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ArtsWave Hires New Community Investments Executive

CINCINNATI (March 9, 2019) – ArtsWave, the region's engine for the arts, welcomes Ray Gargano to its leadership team, as Vice President of Community Investments. Gargano will lead the grantmaking process for the nation's largest community arts campaign and the region's major source of local arts funding, made possible by tens of thousands of donors through the annual ArtsWave Campaign. Working closely with businesses, civic and arts stakeholders, Gargano will help ArtsWave advance its 10-year Blueprint for Collective Action.

Gargano comes to ArtsWave from the City of Sacramento's arts and culture department, where he most recently was Grant Programs Officer, advancing cultural diversity, equity, inclusion and access initiatives and managing the distribution of \$20M in CARES Act funding. Gargano has Ohio roots, as a Cleveland native with experience at Playhouse Square, as well as Southwest Ohio experience, teaching at Miami University and working at Victoria Theatre Association, now a part of Dayton Live.

ArtsWave President & CEO Alecia Kintner welcomes Ray to the team at an important time. "Ray's experience as an arts grantmaker and relationship-builder is just what ArtsWave needs right now. He will increase our capacity to support arts organizations and artists that play a critical role in the region's economic restart and return to vibrancy."

Gargano holds a B.S. in Communications in Education from Kent State University and an M.A. in Instructional Technology from the University of Akron. He has recently relocated to downtown Cincinnati.

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About ArtsWave:

ArtsWave, a nonprofit serving the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky Region, is the engine for the arts. Its roots stem back to the late 1920s when the Cincinnati Taft family provided initial investment matched by community support. In the late 1940s, it evolved to become the first united arts fund in the nation and in the mid-1970s, the first organization to initiate workplace giving for the arts. ArtsWave continues to innovate while leading, as illustrated by its No. 1 rank nationally in community arts fundraising; coordination of a sector-wide Blueprint for Collective Action; piloting of new technologies to maximize arts engagement; and development of resources for the arts.

Strong funding for the arts has allowed Cincinnati's arts and culture scene to become a national draw and regional asset, creating a wave of economic and community benefits. Each year, ArtsWave supports the work of over 100 arts organizations, school outreach programs, festivals, community centers, neighborhoods and various collaborations through impact-based grants. In 2020, ArtsWave amassed \$13+ million for the arts, through a combination of its 2020 Campaign and a separate Arts Vibrancy Recovery Fund, designed to ensure the solvency and a vibrant return of the region's arts assets in the wake of the unprecedented health and economic crisis.

ArtsWave is focused on helping the Cincinnati Region's arts sector weather the coronavirus crisis. The region's arts sector has an economic impact of more than \$300 million annually and includes more than 225 organizations throughout Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky and Southeastern Indiana that employ 10,000 individuals as artists, performers and staff. The sector was hit at the onset of the coronavirus crisis, when venue and performance closures were announced in early March. ArtsWave has accelerated \$2.4 million in grant payments for 43 organizations which receive operating revenues, expanded its \$10,000 Working Capital Bridge Loans for eligible arts organizations, and has provided Emergency Arts & Culture Organization grants to 47 organizations. It's also administered \$3,700,000 in relief funds at the federal, county and city level to arts organizations and artists. The 2021 ArtsWave Campaign kicked off in mid-February and is actively running. The public can help fund the Campaign and additional, evolving efforts at artswave.org/give.