While the House has passed legislation that supports a phased-in implementation, and there are pending legal challenges to the regulations, it is not expected that this legislation will move through the Senate or find support with the Administration. Employers are strongly urged to prepare for implementation.

To offer guidance, OPERA America and Theatre Communications Group (TCG) have created these helpful resources which discuss implementation of the regulations from the perspective of a nonprofit performing arts organization:

- OPERA America Policy Summary
- TCG Overtime Policy Webinar

Here are additional resources discussing the regulations from the lens of the nonprofit sector:

- Department of Labor Non-profit Fact Sheet and general resources
- Independent Sector overtime regulations resource page
- National Council on Nonprofits resource page

Professional Development Webinar: Making a Great Video

Mark your calendars for our next live professional development webinar on **Wednesday, December 14** at 2 PM CDT. Video Association of Dallas co-founder Bart Weiss will discuss ways to develop a great video. If your organization will be applying for TCA's Arts Create grant program in 2017, plan to watch this webinar to help you develop the best audiovisual sample possible! The webinar will also be useful for other (non-TCA) application processes that require an audiovisual sample. A webinar invitation will be sent out in early December.

Are you looking to diversify your organization's income sources?

TCA's October free professional development webinar focused on **grants and gifts from foundations and corporations**. Two development powerhouses, Zenetta Drew, Executive Director of Dallas Black Dance Theatre and Brett Barnes, Vice President for Development at the Long Center in Austin, provided effective practices for developing and maintaining relationships with these important funding sources. If you missed the live webinar, a recording is available on our Professional Development Vimeo page for free.

Zenetta Drew

Zenetta Drew has been with Dallas Black Dance Theatre since 1987 and has seen the company grow dramatically over her tenure, from an annual operating budget of $175,000 to over $4 million. The company's yearly services have grown from 30 to over 600, with national and international venues, and audience growth has increased from 20,000 to 150,000 annually. Currently a member of several arts boards, Ms. Drew has guest lectured on fundraising, accounting, and arts leadership for multiple groups including SMU, the Texas Society of CPA's Nonprofit Organizations, Syracuse University, LeMoyne College and Texas A&M University - Commerce.

Brett Barnes

Brett Barnes has earned the credentials of Certified Fund Raising Executive and Certified Fund Raising Manager and is an active member of the Austin Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. Mr. Barnes was honored in 2013 as the Outstanding Professional Fundraiser of the Year by AFP Greater Austin. He has presented at local, state and national conferences on fundraising best practices as well as evaluating arts grants. As Vice President of Development for the Long Center, Mr. Barnes leads their fundraising efforts. Working with generous donors, he recently closed a $1.5M endowment gift for their education programs.

Solving the Holiday Gift Dilemma: Get the Plate that Supports the Arts

Perhaps you're gearing up for some holiday-related gift-giving in the next few months? Perhaps some of the people you're shopping for are hard to find gifts for? Trust us, we understand! If your loved ones live in Texas, we've got a win-win solution for you. Get them TCA's *State of the Arts* license plate. The plate looks great on all kinds of vehicles, shows Texas pride and support of the arts, and costs a mere $30 a year in addition to vehicle registration. $22 of the $30 fee goes to TCA and straight into our grants budget! TCA is grateful to the many Texas drivers who purchase the State of the Arts license plate, and to the wonderful arts organizations that help promote it to their patrons.

Farewell Stephanie, Hello Kenneth!

TCA recently said goodbye to program assistant Stephanie Gage, who left to pursue training in computer programming. Stephanie came to TCA in January 2014 and quickly became known for her can-do attitude, dry sense of humor, and talent for photography.

On November 1, TCA welcomed our new program assistant, Kenneth Williams, a recent graduate of UT Austin with a BA in English through

Kenneth Williams

the Liberal Arts Honors program. He has a keen interest in theater as well as literature. Kenneth has worked at the Harry Ransom Center at UT in the Theater & Performing Arts archives, Shakespeare at Winedale at both UT and Round Top, and the Hidden Room Theatre in Austin. He is originally from Longview, Texas.

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Texas Commission on the Arts

anina@arts.texas.gov
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