

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 466**Are you a 501(c)3 organization in good standing with the IRS?**

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 August 1, 2025?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

No code received. Lisa is aware.

Organization Name

CREC Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts Half Day Program

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

204091009

Principal Contact Name

Alexa Melonopoulos Fleury

Title

Dance Chair

Emailafleury@crec.org**Phone**

(860) 757-6338

Address

15 Vernon Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
United States
[Map It](#)

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

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\$7,500.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

CREC Mission: Equity, excellence, and success for all through high-quality educational services.

The mission of the CREC Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, a magnet public high school program, 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.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

The Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) started in 1966 as a grassroots organization of local public school districts working together to solve common problems in education. CREC is a Regional Service Center (RESC) established under Connecticut Statute 10-66. Through this legislation the state permits local boards of education to support RESCs in providing high quality educational programs to local districts. CREC's mission is to work with boards of education and community based organizations to improve the quality of public education. CREC serves over 35 school districts through 150 educational programs and inter-district magnet schools. The Capitol Region Education Council is governed by the CREC Council (made up of Board of Education members from 35 central Connecticut school districts). The council meets six times each year. In addition, CREC has a 10-person Board of Directors elected by the CREC Council. Membership on the Board includes representation of small, medium, and large school districts. They meet 10 times a year, sets program direction and makes personnel and fiscal decisions.

The CREC Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts was founded in 1985, as one of the first inter-district Magnet Schools in Connecticut. It began as a half day program with an original mission as a resource for gifted and talented students in 9th-12th grades from 40 member districts with an interest in and affinity for the arts. The Academy relocated to the Learning Corridor campus in 2000 and became part of the State's efforts to address the requirements of the Sheff vs O'Neill lawsuit which articulated racial and socio-economic disparities inherent in State funded public education formulae. The Academy is a unique organization in central Connecticut: It is both an important educational resource serving a diverse regional population and an arts organization presenting multiple performances in theater, dance, music, and the visual arts to the larger community.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

Our program serves over 40 towns in the Hartford region providing us with a diverse population from varied geographical, social, economic, racial & ethnic populations. We expand the reach of work created in CS by performing pieces both locally and nationally. The breakdown of our most recent performance was as follows: 33.3% parents, 20% alumni, 20% family members/friends. 6.7% CREC employees, 6.7% members of the local dance community, 6.7% Hartford residents and 6.7% 'other'.

Describe your organization's governance.

CREC is governed by the CREC Council and a 10 person Board of Directors. The CREC Foundation was established in 2005 to support CREC's programs and its mission. The Foundation's board of directors meets 4 times a year. Members are required to attend at least 2 board meetings to remain in good standing. In September 2024, Dr. Sasha Douglas began her tenure as Superintendent. Director Kim Stroud retired after over 30 years of service. CREC hired Tracy Kane to take her place as the Director.

Please describe the diversity of your board by gender and ethnicity/race. Use percentages.

CREC is an intentionally diverse social justice organization whose members work to acknowledge, respect, and empathize with people of all different identifiers, such as race, socioeconomic status, gender identity, and expression, education, age, ability, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, language, nationality, and religion.

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There are currently 8 members of the CREC Foundation Board. The current breakdown is as follows: African American Males 37.5%, White Male 37.5%, and 25% White Female.

What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

The CREC Foundation Board is made of representation from sending school districts and community leaders who serve on a rotating basis. A list of board members and their tenure is attached to our application. Currently, 100% of our board volunteers a significant amount of time and 25% contribute financially. In education, it is common that members of the board volunteer their time rather than contribute financially. We feel fortunate that 25-70% of our board make contributions annually.

Project Name

Choreographers' Showcase 2025

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

Project Description

Choreographers' Showcase(CS) brings professional choreographers from New York, Connecticut and beyond, to work with Academy students in creating an evening of dynamic and varied dance pieces. Our guest artists bring unique aesthetics and their distinctive backgrounds to the project which inform, develop, and expand the students' artistic perspectives. Choreographers impart professional expectations and real-world experience to our unique pre-professional training program and prepare our students for professional careers in dance. The process includes an audition, a weeklong residency in August, a rigorous rehearsal schedule in the fall and performances in October. The project provides an exceptional opportunity for the participating dancers, student production staff, and the greater Hartford community to experience some of the highest quality dance performance in the region. 2025 guests include Pilobolus, Dance Heginbotham, Ballez, Justice Dance Performance Project and an alumni piece.

Total estimated project budget

\$25,722.00

Project start/opening

08/04/2025

Project end/closing

10/25/2025

Project venue

Theater of the Performing Arts, 359 Washington St, Hartford, CT 06106

Project town

Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

The performance is presented for one paying audience of 275– 350 and a free matinee performance for roughly 280 high school students. Ticket are \$5 for students/seniors and \$15 for adults. Cast and crew members are given 2 comp tickets. We

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have implemented a special “GHAA Hero” rate that allows people to add a donation to the cost of the ticket, this has served us well. We increase our audience reach with additional performances of pieces throughout the year both locally and nationally.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

We utilize press releases, Social Media, online calendar postings, local poster distribution, email invites, invites to dance studios, flyers, and information distributed to college programs and internal marketing to CREC employees. As our social media accounts grow we have also used digital ads and continue to gather information through our audience survey. We will continue to our efforts to get local press coverage, though this does appear to be a challenge.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

The Foundation’s support allows us to be one of the few dance projects to bring nationally and internationally celebrated choreographers to Hartford and the state. The Excellence in Arts grant also allow us to provide high school students with a truly unique dance experience by helping us fund artistic and production fees. Most importantly, allow us to create equitable opportunities for our students as there are no costs associated with the students’ participation in Choreographers' Showcase.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts Foundation will be acknowledged, and the Foundation’s logo prominently displayed, in all print, media and social media materials. The Foundation will also be thanked publicly at all performances. In addition, we speak to the students about the Roberts Foundation and your continued support. We feel it is an important learning opportunity for them to understand arts funding and grant applications and reporting.

What is your organization’s definition of artistic excellence?

We believe that “Every student can and shall learn at high levels and, therefore, must have access to high-level education resources.” We are dedicated to providing rigorous arts training through a comprehensive curriculum of 200+ arts courses specifically developed for high school students. Commitment to serious study of an art form is the expectation for all students who enroll in our program. To ensure that students reach their highest potential, they are placed in classes according to their skill and ability levels.

Although any definition of Artistic Excellence is 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 focusing on Integrity, Intention, Expression, Craft and Ensemble.

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

The demands, and benefits, of this immersive experience directly relate to our mission. CS helps our young artists foster the skills needed for college and professional level work and create a climate of professionalism which encourages all students to expand their technical knowledge and creative abilities as dancers. As a social justice institution our mission includes “bringing together people of diverse cultural heritage through the arts.” As a school we continue to celebrate diversity and to strive for equity in all that we do. To that end, we are mindful about offering opportunities to all of our students regardless of experience or background. And we include artists from all backgrounds and genres as we invite choreographers to participate in our showcase. We are committed to adding diversity of experience and dance genres to our program and to openly celebrate the accomplishments of underrepresented dancers.

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

As a community of artists, we know that public performance presents a unique opportunity for both performer and audience to build community. Choreographers’ Showcase brings people to our school and to Hartford so they may share in the rich artistic

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tradition of this program and hopefully inspire them to attend other arts and cultural events at the Academy.

Our student population comes from 40 towns in the greater Hartford area, presenting a unique opportunity to bring together families and the general public from varied geographical, social, economic, racial and ethnic populations. The Academy's location near the south end of Hartford also provides accessibility to a population that may find it difficult, for reasons both geographical and economic, to take advantage of cultural and artistic resources available to the Hartford community.

We remain proud to be one of the few institutions that brings choreographic work of this prestige and notoriety to Hartford audiences.

How will this project be evaluated?

We have had great success in utilizing surveys to help us assess each part of our process – auditions, rehearsals and performance. Student surveys give our dancers the ability to share their opinions in a way that allows them to be thoughtful and honest about their experience. We ask faculty to assess students during rehearsals and performances as they do in class. We also ask faculty to share their thoughts on aesthetic aspects of the performance, the artistic work of choreographers and the growth of our students. Observation of our student audience and performers during talk back after our matinee gives wonderful insight as well!

Audience surveys and data from our ticketing service has allowed us the ability to delve in to audience demographic and purchasing data. We are learning where audience is from, how they are connected to CS and how they heard about our performance. We are hopeful to use this information to increase our audience in the future.

Cover letter

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

Board list

- [CREC-Foundation-Board-Members-2024-2025-R.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [CREC-Foundation-501c3designationletter.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [CREC-Balance-Sheet-3.31.2025.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [CREC-2024-Audit.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [CREC-FY-2025-Operating-Budget-4.16.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [CREC-Balance-Sheet-3.31.20251.pdf](#)

Project budget

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- [CREC-CS-BUDGET-2025-Proposed.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Annual report

- [CREC-Annual-Report-2023-2024.pdf](#)

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Grant Report

- [CREC-Grantee-Reporting-Form-.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [CREC-Guest-Artist-Information-2025.pdf](#)

Thank you for your continued support of the Arts in Hartford.

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