



MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE

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For Immediate Release

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Mid-America Arts Alliance Acquires Artist INC Program from UMKC **Artist INC will continue to expand throughout the M-AAA region and beyond**

(Kansas City, MO) – Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) announces that it has acquired Artist INC as the program completes ten successful years with the University of Missouri–Kansas City (UMKC) Innovation Center. Artist INC began in Kansas City as KCArtistLink, a collaborative project of ArtsKC, Charlotte Street Foundation, and the UMKC Innovation Center, and began partnering with M-AAA in 2013 to expand training to individual artists throughout the M-AAA six-state region of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas. Artist INC empowers individual artists of all disciplines by connecting them to the tools, resources, and opportunities necessary to develop their entrepreneurial skills and strengthen their artistic practice.

“We have seen incredible results in the careers of artists and know that the transfer of the program to Mid-America Arts Alliance will allow Artist INC to greatly expand its reach,” said Maria Myers, Director of UMKC’s Innovation Center.

Artist INC, through its regional partnership with Mid-America Arts Alliance, reached nearly one thousand artists in FY2017 (July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017), with training in Kansas City, Missouri; Austin, Houston, and Wichita Falls, Texas; Omaha, Nebraska; Lawrence, Kansas; Springdale, Arkansas; and seven other communities across the region. Started as an eight-week intensive training program for artists and taught by peer facilitators, Artist INC’s programming now includes Artist INC; Artist INC Advance; Artist INC Express; and What Works Workshops to allow more flexibility in serving communities large and small.

Todd Stein, CEO of Mid-America Arts Alliance, said, “Artist INC makes a direct impact in the lives and careers of artists while drawing artists and communities together to strengthen their creative economies. Our close partnership with the UMKC Innovation Center, the broad appeal of Artist INC throughout our region, and our shared belief that the transfer of Artist INC to M-AAA is the next logical stage in the life of the program, makes M-AAA’s acquisition a natural next step in the evolution of Artist INC.”

Lesson topics covered in the eight weekly sessions of Artist INC include: planning; marketing; financial management; writing; legal issues; grants; technology; and public presenting. This training changes the way artists think about business, giving them the practical tools and peer feedback they need to strengthen their art practice, seize opportunities, and shape their creative and financial futures. As artists leave Artist INC, they connect with one another in a variety of ways to share ideas, funding opportunities, and more. Strong, connected artist networks not only contribute to healthy overall cities, but they enhance regional impact and improve communities across state lines.

Artist INC’s Lisa Cordes and Sarah Hearne have joined M-AAA’s staff. “Transferring Artist INC to M-AAA opens up opportunities to empower more artists to create sustainable careers and grow their arts businesses in more communities across the region and potentially across the country, while continuing to serve the Kansas City artist community that has benefited from our work since 2009,” said Cordes.

Community and organization leaders wishing to bring Artist INC to their city, contact M-AAA at artistinc@maaa.org.

Support for Artist INC comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, Windgate Charitable Foundation, Inc., Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation, and Hallmark Corporate Foundation, as well as Arkansas Arts Council, Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission, Missouri Arts Council, Nebraska Arts Council, Oklahoma Arts Council, Texas Commission on the Arts, and other foundations, corporations, and individuals.

About Mid-America Arts Alliance

Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) strengthens and supports artists, cultural organizations, and communities throughout our region and beyond. We are especially committed to enriching the cultural life of historically underserved communities by providing high quality, meaningful, and accessible arts and culture programs and services. We believe in more art for more people. Additional information about M-AAA is available at www.maaa.org.

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