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1889 Foundation and Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance Announce Creative Health Impact Grant Awards

(JOHNSTOWN, Pa.) – 1889 Foundation and Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance (PRAA) are pleased to announce the 2022-2023 recipients of the Creative Health Impact Grant (CHIG) Awards. The awards provide up to \$60,000 in 1889 Foundation funds to support arts programs related to health and wellness in Cambria and Somerset Counties.

“Each year the applications for this grant have gotten stronger, and this year is no exception. The submitted applications show that arts organizations understand that creative arts and health and wellness go together. The funded projects provide many opportunities for diverse groups in the community to exercise their creativity and maintain health and wellness” said Becky Catelinet, Executive Director of the PA Rural Arts Alliance

This is the seventh year of 1889 Foundation’s support of the CHIG Awards. “The CHIG applicants do a wonderful job collaborating with other organizations to achieve their program goals” said Debbie Costlow, Program Director, 1889 Foundation. “This correlates directly with 1889 Foundation’s Statement of identity which is for multiple organizations to work in partnership for a more comprehensive approach and larger impact. It is interesting to see how a particular idea can not only provide a health component yet remain an innovative arts program at the same time. Very impactful!”

All funded activities will take place between September 1, 2022, and August 31, 2023. The funded programs are as follows:

Bottle Works Ethnic Arts Center – “Mindfulness & Art Club & Exhibition at Conemaugh Valley Elementary School”: The Bottle Works Ethnic Arts Center’s project supports the Conemaugh

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Valley Elementary School's M.I.N.D Works After-school Art Club, a 4-week Art Classroom Residency, and a School-wide Mindfulness & Art Exhibit at the Bottle Works.

Cambria County Library – “Senior Crafternoon & Mobile Revolving Library for area Retirement Homes”: The Cambria County Library will hold a monthly senior “crafternoon” for any member of the community aged 60+. A variety of arts mediums will be explored. In addition, the library will expand its mobile revolving library service of delivery and pick-up to area retirement homes. Items provided include a selection of large print books, audio books, musical CDs, jigsaw puzzles, and movies. Through grant funding, “memory kits” and “reminiscence kits” will be added.

Community Arts Center of Cambria County – “Insightful Art”: This project provides art and craft workshops to the blind and visually impaired community. Four art workshop experiences will be held each month for adults, for a 12-month period. The goal of the workshops is to enhance communication, self-expression, and emotional release to bridge the social gap between people with visual impairments and the public.

Creative Craft - “The Voices from the Margins: Learning Poetry and Printmaking as a form of Expression for LGBTQ+ Youth”: This project creates an opportunity for teen youth in the LGBTQ+ community to manage stress and mental health issues they face by expressing themselves through poetry and screen printing. Youth will work with the Poet Laureate of Johnstown, Joyce Robley, to learn how to write poetry about mindfulness and mental health challenges. Screen printing will be used to add lines of the poems on apparel, totes, and posters as a way to express to the public the challenges one faces being in the LGBTQ+ community. An exhibition of the work and a presentation of the poetry will conclude the project.

Laurel View Village – “Connecting, Inspiring and Thriving Through Art”: This project builds on the success of previously funded Opening Minds Through Art activities. The goal this year is to pursue certification in the OMA program for two life enrichment staff members and implement the program on campus for those residents affected by dementia. Professor Don Talbot will provide guidance and mentorship. The final phase of the project is an OMA exhibit on campus featuring the artwork created by residents.

Laurel View Village – “Music and Memory for All”: The goal of the Music & Memory for All project is to sustain and grow Laurel View Village’s current programming. Their programs provide emotional and behavioral benefits for people with Alzheimer's and other types of dementia. The program will build on previous years’ grant-supported efforts.

Lilly-Washington Public Library – “Art in the Park”: Art in The Park will benefit the community of Lilly and Washington Township by bringing arts and cultural activities to the town that lacks

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arts experiences. Each month artists, musicians, theatrical performers, yogis, culinary artists, and presenters will visit the library to enrich the community. In conjunction with the arts activities, there will also be medical related persons and organizations that will be present to answer health related questions of the community and perform simple tests.

Small Town Hope, Inc. – “Small Town Hope Jean Jacket Design Project”: Through eight two-hour artist-led interactive classes, kids will design & create a wearable jean jacket. While learning about fashion design & health benefits of jacket-wearing, they will deconstruct old jean jackets to see how they're made for inspiration of their jean jacket designs. Combining the deconstructed parts with new materials, children will create their functional work of art. The creations will be displayed at The Treehouse in a Jean Jacket Design Project Exhibition.

The Learning Lamp – “Improving Problem Behaviors Through Therapeutic Arts”: The Learning Lamp will provide a therapeutic arts counselor to work with students who have been placed in Ignite's elementary behavior intervention classrooms for extended periods of time. The arts counselor will create large and small group and individual SEL-focused arts activities that can help children meet their behavior improvement goals, learn and practice coping skills in and out of the classroom, and return to their home schools more capable of interacting positively with others and more assured of their own value and strengths.

Veteran Community Initiatives, Inc. – “Veterans Art & History Program II”: VCI's project is a continuation of the work done in year one of this project. They will combine the Veterans History piece with a Veterans Art Therapy piece, encouraging and engaging mind, body, and spirit to receive positive wellness and emotional healing. Stories from veterans will be collected and preserved for the U. S. Library of Congress. The Art Therapy piece includes work with a Certified Art Therapist to create artwork based on the theme “Healing and Hope.” Due to COVID restrictions, some aspects of the year one project were unable to be carried out as planned.

1889 Foundation's mission is to support innovative programs and initiatives that improve and transform the overall health and wellness of our region. Through collaborations and partnerships, with a focus on population health, the Foundation is dedicated to making meaningful change in the areas that are negatively impacting the health and well-being of our local communities. For more about the 1889 Foundation, visit www.1889foundation.org.

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The Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance (PRAA) is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization whose mission is to develop and promote the arts throughout rural areas of southwestern Pennsylvania. Recognizing a need for arts information and technical assistance to existing and emerging arts organizations and individual artists, PRAA was founded in 1988. Its activities are supported by membership dues and grants from private foundations and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.