

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 41

Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after February 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Organization Name

CREC Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

060853106

Principal Contact Name

Alexa Melonopoulos Fleury

Title

Dance Chair

Email

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Phone

(860) 836-2241

Address

15 Vernon Street
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[Map It](#)

Website

<https://ghaahd.crecschools.org/>

Amount requested this application

\$5,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

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The mission of the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, a magnet public high school, is to bring together people of diverse cultural heritage and to develop in all students the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to reach their fullest artistic potential, to live a productive life, and to contribute to society as creative engaged citizens.

The Academy's vision states that "Every student can and shall learn at high levels and, therefore, must have access to high-level education resources."

Describe the diversity of your board.

CREC's mission is to work with boards of education and community-based organizations of the Capitol Region to improve the quality of public education. CREC serves over 35 public school districts through 150 educational programs. CREC is governed by the CREC Council and a 10-person Board of Directors. The CREC Council, includes 12 men, 2 men of color, 17 women and 4 women of color. The CREC Foundation Board is made up of 4 women, 1 woman of color, 4 men and 1 man of color.

Detail any changes since your last application.

Effective in 2019-20, the Half-day and Full-day Academy programs separated. Dance, Music, Musical Theater, Theater, Theater/Design/Production, and Visual Arts are offered in the Half-day program located at the Learning Corridor with classes running, Monday-Thursday, from 1-4:15pm. Returning to our roots of providing students with a unique conservatory model and preparing our students for professional careers in the arts has reinvigorated the half-day program and allowed us to continue as one of the premiere pre-college, pre-professional arts programs in the country.

Project Name

Choreographers' Showcase 2020

Project Description

Choreographers' Showcase is a one-of-a-kind performance that is an invaluable experience for young dancers. Students have the ability to work with professional artists whose work may include classical, modern, hip-hop, and post-modern genres. Choreographers impose a real-world performance model on students - an audition, a rigorous rehearsal schedule, and performances. Under normal circumstances students audition for guest artists in May, and choreographers are in residence for one week in August. Artists return in the fall to check on progress, technical/dress rehearsals, and performances. As we wait for guidance about safely return to school, we are gathering information from students, choreographers and faculty about an alternative audition and rehearsal schedules. We are in conversations with prospective choreographers navigating what is possible when restrictions regarding social distancing are lifted. More detailed information can be found in the attachments provided.

Project start/opening

08/03/2020

Project end/closing

10/24/2020

Project venue

Theater of the Performing Arts

Project town

Hartford, CT

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Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

The work is performed for one paying audience of 325–400 patrons with tickets priced from \$10 - \$20. The Academy presents a free matinee for high school students. The student performance includes a 15 -30 minute talk-back providing the audience with an opportunity to discuss the work. October, 2020 performances are scheduled as follows:

Thursday, October 22nd, 2:30pm Student Matinee, Anticipated Attendance: 400

Saturday, October 24th, 7:30pm Public Performance, Anticipated Attendance: 375

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

Press Releases to Hartford Courant and local papers; Press Release to regional weeklies highlighting the student participants that reside in their towns; Social Media Marketing via Facebook, Instagram, etc.; Online Calendar postings; Poster distribution to local businesses; Target marketing letter to institutions affiliated with central CT's elder population; Offer group/discount admission; Target marketing letter to dance studios; and posters distributed to College Dance Departments.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

The Roberts Foundation will be acknowledged in all print, media, and social media material listed above and will be publicly thanked prior to both to both performances.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

We are dedicated to providing a rigorous arts curriculum for high school students. Although any definition of Artistic Excellence is necessarily subjective, the Academy maintains that each Artist must cultivate their individual and unique voice to collaborate and to create in response to their lived experience. The Arts Academy evaluates excellence by asking the following questions:

- Integrity – Does the work honestly describe or communicate meaning about some aspect of an individual life and /or the life of the community?
- Intention – Is there a clear objective articulated in the work? If not, why not?
- Expression – How well does the work communicate an idea, a concept, a feeling or emotion?
- Craft – Does the work demonstrate a command of the medium of expression?
- Ensemble – How does the individual artist or performer fit into and collaborate with the larger community both in the sense of being part of a performance and a member of the community?

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

For students working in performance-based disciplines, is essential that studio and classroom activity be complemented by the intense concentration and collaboration required for public performance. Working as part of a group requires collaboration, fosters the development of ensemble, encourages community building, and provides opportunities for students to develop skills as team members, planners, creative thinkers, and problem solvers, all of which align with the Arts Academy mission.

Choreographers' Showcase is an immersive professional dance experience at the pre-professional level. The 2019-20 CS had significant tangible benefits for Academy dancers when Alumus Kyle McHargh's *The Space Between*, and the duet from Alwin Nikolais' *Mechanical Organ* (Staged by Alberto del Saz) were accepted for the Gala Concert of the National High School Dance Festival. Both pieces performed to an audience of close to 1,300 people at Pittsburgh's Byham Theater.

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How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

We believe that public performance presents a unique opportunity for both performer and audience to build community and nurture and cultivate relationships. Over the last few years, we have built wonderful relationships with the Hartt School's Dance Division, the Merce Cunningham Trust, Nikolais-Louis Foundation for Dance, Trinity College, the Judy Dworin Performance Project, University of Massachusetts Dance Department and the American Dance Legacy Initiative. We have been able to revisit these connections and mutually support one another through master classes, audience development and college recruitment for our students. In addition, we are one of few dance performances in the state to present historical dance works by major dance companies and legendary choreographers giving our audience an unique opportunity to see dance history come alive outside of New York.

How will this project be evaluated?

- Assessment of student participants by Arts Academy Dance instructors during the rehearsal period, as well as during and after the performances using rubrics designed to assess performers' understanding of movement, musicality, spatial and emotional awareness.
- Arts Academy Faculty Survey
- Student Survey and anecdotal responses
- Audience demographic data relating age groups and residence
- Observation of student audience – performer interaction during talk-backs after performances

Cover letter

- [CREC-Cover-Letter.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [CREC-Operational-Budget-2019-2020.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [CREC-Balance-Sheet-Report-2020.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [CREC-ProjectedBudgetChoreographersShowcase2020.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Annual report

- [CREC-Annual_Report_2019.pdf](#)

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Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Other materials?

- [CREC-NarrativeChoreographersShowcase2020.pdf](#)
- [CREC-PotentialChoreographerBios2020.pdf](#)
- [CREC-PROJECTED-BudgetChoreographersShowcase2019.pdf](#)
- [CREC-FINAL-BudgetChoreographersShowcase2019.pdf](#)

Please read detailed information regarding the unique aspects of Choreographers' Showcase that can be found in the attachment titled "CREC NarrativeChoreographersShowcase2020".

We were able to upload our final report narrative, but unable to include the additional materials - projected budget, final budget, poster and playbill. I have emailed these materials to the Foundation.

Please feel free to contact me if I have made any errors in the online application. I can be reached at afleury@crec.org or on my cell 860-836-2241.

Many, many thanks for your continued support of the arts in Hartford!

Alexa Melonopoulos Fleury

Dance Chair, CREC Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

Yes