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PRESS RELEASE

Alameda County Arts Commission announces eight recipients of the 2017 Alameda County Arts Leadership Award

Alameda County Board of Supervisors Commends Award Recipients on Tuesday, September 26, 2017

(Oakland, CA) – The Alameda County Arts Commission is pleased to recognize eight individuals for their achievements and contributions impacting the arts community and residents of Alameda County. The recipients of the 2017 Alameda County Arts Leadership Award are the following listed by the Supervisorial District they represent: Denny Stein and Mary Bobik (team), Carol Zilli, Ami Ferreira, Greg Morozumi and Elena Serrano (team), Catherine Ndungu-Case, and Joyce Gordon,

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors will commend these eight individuals during the Board’s public meeting on Tuesday, September 26, 10:45am at the Alameda County Administration Building, Supervisor’s Chambers, 1221 Oak Street, 5th Floor, Oakland. This event is presented in conjunction with the County’s celebration of National Arts and Humanities Month of October.



Denny Stein and Mary Bobik (team) of Fremont, representing Supervisorial District One: Working as co-leaders of the Fremont Art Association, Denny Stein is the president and Mary Bobik is the vice-president and gallery director. The Fremont Art Association operates as the oldest cooperative art gallery, working studio, and shop in Fremont. The Association presents monthly artist demonstrations, feature artist showcases, annual events, and art classes for all ages and provides the opportunity for community members to create and appreciate art in a welcoming and friendly atmosphere. Fremont Art Association has over 150 active members from throughout Fremont and the surrounding areas in Alameda County. Denny and Mary work together as a dedicated and effective team enriching the lives of the community members of Fremont and Alameda County. Additionally, Denny

served as president of the board of directors of the Child, Family & Community Services organization, and Mary is a volunteer at Don Edwards S.F. Bay National Wildlife Refuge located in Fremont.



Carol Zilli of Fremont, representing Supervisorial District One: Carol Zilli is the founder and executive director of Music for Minors II in Fremont, which will be celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2018. Each year, Music for Minors II provides music enrichment for almost 5,000 elementary school students in 30 public schools throughout Fremont as well as other areas of south and east Alameda County. The organization's mission is to nurture children's love and literacy of music. The program includes engaging vocal and instrumental music lessons as well as performance opportunities for children at school sites and on professional stages in the community. Carol uses her rich experience as a piano player, piano teacher, and choir director to lead the organization while also serving as the teacher trainer for the adult volunteers who become Music for Minors II music docents.



Ami Ferreira of Fremont, representing Supervisorial District Two: Ami Ferreira (also known as Tsunami) is an arts educator and cultural diplomat with All The Way Live Foundation in Hayward. She is also a member of the Soulshifter artistry collective and world-renowned dance crew "Circle of Fire." Ami is a national champion in classical ballet and lyrical dance and holds national and world titles in artistic roller skating. As an educator, Ami nurtures the freestyle dance movement locally at MVMNT studio and worldwide through performing, teaching, and judging competitions as well as mentoring at-risk youth. Ami is currently co-producer of the Bay Area House Dance Festival and recently completed a 50-foot long mural for the United Capoeira Arts organization in Hayward. In 2018, she will travel to Burma (Myanmar) through the Next Level USA cultural exchange program to work with underprivileged youth to promote conflict resolution through hip-hop music and dance.



Greg Morozumi and Elena Serrano (team) of Oakland, representing Supervisorial District Three: Greg Morozumi and Elena Serrano are the Principal Co-Founders of the EastSide Cultural Center located in the San Antonio District of Oakland. The EastSide Arts Alliance is an organization of artists, cultural workers, and community organizers of color to support a creative environment that improves the quality of life for local communities and advocates for progressive, systemic social change. Greg and Elena are both founding members of the 12-member EastSide Staff Collective that formed to present the first Malcolm X JazzArts Festival in 1999. The Malcolm X JazzArts Festival is currently in its 18th year of presenting world-class jazz free to the communities of the San Antonio District and Alameda County. EastSide Arts Alliance recently paid off the mortgage on their current multi-use site and has made history by being one of the only grassroots community cultural centers owned and operated by artists and organizers of color.



Catherine Ndungu-Case of Pleasanton, representing Supervisorial District Four: Catherine Ndungu-Case is the founder and CEO of Cheza Nami Foundation in Pleasanton. Cheza Nami (which means, “come play with me” in Swahili) was founded in 2011 to encourage young people’s appreciation of the rich culture of Africa through active exploration of African dance, drumming and play. Cheza Nami envisions a culturally diverse world where individuals of all ages can embrace the concept of global citizenship and understand the fundamental interconnectedness of all things. The programs teach children and remind adults that music, dance, and an open mind are essential ingredients for a beautiful life, where people of all backgrounds can reach across their differences to find a joyful common ground. The organization serves the Pleasanton School District as well as many other schools, community centers, libraries, and retirement homes in Pleasanton and East Alameda County.



Joyce Gordon of Oakland, representing Supervisorial District Five: Joyce Gordon is the founder and owner of Joyce Gordon Gallery in Oakland. The Joyce Gordon Gallery, now in its 14th year, exhibits art that reflects the social and cultural diversity of the Bay Area and international artists. The Gallery has hosted over 200 exhibitions and programmed events over the years including poetry, dance, theatre, lectures, and more. Joyce’s most recent accomplishments include establishing the Joyce Gordon Foundation of the Arts non-profit organization to build community through arts programming focusing on underserved youth. In August, the Foundation presented its 1st Annual Youth Art Festival which was co-organized by youth. The event celebrates the creativity of Oakland youth through a showcase of youth created and presented visual art, music, dance, poetry and more. This free festival drew over 500 community members to celebrate youth arts in downtown Oakland.

The Members of the Alameda County Arts Commission selected these individuals from a group of nominees submitted by the public. Award recipients were selected based on their achievements within the arts field and their contributions to the community. This annual program recognizes individuals or teams from each of the five Districts of the Board of Supervisors. This year, there was a tie-vote for the nominees in District 1 and two teams, each comprised of two people, were selected for District 1 and 3. Therefore, in total there are eight award recipients this year. For more information about the program or the award recipients, please contact the Alameda County Arts Commission at (510) 208-9646 or by email at artscommission@acgov.org

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