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Theatre Communications Group Announces First Round of Audience (R)Evolution Grant Recipients

New York, NY –Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, is pleased to announce the first round of recipients for the Audience (R)Evolution grant program. Funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the **Audience (R)Evolution grant program** will award ten grants for a total amount of almost \$800,000, including total general operating support of over \$118,000, through two initiatives:

- **(Re)Modeling** grants will support TCG Member Theatres who aim to increase their proficiency in reaching specific audience(s)/community(ies) by observing, adapting and/or implementing successful models used by newly identified partner organization(s);
- And **(Re)Imagining** grants will support TCG Member Theatres with a high level of proficiency and successful track record of reaching audience(s)/community(ies) who now seek new and/or different ways to deepen or expand this work.

“From collaborating with social service organizations to gamifying the patron experience, we’re thrilled by our grantees’ commitment to revolutionizing the ways theatre builds audiences and connects with community,” said Teresa Eyring, executive director of TCG. “Our long-standing partnership with the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation empowers us to undertake this multi-pronged effort to understand, develop and share working models from the field.”

“Building audiences continues to be a critical issue for theatres everywhere. Audience (R)Evolution promises to be enormously important, not only for grantee theatres but for the theatre field at large,” said Ben Cameron, program director for the arts at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. “We are honored to support this important program.”

(Re)Imagining Grants:

Cornerstone Theater Company (Los Angeles, CA)

Cornerstone Theater Company will reimagine their audience engagement program Creative Seeds through the cultural knowledge of community representatives, called Community Connectors—past participants of their collaborative play-making process—to reach more community audiences and to better tailor their audience engagement.

Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, OR)

Oregon Shakespeare Festival will reimagine their successful local Latino community-building model into a new and meaningful engagement program with a distant-destination audience. Dialogue between artist/activist Luis Alfaro and Portland groups and youth of color will overcome the obstacles to bringing these and other new audiences the 300 miles to Ashland.

Pasadena Playhouse (Pasadena, CA)

To reimagine their Theatrical Diversity Project and build a new model of artistic co-creation between their institution, Latino artists and emerging Latino community artists, Pasadena Playhouse will create an engaged Latino Community Taskforce that includes outreach programming and artistic mentorship.

Pillsbury House Theatre (Minnesota, MN)

Artists will develop public art installations and curricula for social service programs (i.e. childcare center, afterschool programs, free clinic) exploring themes from mainstage productions and leading neighbors, program participants and parents to enter the theatre and experience mainstage plays.

Portland Center Stage (Portland, OR)

Portland Center Stage (PCS) will elicit deeper patron engagement by "gamifying" participation in their programs. Working with Portland-based tech firm Perka, they will build an app that features interactive rewards for participation in PCS activities and create an outreach tour to recruit new app users and audiences.

Steppenwolf Theatre Company (Chicago, IL)

Steppenwolf Theatre Company will present Project Compass, a highly participatory project that asks audiences to explore the questions: What is your internal compass? Why do we make the decisions we do? Housed in The Steppenwolf Lab, their new space and testing ground for audience engagement, teens and adults will explore these questions together.

Su Teatro (Denver, CO)

Su Teatro will utilize recent immigrant youth involved in their school theatre programs to help shape and lead a comprehensive marketing and outreach effort to engage their peers, with the belief that they are the most important artists and audiences in Su Teatro's future.

Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (Washington, DC)

Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company is seeking to multiply their Connectivity department's effect on their artistic work and their audiences by refining the revolution they've already started, and enlarging the footprint of the department. Their vision is to exponentially increase their impact by launching new and longer-term partnerships.

(Re)Modeling Grants:**Cape Fear Regional Theatre (Fayetteville, NC)**

Cape Fear Regional Theatre (CFRT) will partner with Hidden Voices and Mike Wiley Productions to develop their Community Engagement Initiative VOICES FROM THE HOMEFRONT, an outreach effort to give voice to the military community. Focusing on the spouses and children of deployed military men and women, CFRT will develop a process to turn these voices into a piece of documentary theatre, programmed as a stage reading and installation.

Dallas Children's Theater (Dallas, TX)

Dallas Children's Theater will partner with Orlando Repertory Theatre and Nashville Children's Theatre to evaluate and implement sensory-friendly performances for children with autism and others who need adaptations to help them comfortably experience live theatre with their families.

The Audience (R)Evolution grant panel included Edgar Dobie, executive producer, Arena Stage; Randy Reyes, artistic director, Mu Performing Arts; Bil Schroeder, director of marketing & communications, South Coast Repertory; Alida Wilson-Gunn, education and community outreach programs director, Borderlands Theater; and Shay Wafer, executive director, 651 ARTS.

Audience (R)Evolution is a four-stage program to study, promote and support successful audience engagement and community development models across the country. The first stage is an ongoing research and assessment project conducted by AMS Planning & Research to study the most impactful engagement models. The second stage of the program was the Audience (R)Evolution Learning Convening, which brought over 250 theatre professionals to Philadelphia in February 2013 to share the success and challenges of their own engagement models and strategies. In this third stage of the program, theatres will be awarded grants to adapt and/or reimagine successful audience engagement models. The final stage of the program will be widespread dissemination, through which theatres at large will have quick and easy access to the project's findings about how to implement effective audience engagement and community development programs. For more information about Audience (R)Evolution, visit http://www.tcg.org/grants/aud_rev/index.cfm or contact audiencerev@tcg.org.

Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's (www.ddcf.org) mission is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and child well-being, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. The Arts Program focuses its support on contemporary dance, jazz and theatre artists, and the organizations that nurture, present and produce them.

Since 1988, **AMS Planning & Research** (www.ams-online.com/) has been supporting the success of the arts and cultural sector through applied research and strategy development. From major research studies of the theatre and music sectors nationally to the development of creative solutions to improved effectiveness, AMS has developed innovative methodologies and deep perspectives on cultural markets, cultural consumers and cultural organizations. Their work is characterized by objectivity and rigor and grounded in real-world data. From their leadership role in research around the Wallace Foundation's investments in more than 45 not-for-profit theatres in the 1990s to their seminal work with 15 symphonies participating in the Knight Foundation's Magic of Music Initiative in 2002-2003, they have served hundreds of clients with thoughtful and creative research. AMS has also taken a leadership role in the dialogue regarding the changing dynamics of the arts and cultural sector and the related impact on organizations and facilities.

For over 50 years, **Theatre Communications Group** (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre. TCG's constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to nearly 700 member theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 12,000 individuals nationwide. TCG offers its members networking and knowledge-building opportunities through conferences, events, research and communications; awards grants, approximately \$2 million per year, to theatre companies and individual artists; advocates on the federal level; and serves as the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute, connecting its constituents to the global theatre community. TCG is North America's largest independent publisher of dramatic literature, with 12 Pulitzer Prizes for Best Play on the TCG booklist. It also publishes the award-winning AMERICAN THEATRE magazine and ARTSEARCH®, the essential source for a career in the arts. In all of its endeavors, TCG seeks to increase the organizational efficiency of its member theatres, cultivate and celebrate the artistic talent and achievements of the field and promote a larger public understanding of, and appreciation for, the theatre. www.tcg.org.

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