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ARTS AND CULTURE No. 20-007

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PRESS RELEASE

May 5, 2020

**COUNTY ANNOUNCES COVID-19 RELIEF GRANT FOR
ARTS AND CULTURE NONPROFITS**

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – In recognition of the nonprofit arts and culture industry’s essential contribution to Santa Barbara County’s economy and community identity, the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission, Santa Barbara Foundation, and Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation are partnering on a new COVID-19 Relief Grant Program for arts and culture nonprofits. More than \$75,000 will be disbursed in two cycles to support county arts and culture nonprofits impacted by COVID-19.

The application is available at sbac.ca.gov/county-grants. Submissions are due by May 24, 2020. The County Office of Arts and Culture will host an online grant workshop for interested applicants at 3 p.m. Wednesday, May 13.

Funding for the COVID-19 Relief Program is provided through the Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation lease agreement where 50 cents from every ticket sold goes into a fund for arts and culture grants. Additionally, the Santa Barbara Foundation contributed \$25,000 to help increase the scope and impact of the program, which is intended to help arts and culture organizations with general operating expenses, including staff and facilities support. The grant is stewarded by the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission and administered by the County Office of Arts and Culture.

“Arts and culture are the heart of our community,” said Jackie Carrera, President and CEO of the Santa Barbara Foundation. “This collaboration aims to provide relief and support to arts and cultural organizations as they navigate through this pandemic. We are thrilled to partner with the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission to offer this program.”

Support is designated for nonprofit arts and culture organizations working to produce, promote and preserve arts and culture in Santa Barbara County. Applicants must have an annual operating budget under \$1 million.

Arts Commission Chair Dennis Smitherman said, “We are so fortunate to live in a place with such incredible arts and culture spaces. Hopefully this grant can help keep their doors and businesses open.”

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NEW COVID-19 RELIEF GRANT FOR COUNTY ARTS AND CULTURE NONPROFITS

Santa Barbara County holds the largest relative number of arts and culture nonprofits per capita in California. In 2016, the County partnered with the City of Santa Barbara to commission Americans for the Arts and the Office of Arts and Culture to conduct an economic impact study. The 93 arts and culture nonprofit participants generated almost \$200 million, supporting 5,857 full-time equivalent jobs and directly contributing \$4.6 million in local government revenue.

“We hope this funding will help support organizations in a critical way so they can continue to provide their exceptional services to communities in need,” said Karen Kerns, Vice Chair of the Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation. “The Santa Barbara Bowl believes in the power of the arts to transform lives. During difficult times, people turn to the arts as a way to heal and come together.”

Additional contributions to this relief program have already been pledged by the Santa Maria Arts Council and private donors. The second cycle will also include a program intended to keep artists working during this time. To learn more about this relief effort and program, please visit sbac.ca.gov.

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About the Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation:

The Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation is a respected funder and partner in performing arts education for the greater Santa Barbara area. Their mission is to ensure that everyone has access to music — whether by playing or by listening. In addition to hosting concerts, the Bowl invests in future artists and audiences by supporting performing arts education for youth through the Education Outreach initiative.

About the Santa Barbara Foundation:

The Santa Barbara Foundation, the largest community foundation in the region and the county’s go-to resource for investment and capacity-building, strives to mobilize and elevate all residents to thrive. Nearly every Santa Barbara County nonprofit organization and essential community project has been supported by the Foundation during its 92-year history.

The Foundation is working to improve areas that affect quality of life in Santa Barbara County including childcare, workforce development, and workforce housing. The Foundation connects those who give with those in need - and all who dream of stronger communities. To learn more, please visit SBFoundation.org.

About the Santa Barbara County Office of Arts & Culture:

As the State-Local Partner of the California Arts Council, the SBCOAC serves as the regional governmental umbrella for arts and culture projects and programs within Santa Barbara County. A division of the County’s Community Services Department, the office represents a longstanding partnership between the County of Santa Barbara and the City of Santa Barbara. For more than 30 years, both governments have shared resources and staff to maximize support for Santa Barbara arts and culture institutions, programs, initiatives and projects. For more information, visit www.sbac.ca.gov.