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THE PORTLAND CREATIVE CONFERENCE GIVES BACK

Funds raised at the creative industries event support various K-12 arts education programs in Oregon

Portland, Ore. (May 2, 2017) – Keeping the Arts, a nonprofit that supports K-12 arts education programs in Oregon, has announced financial support for several programs as a result of funds raised at the 2016 Portland Creative Conference. Including the new grants, Keeping the Arts has distributed over \$94,000 to support such programs.

Programs selected to receive financial support from 2016 Portland Creative Conference proceeds are:

- Open School North (Portland) - to support their Open AiR artist-in-residence program for at-risk youth.
- Corban Theatre Arts Summer Camp (Salem) - to provide scholarships for students in grades 6-12 from communities in the Santiam Canyon to attend the camp at no charge.
- Caldera Arts Center (Sisters) - to support their arts programs for underserved youth.
- Children’s Repertory of Oregon Workshops (Florence) - support their production of The Addams Family Musical, which will have a K-12 kids cast and crew of 30 and will be seen by 1,500+ kids in the community.
- Madras High School Band (Madras) - to support a Festival performance opportunity in San Diego as part of an overall effort to revive the Band program.

“The Portland Creative Conference is a systemic event,” said Steve Gehlen, Conference Chairman and Co-Founder of Keeping the Arts. “We produce an event for creative industries professionals, providing them with new inspiration, ideation and connections. We then use the proceeds from that event to support the development of the next generation of creative professionals.”

The next Portland Creative Conference will take place on Friday September 29th in the Gerding Theater at the Armory.

(more)

"We are so grateful for the grant that Keeping the Arts awarded us. These monies will enable us to offer full theatre camp scholarships to 5 students and partial scholarships to 10 students. As a result, 15 students that would otherwise not be able to attend a summer camp will experience 2 weeks of learning theatre skills, collaborating with their peers to produce a short play, and discovering their inner creativity," said Tamara McGinnis, director of the Corban Theater Arts Summer Camp.

Supporting arts education programs in rural Oregon is a priority for Keeping the Arts. Several members on the organization's Board of Directors were raised in such communities.

"Our Keeping the Arts grant provides direct support to Caldera's youth mentoring program, allowing us to bring artists and designers in to work closely with our young people on a range of creative projects, from photo and film to poetry slams and more. The energy that comes from this creative mentoring is a catalyst for transformation," said Caldera Executive Director Tricia Snell. "We love that the Portland Creative Conference sees the value of supporting the next generation of creative thinkers. I have no doubt that some of them will someday be on the stage at the Conference."

Oregon-based arts education programs can apply for grants from Keeping the Arts at <http://keepingthearts.org/grants/grant-application-form/>

About the Portland Creative Conference

The Portland Creative Conference is an interdisciplinary exploration and celebration of the creative process across various creative industries. Past speakers include Spike Lee (director), Dan Wieden (advertising guru), Steve Buscemi (actor), Chelsea Cain (author), Chris Carter ("X-Files" creator), D'Wayne Edwards (Nike, Pensole), Bibi McGill (lead guitarist for Beyoncé), and Brynn Bardacke (Coca-Cola). The next event is scheduled for September 29, 2017. The conference is produced by a volunteer team led by event Chairman Steve Gehlen. For more information, visit <http://cre8con.com>

About Keeping the Arts

Keeping the Arts is an Oregon-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity dedicated to providing financial support to various K-12 arts education programs in Oregon, with a focus on rural Oregon communities. The organization is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors led by co-founder and Board President Steve Gehlen. For more information, visit <http://keepingthearts.org/>

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