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PRESS RELEASE

Alameda County Arts Commission announces the recipients of the 2018 Alameda County Arts Leadership Award

Alameda County Board of Supervisors Commends Award Recipients on Tuesday, October 2, 2018

(Oakland, CA) – The Alameda County Arts Commission is pleased to recognize seven individuals for their achievements and contributions impacting the arts community and residents of Alameda County. The recipients of the 2018 Alameda County Arts Leadership Award are the following (listed by Supervisorial District): Paula Chenoweth and Mary Galde (team), Jonathan "Bionic" Bayani, Janet Koike, Gerald Thompson and Winifred Thompson (team), and Deborah Vaughan.

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors will commend these seven individuals during the Board's public meeting on Tuesday, October 2, 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.



Supervisorial District One

Paula Chenoweth and Mary Galde, of Fremont, are the award recipients for the First District of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Paula Chenoweth and Mary Galde are the co-founders and co-directors of Broadway West Theatre in Fremont. For 21 years, they produced shows enjoyed by the local community. Each annual season included six full productions, as well as shorts plays and stage readings in the summers.

The shows were wide-ranging and included dramas, comedies, murder mysteries, and musicals. Paula and Mary were involved in every aspect of the organization— acting in and directing shows, designing and painting sets, and managing all elements of the productions and the organization. Along with established actors, local young talent and students were in many productions. The organization won many local awards. Paula and Mary's Broadway

West Theatre was a welcoming and vibrant arts organization for the community. In June 2018, Paula and Mary closed Broadway West Theatre to retire and begin a new phase of their lives.



Supervisorial District Two

Jonathan "Bionic" Bayani, of Fremont, is the award recipient for the Second District of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Jonathan "Bionic" Bayani is a dancer, performing artist, arts educator, and event organizer with Mighty4 Arts Foundation in Union City and All The Way Live in Hayward. He works and performs throughout the Bay Area and beyond.

Jonathan's work advances the artistry of dance and empowers youth. Jonathan has provided free dance workshops and lectures focused on youth and Hip Hop dance arts with the goal of mentoring young dancers and sharing their passion for dance. Jonathan's dance work spans over two decades. He is an international touring artist and a world-class champion competitor at international dance competitions since 1998. His talent and experience enabled him to have a very successful career in the entertainment industry. One of his biggest accomplishments was as a premier character in Cirque Du Soleil's Michael Jackson Immortal World Tour. Jonathan traveled the globe for four years in this role. Jonathan currently works as an international artist, sharing his passion for dance and creative expression with the world.



Supervisorial District Three

Janet Koike, of the City of Alameda, is the award recipient for the Third District of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Janet Koike is the founder and artistic director of Rhythmix Cultural Works in the City of Alameda. As an accomplished Taiko Drummer, Janet has long had a vision to bring people together through culture and the arts. Janet opened Rhythmix in June 2007 as Alameda's only visual and performing arts community center with a beautiful 150-seat

theater, art gallery and multipurpose classroom facilities. Rhythmix brings people of all ages together to experience and explore music, dance, visual art and cultural education opportunities. Janet curates the K Gallery presenting seven art exhibitions annually, as well as free artist lectures. Koike's outreach efforts include providing free cultural arts performances for East Bay schools, sponsoring community fundraising efforts, and offering performances by Rhythmix artists at business mixers, street fairs, and other local events. Rhythmix has grown over the past 11 years to become the leading provider of arts programming in the City of Alameda. Through its "Love Our Island Art Walk" program, public art, storefront art installations, and music performances Rhythmix enhances Alameda's historic downtown area. In 2016, Janet launched "Island City Waterways" a series of multidisciplinary site-specific free public art events that celebrate Alameda's waterfront history.



Supervisorial District Four

Gerald Thompson and Winifred Thompson, of Castro Valley, are the award recipients for the Fourth District of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Gerald (Gerry) Thompson and Winifred (Winnie) Thompson are arts community leaders who have worked with A.R.T., Inc. in Castro Valley, the Hayward Arts Council, and many other arts and cultural organizations throughout the area. Gerry and Winnie encourage and support local artists and arts organizations to help enrich the whole community. They are also both visual artists and exhibit their paintings at many local venues. In 2015, Gerry and Winnie became board members of A.R.T., Inc. where they work closely with the Adobe Art Center in Castro Valley to help coordinate the annual Members' Show and the annual Area Artists' Juried Exhibition. Since 2015, Winnie has served as the A.R.T., Inc. vice-president of events. Together, Gerry and Winnie plan and coordinate free artist demonstrations at the Adobe Art Center. For many years, Winnie has empowered community members to write their own life stories which she shares through her self-published series titled "My Name is America." From 2014-2016, Gerry was A.R.T., Inc.'s gallery curator of the Baywood Court Community Center. Gerry and Winnie are also long-time board members of Hayward Arts Council and in 2016, they served as the Council's co-presidents. They were an instrumental part of Hayward Arts Council's move to its new home at the Hayward Adult School. In 2017, Gerry and Winnie were recipients of the Ruby Hearts of Hayward Award for their service to arts and the community.



Supervisorial District Five

Deborah Vaughan, of Oakland, is the award recipient for the Fifth District of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Deborah Vaughan is the co-founder and artistic director of Dimensions Dance Theater in Oakland. The company recently celebrated its 45th anniversary. Deborah has traveled, studied and explored traditional dance in West Africa, Zimbabwe, Cuba, Brazil, Congo and throughout the Caribbean. Deborah founded Rites of Passage and Dimensions Extensions in 1993, a comprehensive educational outreach program serving youth ages 8-18 years throughout the East Bay. Students learn traditional styles of movement and contemporary forms. Through years of collaborative effort, Dimensions is known for bringing many artists together in creative partnerships, linking choreography, storytelling with the visual arts, theater, and music. Deborah brings to the stage both conceptual material and a point of view, that takes the experience of Africans and African-Americans to a new frontier by blending contemporary influences with the deep and vital traditions of the past. Deborah Vaughan received The Oakland Indies Pillar Award in 2016 and The Della Davidson Prize in 2017.

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 Alameda County Board of Supervisors. 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.

Photo Credit Note: Photo of Paula Chenoweth and Mary Galde courtesy of Tri-City Voice Newspaper, Fremont.

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