



KeepArtHappening.org

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Arts and Education Council Announces new board chair, members

Four new members join roster of region's only privately-supported united arts fund

ST. LOUIS – Feb. 12, 2020 – The Arts and Education Council announced today that **Caren Vredenburg**, former senior director creative services at Caleres, has been elected as the nonprofit's new board chair. Vredenburg has served on the board for seven years. Four members of the board of directors have also been elected. **Jeffrey Carter, M.D.**, **Naretha Hopson**, **Janet Newcomb** and **Solomon Thurman, Jr.**, were each elected to a three-year term beginning January 1. Newly-elected Young Friends of the Arts President **Alexandra Schenk**, marketing director at Capes Sokol, also joined the board as an ex officio member.

Officers have also been elected to the following positions: **Curtis Cassel**, Vice Chair and Governance Committee Chair; **Ken Haller, M.D.**, Vice Chair; **Nicole Hudson**, Secretary; **Deanna Hohmann**, Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair; **Linda Lee**, Development Committee Chair; **Brad Liebman**, Facilities Committee Chair; **Terrance Good**, Grants and Program Committee Chair; **Sheila Burkett**, Strategic Planning Committee Chair, and **Kit Sundararaman**, Marketing Committee Chair.

"We are thrilled to welcome Caren as our new board chair. Under her leadership and with these new board members, the Arts and Education Council is positioned continue to support more than 70 arts organizations through diverse grants and programing while developing exciting new initiatives," said Cynthia A. Prost, Arts and Education Council president and CEO.

"On behalf of the Arts and Education Council, I'm pleased to welcome these four individuals to the board of directors. Their leadership, expertise and passion for the arts in our community will be valuable as we work to keep art happening across the St. Louis region," said Board Chair Caren Vredenburg.

Jeffrey Carter, M.D. is an anesthesiologist in Des Peres, Missouri, and is affiliated with Missouri Baptist Medical Center. He received his medical degree from Yale University School of Medicine and has been practicing for more than 20 years.

Naretha Hopson is the Founder and Executive Director of Ever-Appropriate Etiquette Institute (EAIE), which educates youth and professionals in leadership, dining etiquette, business etiquette and impression management. Previously, she served as Director of Diversity Outreach and Assistant Editor for United Media International, a global publishing house for the Korean American Journal and Beauty Times Magazine. A St. Louis native, she has served on boards and committees including the United Way, Urban League, the St. Louis Regional Business Council Young Professional Network, Young Professional Boards of the Saint Louis Crisis Nursery and the Saint Louis Zoo.

Janet Newcomb is Director of Client Service at Kennedy Capital Management, Inc. where she is responsible for leading a team in all aspects of the client experience, including the oversight of client onboarding, client meetings and reviews, RFIs and all other client communications. Prior to that she was Senior Vice President and Market Director; Managing Director at

PNC Capital Advisors, LLC for 18 years. Newcomb served one term on the Arts and Education Council's board from 2016 to 2018.

Solomon Thurman, Jr. is an artist, researcher, and teacher. He has been painting for more than five decades. His style can be categorized as conceptual realism and contemporary abstractions. His art focuses primarily on the American experience with an emphasis on the African diaspora. He has been featured in numerous one-man and group exhibitions in United States, Canada and Brazil. Thurman received the 2020 St. Louis Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts.

For more information about the Arts and Education Council and a complete board listing, visit KeepArtHappening.org.

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About the Arts and Education Council: *Keep Art Happening*. – The Arts and Education Council ensures the 16-county, bi-state region is rich with arts and cultural experiences for all through programs and services that support more than 70 organizations each year, including: operating grants; arts incubation at the Centene Center for the Arts; the Arts and Healing Initiative; PNC Program Grants; the Creative Impact Fund, with lead support from Bayer Fund; Creative Impact Fund for Diversifying the Arts; the Maritz Arts and Education Fund for Teachers; Bayer Fund Rural Community Arts Program grants; the Art Education Fund, underwritten by Wells Fargo Advisors; the Catalyst Innovation Lab; the Katherine Dunham Fellowship; the stARTup Creative Competition; Leadership Roundtables; Arts Marketers; the St. Louis Suburban Music Educators Association; the Keep Art Happening Scholarship; and the St. Louis Arts Awards.

The Arts and Education Council is entirely funded by individual donors, corporations and foundations in the St. Louis region. Since its inception in 1963 as the region's only privately-supported united arts fund, the Arts and Education Council has raised and distributed more than \$100 million in private funding for the arts – a significant contribution that directly impacts the quality of life in our region. The Arts and Education Council meets all 20 Better Business Bureau Charity Standards and has earned the Wise Giving Seal of Approval, a three-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Guidestar Exchange Gold Participant rating.

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