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## **Business Council for the Arts announces 8 members of its Leadership Arts Institute Collin and Denton Counties Class of 2021**

**Collin and Denton Counties** – A cultural and civic minded group of business and nonprofit leaders have been selected from a diverse cross-section of industries to participate in Leadership Arts Institute's Collin and Denton Counties Class of 2021, a keystone program of BCA that has contributed more than 1,300 graduates over its 30 plus year history.

Leadership Arts Institute began with its first cohort in 1989 as the first program of Business Council for the Arts, an organization founded by Raymond D. Nasher and other Dallas leaders in 1988 to develop the next generation of business and arts leaders invested in supporting the arts in North Texas.

As Katherine Wagner, BCA CEO recently said "Now, more than ever, arts nonprofits need innovative and informed board leaders from our business community."

This year's class members will join over 1,300 graduates who are committed to fostering arts and culture in our communities. Leadership Arts Institute has matched graduates to more than 170 nonprofit organizations' boards of directors in North Texas, across the U.S. and internationally.

The nine-month program has begun virtually this year due to the pandemic but will move to in-person classes once safety can be assured for all participants. Class sessions are filled with innovative, engaging material that include seminars led by expert speakers, introduction to a variety of arts and culture venues, collaborative activities that showcase both visual and performing arts, and an annual project that serves as a practicum to further supplement understanding of the best practices for nonprofit board of directors members and knowledge of current issues affecting cultural institutions in North Texas.

**Class Members of the Leadership Arts Institute Dallas Class of 2021 are as follows:**

Lisa Bethea – Visit Frisco

Andrea Davis – Dallas Art Therapy

Malcolm Frierson – The Malcolm Frierson Foundation

Weeda Hamdan – Education Unbound

Amy Pagan – City of Plano

Charmaine Solomon – My Possibilities

Jared Thornton – Capital One/ JLL

Kelly Trager – KKT Law

**Display Quotes from Leadership Arts Institute Class of 2020 Graduates:**

Antonio Carr- American Airlines- “Leadership Arts was an eye opening experience that provided exposure to the North Texas arts ecosystem and demonstrated the value of creative industries and arts programming in our community. I would highly recommend LAI to anyone interested in developing the skills necessary to be a leader in the arts community.”

Jhubin Moghaddamfar- Frost Bank- “Leadership Arts Institute is a great way to bring the business community together to support the city we all love so much. Our vibrant arts community needs our help more than ever, and it’s an honor to be able to support the arts.”