



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 19, 2020

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LEADERSHIP ARTS INSTITUTE GRADUATES CLASS OF 2020

COLLIN/DENTON COUNTIES—Sixteen Collin and Denton Counties professionals graduated May 21 in preparation for board positions in North Texas arts organizations, all under the aegis of the Business Council for the Arts (BCA) Leadership Arts Institute (LAI). For 32 years the Institute has been training emerging and accomplished business professionals in leadership, nonprofit board best practices, and understanding of critical issues affecting arts and cultural institutions throughout this region.

The Institute was founded by the late Dallas philanthropist and global art collector Raymond D. Nasher, NorthPark Center developer who believed “every company has a special responsibility to enrich the lives of its community. It should serve as a catalyst to link art and business for the benefit of all.”

Bringing Public Art to Frisco

To engender greater financial support for North Texas artists, as well as new opportunities for them to display their art, the Class of 2020 raised more than \$4,000 and partnered with the City of Frisco and the Frisco Economic Development Corporation to commission Frisco artist Zahra Jahanyfard to create a 150-square-foot mural for Frisco’s popular Frisco Discovery Center. The colorful mural celebrates the healing power of art, especially in this time of the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Class officers leading the project included Brad Sharp of Sharp Creative and Kamal Bansi of the Jesuit Dallas Museum, co-chairs; Craig Barber, Plano Symphony Orchestra board president, treasurer; and Delancy McKinley of Cigna/Express Scripts, secretary. In total, class members represented American Airlines, PepsiCo, Museum of the American Railroad, McKinney Arts Commission, Evita Tezeno Fine Arts, Inc., the University of North Texas, and Indique/Arathi School of Dance.

A Nine-month Leadership Program

Over the course of nine months class members heard from more than 30 arts and cultural community speakers. Additionally, the class attended six venue sessions before transitioning to virtual presentations because of the Covid-19 health crisis. Venues

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included North Texas Performing Arts, the Crayola Experience at Willow Bend, Jamatkhana, ArtCentre of Plano, and My Possibilities educational center.

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An Eye-opening Experience

Class member Kristin Ratterree of PepsiCo summed up her LAI experience by saying, “Attending LAI opened my eyes to a larger world of art. I have always been in the bubble of creative arts such as painting, drawing and photography. But I didn’t explore other arts such as music and dance. This was a wonderful experience that enabled me to become more immersed in the cultural climate of North Texas and the world.”

Business Council for the Arts CEO Katherine Wagner and Founder’s Chair Nancy Nasher presided over graduation ceremonies.

Class of 2021 Leadership Arts Institute Application Deadline: July 31, 2020

BCA is now accepting applications for a limited number of positions in the LAI Class of 2021 for both Dallas and Collin/Denton Counties. For more information, please visit <http://ntbca.org/lai/> or contact Chelsea Holmes, Program Director, at 972.991.8300, Ext. 605.

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