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2025 ArtsWave Campaign Resilient, Raises \$12.3 Million for the Region's Arts

Embargoed until 6 p.m., May 20, 2025

CINCINNATI (May 20, 2025) — ArtsWave announced our community has given \$12.3 million for the region's arts during its 2025 Campaign, demonstrating remarkable resilience in a year marked by economic and funding uncertainty in the arts. At the same celebration event, next year's 2026 Campaign Chair was also announced.

2025 Campaign Chair Mel Gravely, Executive Chair of Triversity, shared the news with arts organizations, donors, and civic and business leaders at a celebration held Tuesday evening at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. During the event, business leaders comprising Gravely's Campaign Cabinet were recognized for their efforts in fundraising for the arts.

Of the campaign results, Gravely noted that "Through economic ups and downs, political changes, and global uncertainties, ArtsWave has remained the steady force behind our vibrant arts community for nearly 100 years. This year, our community has once again demonstrated its extraordinary commitment. This achievement reflects the Cincinnati region's understanding that a vibrant arts sector is not an 'extra,' but an 'essential.'"

ArtsWave saw continued success with its "Leaders for Cincy Arts" initiative for new and increased gifts of \$5,000+, with 205 business executives and community leaders participating in its second year. "The strong response from our business community shows that Cincinnati's leaders recognize the critical connection between our region's arts and its economic prosperity," said Gravely.

Alecia Kintner, President and CEO of ArtsWave, thanked Gravely while announcing that the 2026 ArtsWave Campaign will be chaired by James Zimmerman, partner-in-charge of the Taft Cincinnati office and long-time ArtsWave Board member. Kintner noted, "Mel has led this campaign with extraordinary vision during a challenging year. As we

welcome James to chair the 2026 campaign, we're confident his leadership will help us continue building momentum as we approach our centennial anniversary in 2027."

Funds raised from the ArtsWave Campaign support 150+ arts organizations, projects, and artists via competitive grants, resulting in thousands of performances, exhibitions, public art projects, arts education programs, festivals and more for the region's residents and visitors. ArtsWave's investments also advance the sector's shared strategy to build the Cincinnati region's national reputation, deepen residents' roots in the region, enliven neighborhoods, bridge cultural divides and fuel creativity and learning through the arts.

This year saw significant growth in ArtsWave's "More Arts More Kids" initiative, which expanded to reach 15,000 students—triple last year's impact. Students from Cincinnati Public Schools, Catholic Inner-city Schools Education (CISE), and Ludlow Independent experienced performances at Cincinnati Ballet, Cincinnati Arts Association, The Cincinnati Children's Theatre, CSO Young People's Concerts and the Cincinnati Art Museum with further expansion planned for the coming school year.

The ArtsWave App also gained significant traction in its first year, with nearly 15,000 downloads and almost 400 daily users. "The app is the tool of the future, and we're just scratching the surface of what it can do," said Kintner. "It's becoming an essential platform for connecting our community with arts throughout the region." More information about the app can be found at artswave.org/app.

While the campaign concludes, Cincinnati's arts will be in the national spotlight soon with Americans for the Arts Convention, taking place June 12-14. The national gathering will bring arts leaders from across the country to Cincinnati, showcasing the region as a vibrant hub for the arts. The conference kicks off with a public celebration at The Banks, inviting the entire community to participate. The free 'Party at the Banks' will feature the return of fan-favorite BLINK installations, local food trucks, a drone show over the Ohio River, a mainstage music and fashion event hosted by Cincinnati's own Drew Lachey and featuring a surprise pop-up performance from a secret multi-platinum recording artist. Info at artswave.org/partyatthebanks.

Each year, ArtsWave relies on public gifts from thousands across the Cincinnati region to reach its goal for supporting the arts. As is the case every year, the total dollar amount announced includes contributions already received and reported, as well as projections for workplace campaigns that are ongoing through the summer.

Kintner added, "For those businesses and individuals who are still finishing their campaigns, please know that your gifts are essential. Our arts organizations need reliable funding more than ever before to plan the programs that transform our community. Together, we can create stronger arts for a stronger region."

Community-based fundraising through ArtsWave has been the primary way to fund the region's arts since 1927. Donations can still be made at artswave.org/give.

About ArtsWave

ArtsWave fuels the Cincinnati region's arts, supporting 150+ organizations, projects and artists each year. Since 1927, it has been the primary way the region funds the arts, raising millions annually from tens of thousands of individuals, businesses and foundations to drive a more vibrant economy and connected community. Through the Blueprint for Collective Action, ArtsWave strategically makes investments that maximize the arts' impact across the region. **To learn more and give, visit artswave.org.**