

**For:** IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Nov. 28, 2023

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## **ARTSNOW ANNOUNCES ARTS*FORWARD* GRANT RECIPIENTS AND AWARDS NEARLY \$450,000**

**Akron, Ohio (Nov. 28, 2023)**- ArtsNow, the backbone agency for Summit County's arts and culture sector, is thrilled to announce its awarded nearly \$450,000 to the grant recipients of *ArtsForward*, its first regranting program dedicated to advancing and implementing the [Akron/Summit Cultural Plan](#).

*ArtsForward* was launched thanks to the generous support of philanthropic partners such as Akron Community Foundation, Burton D. Morgan Foundation, GAR Foundation, and Knight Foundation, *ArtsForward* is committed to supplying the necessary resources to bolster the Akron/Summit Cultural Plan's [ten key priorities](#), as determined through input from stakeholders, residents, and visitors in our communities.

From free community jazz concerts to a project that explores the journey of the Bhutanese refugee crisis, *ArtsForward* is honored to be championing programs and projects throughout Summit County that align with the collective impact of the Akron/Summit Cultural Plan. The program's primary goal is to uplift the community while continuing to advance the Cultural Plan's essential priorities.

One of the grant recipients, J. Travis, is on a mission to transform the traditional art class into a powerful tool to alleviate stress and anxiety through her project, Assuage HER. "Our classes are tailored to create a safe and supportive environment for women, with a special emphasis on women of color—empowering them with a creative outlet to express themselves," states Travis. "This funding makes it possible for me to hire a team that shares my passion for using art to promote mental health and well-being to the community members of Summit County. Your contribution to *ArtsForward* will help to support the artists that uplift and enrich our communities."

### ***The 2023 ArtsForward Grant Recipients, as chosen by the ArtsForward Committee:***

**Angry Cow Poetry in the Rialto Living Room**  
Keith Allison, \$2,000

**Music for All**  
Eri Snowden-Rodriguez, \$5,000

**Morgan Park Mural**  
Akron Parks Collaborative, \$8,000

**Branding the Downtown Barberton Arts and Entertainment District**  
Main Street Barberton, \$9,840

**Peninsula Art Academy 20th Anniversary –Building for the Future**  
Peninsula Art Academy, \$10,000

**Say It Loud**  
Millennial Theatre Project, \$10,000

**Therapeutic Theater**  
Makeshift Theater, Inc., \$14,594

**Dynamite Duos, dancers with disabilities program**  
ArtSparks, \$15,000

**West Akron Through Time**  
Tyron Hoisten, \$15,000

**Proyecto Letras: Literary Voices of Akron Youth**  
Proyecto RAÍCES, \$16,250  
*Funded in partnership with Summit County ADM Board*

**WORKSHOP**  
Micah Kraus, \$17,337

**The Accessibility Library**  
\$20,000  
*Funded in partnership with Summit DD*

**Assuage HER**  
J. Travis, \$25,000  
*Funded in partnership with County of Summit Executive's Office, Community Development Block Grant Funds*

**Bipolar Butterfly Unify**  
Kimmy Henderson, \$25,000  
*Funded in partnership with Summit County ADM Board*

**Community Paste Up Wall**  
Collide Cuyahoga Falls, \$20,000

**Qu in Recovery**  
QuTheatr, \$20,000

**“We do it for the Water”**  
The Lippman School, \$20,000  
*Funded in partnership with County of Summit Executive's Office*

**Skin Color**  
Althea Jones, \$21,400

**Reflection Series**

The Chameleon Village Theatre Collective, \$24,500

**Ghosts in the Magic City**

Magical Theatre Company, \$25,000

**Artist Advancement: Unleashing Creativity, Self-Care, and Inclusive Leadership**

Center for Applied Theatre and Active Culture, \$25,000

**The Nightlight Website Rebuild and Accessibility Initiative**

The Nightlight Cinema, \$25,000

**Helping Artists Thrive: "Artist Care" Services**

Summit Artspace, \$25,000

**Creative Aging Institute at the Akron Art Museum**

Akron Art Museum, \$25,000

**Shadows to Light: Revealing Bhutanese Refugee Resilience**

Center for Applied Theatre and Active Culture, \$25,000

To learn more about the *ArtsForward* recipients and their projects, click [here](#).

Nicole Mullet, Executive Director of ArtsNow, remarks on the significance of the funding: "The backing of *ArtsForward* stands as a testament to the dedication of the artists, staff, volunteers, and community members who conceived and are actively implementing the Cultural Plan. Arts and culture play a vital role in the growth and vibrancy of our Summit County communities, and we are thrilled to collaborate with and serve our region as stewards of these resources."

To amplify the impact, Knight Foundation has pledged a \$1 million match. Nicole explains, "Knight has committed to matching our fundraising efforts up to 1 million dollars over four years. Annually, as we raise at least \$250,000, Knight Foundation will match it with an additional \$250,000. This means we have the potential to generate \$2 million over four years to enhance our community through arts and culture."

ArtsNow and its partners are asking Summit County residents, businesses, and philanthropic organizations to join them in this effort by donating toward the match. Every dollar you commit will be matched by Knight Foundation, up to \$1 million.

For more information on the Akron/Summit Cultural Plan or to donate to *ArtsForward*, please visit [artsnow.monkeypod.io/give/artsforward](https://artsnow.monkeypod.io/give/artsforward).

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**Akron/Summit Cultural Plan** A cultural plan is a living document intended to examine and strengthen the soul of a community through the exploration of arts, humanities, culture, natural resources, and heritage throughout all neighborhoods of Akron. Learn more at [akronculturalplan.com](https://akronculturalplan.com).

**ArtsNow** works to leverage the arts and culture in Summit County to support and strengthen the region's economic and social vibrancy. Learn more at [ArtsNow.org](https://ArtsNow.org)