

LEAF Community Arts Awarded \$705,000 Grant for New Global Arts Center

November 2, 2018 (Asheville, NC) – On Wednesday, the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) approved close to \$10 million dollars in funding from the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) generated from a portion of Buncombe County room tax revenues. LEAF Community Arts is proud to be one of the six projects awarded grants by the BCTDA.

LEAF plans to open a Global Arts Center in the historic Del Cardo building on Eagle Street where guests can enjoy educational experiences rooted in music, art, community and culture. The 3,300 sq. ft. center will feature an interactive world map where visitors can explore a wide range of cultural art forms, an international immersion room that will transport visitors across the globe through a sensory experience, and a global sound underground to encourage experimentation with unique musical instruments from around the world. A virtual reality mini-theater, intimate performance stage, interactive artist workstations and an area dedicated to preserving the history of the Block are also highlights of the Center. Programmatic offerings like the Artist in Residency Program and merit based engagement curriculum add another layer of attractiveness to this project. Hosting ongoing monthly workshops series, offered by international, national, and local Teaching Artists, will serve as a bridge for global connections and greatly diversify Asheville's current cultural offerings.

"LEAF is an energetic, vibrant group with a global vision. Their project will bring new culture and diversity to our city that will be a perfect complement to the very core of Asheville's identity. There is nothing more powerful than creating positive change in our own community that will have a lasting positive impact felt far beyond our own borders."

– Robert Foster, TPDF Committee Chair

LEAF is honored to work with Mountain Housing Opportunities and Eagle Market St. Development on a shared vision to bring to life common spaces with cultural arts programming. Located within Eagle Market Place development, and adjacent to YMI Cultural Center, the site is ideal for collaborative programming such as presentations, workshops, performances, artists talks, block parties and demos. LEAF is dedicated to honoring the rich African American history by working with elders, community leaders and youth. The Center will promote cultural preservation and co-create programming that welcomes visitors, while serving the community; connecting to the past and working together to build a vibrant future.

"We're very happy about receiving funding for the Global Arts Center. It gives everyone a chance to learn what the Block means to those who used to hang there and an opportunity to be a part of an organization that gives so much to our community, our youth and our international programs." – Deborah Bryant, LEAF Executive Board Member

LEAF is grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with a talented and diverse team of longtime LEAFers and local community leaders to help bring its work, vision and mission to life in the Center. As LEAF looks toward an August 2019 opening, there are exciting ways to get involved with this project. Corporate and individual support welcomed and naming opportunities also available.

For more information on the LEAF Global Art Center project and how to get involved, please visit theLEAF.org/GlobalArtsCenter.

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LEAF Community Arts, producer of LEAF Festival, is Mountain Xpress' Best of WNC:
#1 Nonprofit Serving the Arts | #1 Music Festival | #1 Camping Festival | #1 Kids Festival

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ABOUT LEAF COMMUNITY ARTS

LEAF Community Arts is a non-profit organization, building community, connecting cultures and enriching lives through the arts – locally and globally – with festivals, community events, and arts education programs. LEAF was founded in 1995 with the idea that music, craft, poetry, visual arts, and healing arts of diverse cultures can create powerful connections. In 2004, LEAF expanded its mission with the creation of LEAF Schools & Streets, and again in 2006 with the global initiative LEAF International. Through 23 years and 48 Festivals, through more than a thousand youth participating in LEAF International programming, and through more than 62,000 local Asheville youth taught by the LEAF Schools & Streets teaching artists, LEAF Community Arts has remained true to its roots and mission of connecting cultures and enriching lives through music and the arts.

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