

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Jen Swan; 716-362-8389 x510

**Arts Services Initiative of Western New York awards $118,440 in “DEC” grants**

**to artists and organizations in Erie and Niagara Counties**

*New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization Program source of funds*

Arts Services Initiative of Western New York (ASI), in partnership with the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2016 **Decentralization (DEC)** grant programs. Fifty-five organizations and artists in Erie and Niagara Counties will receive a total of $118,440 for community and school-based based arts and cultural programs taking place in 2016.

This will be the fourth year ASI distributes these funds to Erie and Niagara Counties. “This year we were pleased to receive an increase of funds to distribute to the applicants in our region through the New York State Council on the Arts” said DEC Coordinator and ASI Associate Director Jennifer Swan. “This increase in grant funding allowed us to fund more emerging artists and projects than ever before.” The increased amount for DEC and other NYSCA funding was part of ASI’s statewide advocacy efforts as part of the ArtsNYS coalition.

ASI administers the Decentralization Grant program with funds provided by the New York State Council on the Arts. The Decentralization (DEC) program was founded in 1977 following the mandate of the State Legislature to encourage increased participation at the local level in the state's cultural funding process. The purpose of the DEC program is to foster continued development of local cultural resources responsive to community cultural needs. DEC support enables emerging artists and organizations to grow professionally and enhance the cultural climate in communities and neighborhoods where they live and operate.

The DEC program has three funding categories: **Community Arts**, **Arts Education**, and **Individual Artist Commissions**.

* The **Community Arts Grant** is a competitive arts grant that provides financial and technical assistance for community-based arts activities offered by eligible nonprofit organizations and/or individual artists with qualified partners in Erie and Niagara Counties.
* The **Arts Education Grant** is a competitive arts grant that provides financial and technical assistance to cultural organizations and/or individual artists to support arts education projects in K-12 public school and publicly funded charter school settings in Erie and Niagara Counties. These grants support the role that local cultural organizations and/or individual artists play in engaging K-12 students in rich artistic learning experiences.
* The **Individual Artist Commission** is a grant intended to support the creation of new work that engages the community through the artists’ creative process. Artists residing in Erie and Niagara Counties are eligible to apply for this grant for community-based projects. The goal of this grant is to support the creative work of individual artists in all disciplines while encouraging interaction between artists and community members to highlight the role of the artist as a community resource.

The 2016 recipients are:

**Erie County Community Arts & Arts Education Grant Recipients**

710 Main Theater – “Out of Bounds (An Anti-Bullying Initiative)”

The Belle Center (Erie Regional Housing Development Corporation) – “Afro-Caribbean Roots II”

Blasdell Recreation Department – “2016 Summer Concert Series”

Blues Society of Western New York – “Buffalo Niagara Blues Festival”

Brazen-Faced Varlets – “6×8″

Buffalo Game Space – “Introduction to Game Development Workshop Series”

Buffalo Niagara Choirs – “Affirmation of Hope: All Things Irish”

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy/Friends of the Japanese Garden – “2016 Cherry Blossom Festival”

Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus – “High School Affiliate Program”

Chestnut Ridge Conservancy – “Artify Chestnut Ridge”

Dreamland Arts – “Dreamland Presents: Neo-futuristic Buffalo”

The Foundry – “Community Mural Making Pilot”

Friends of the Burchfield Nature and Art Center – “2016 BNAC Summer Concert Series & Festivals in the Park”

Group Ministries – “Jefferson Avenue Arts Festival”

Holland Community Choir – “Spring and Christmas Productions”

Ani Hoover (with Buffalo Public Schools) – “Craft Art Field Day – Arts in Education Program”

Impact Artists Gallery – “Peace Project”

Juneteenth Festival – “Arts and Culture Stage/Entertainment Stage”

Lancaster Opera House – “Lend Me a Tenor”

Learning Disabilities Association of WNY/Starlight Studios – “Starlight Artists Engage the Arts Community”

Moving Miracles (Suburban Adult Services) – “Moving Miracles performance project”

Northwest Buffalo Community Center – “Artscapade WNY”

O’Connell & Company Productions – “Breast in Show – A Theatrical Performance and Awareness Raising Event”

Old First Ward Community Association – “Participatory Experimental Music Workshops for Untrained Musicians”

People Inc. – “Momentum WNY Choir”

Project Grant/Tina Dillman – “2016 Project Grant Summer Programming”

Red Blazer Men’s Chorus (Amherst Male Glee Club) – “Senior Citizen Holiday Concert Series”

Red Thread Theatre – “Louisiana Bacchae”

Fotini Galanes Renzoni (with Park School of Buffalo) – “Mark Making Planet Earth”

Dave Ruch (with Forest Elementary School) – “A Mule Named Sal – Erie Canal History Through Music”

Claire Ellen Schneider (with City Honors School) – “Conceptualizing a Pavilion for Forgotten Skies”

Springville Youth Inc. – “Springville Shake”

Subversive Theatre Collective – “The Mark of Cain”

Sugar City – “Make Meaning: An Outside the Box Exhibition Series”

Annette Daniels Taylor (with Frederick Law Olmsted School) – “Wall-Paper Poems: The History Series”

Town of Boston – “2016 Summer Concert Series”

Town of Brant – “Brant Monday Night FREE Summer Concerts”

Town of Elma – “2016 Summer Concert Series”

University District Community Development Association – “Bailey Avenue Mural Series”

West Buffalo Charter School – “The Young Muralist Project”

Wooden Cities – “Composing Graphic Music with Wooden Cities”

**Niagara County Community Arts & Arts Education Grant Recipients**

Artpark & Company – “Earthsong”

Harmonia Chamber Singers (with Niagara Falls High School) – “Choral Workshop & Concert with Harmonia Chamber Singers and Dr. Steven Sametz”

Lewiston Council on the Arts – “3D Chalk Artist Residency”

Lock City Glee Club – “50th Year Concert Series”

Lockport Chorale – “Spring Concert: Songs from Around the World”

Niagara Falls Historic Preservation Society – “Niagara’s Legacy Tour & Docent Training Program”

Opportunities Unlimited of Niagara – “The Fabric of Our Lives – Our Homes, Back Yards, and Communities”

Sanborn Area Historical Society – “Native American Dancers”

United Cerebral Palsy Association of Niagara County (EMPOWER) – “Spectrum Theater Program”

Western Door Playhouse – “Chucky’s Universe”

**Individual Artist Commission Grant Recipients**

**Niagara County:**

Michelle Marcotte – “Dinner – Goodness and Plenty” (Visual – Oil Painting on Canvas)

Chuck Tingley – “Painting Spectacular” (Painting)

**Erie County:**

Ani Hoover – “Craft Art Field Day – the Exhibit” (Fine Art/Craft)

Joy Scime – “Dissonance” (Literary Arts/Play)

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