

Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

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Phoenix Art Museum receives \$50,000 grant from Thunderbirds Charities to cultivate new generation of museum leadership

The gift seeks to foster diversity and provides vital support for the Museum's teen programs



PHOENIX (February 19, 2019) – Phoenix Art Museum has been named the recipient of a \$50,000 grant from Thunderbirds Charities to expand the Museum's efforts to foster the next generation of diverse museum leaders. The gift matches a portion of a 2017 grant awarded to the Museum by the [Diversifying Art Museum Leadership Initiative \(DAMLI\)](#), a partnership between the Walton Family Foundation and the Ford Foundation. The funds from Thunderbirds Charities will provide additional core support for all programming associated with the Museum's Teen Art Council.

"We are grateful for the generous gift from Thunderbirds Charities," said Amada Cruz, the Sybil Harrington Director and CEO of Phoenix Art Museum. "This grant will enable the Museum to remain a dynamic space where young people in our diverse community may continue to grow and connect with each other, while charting a path toward a career in the arts."

Previously piloted in 2016 by Thunderbirds Charities, the Teen Art Council is a paid part-time leadership opportunity for Valley teens offered at Phoenix Art Museum. Members of the 15-student council serve as the principal ambassadors for the Museum's teen visitors and are tasked with creating teen-centered programs aimed at strengthening engagement with the arts. Students also enjoy various opportunities to network with artists, museum staff, and other creative professionals.

"Three years ago, Thunderbirds Charities provided lead funding to launch the Museum's Teen Engagement Initiative, laying a strong foundation for us to build programming 'by teens, for teens,'" said Kaela Sáenz Oriti, the Museum's Gerry Grout Education Director. "This most recent gift not only ensures the continued success of our Teen Art Council, but also enables us to further create meaningful leadership and professional-development opportunities for these future museum leaders."

“We are thrilled to support the Teen Art Council of Phoenix Art Museum,” said Thunderbirds Charities President Carlos Sugich. “Phoenix Art Museum has a tremendous positive impact on our young people, and we are very proud to be part of this innovative and creative program.”

The grant from Thunderbirds Charities will underwrite all programs associated with the Teen Art Council, ensuring the Museum’s continued efforts to cultivate a new, diverse generation of museum leaders. Additionally, the funds will enable the Museum to continue recruiting candidates from various backgrounds to ensure the future diversity of its Teen Art Council.

The matching gift supplements a grant previously awarded to the Museum. In 2017, Phoenix Art Museum was one of 20 museums nationwide to receive funding from the Diversifying Art Museum Leadership Initiative (DAMLI), a partnership between the Walton Family Foundation and the Ford Foundation that supports efforts to diversify curatorial and management staff in art museums. The funds awarded to Phoenix Art Museum by DAMLI currently support the Museum’s Teen Art Council, paid internships for undergraduate and graduate students, and a two-year curatorial fellowship.

For more information about Phoenix Art Museum and its Teen Art Council, internship program, and diversity efforts, contact the Marketing and Communications Office of Phoenix Art Museum at 602.257.2105 or margaree.bigler@phxart.org.

About Phoenix Art Museum

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for nearly 60 years and is the largest art museum in the southwestern United States. Critically acclaimed national and international exhibitions are shown alongside the Museum’s permanent collection of more than 19,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, modern and contemporary art, and fashion design. The Museum also presents festivals, a comprehensive film program, live performances, and educational programs designed to enlighten, entertain, and stimulate visitors of all ages. Visitors also enjoy vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum’s landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit phxart.org, or call 602.257.1880.

Thunderbirds Charities

Thunderbirds Charities is a non-profit organization formed in 1986 to distribute monies raised through the Waste Management Phoenix Open golf tournament. The mission of Thunderbirds Charities is to assist children and families, help people in need, and improve the quality of life in our communities. The organization’s giving is directed toward organizations based or with a significant presence in Arizona. The Thunderbirds were founded in 1937 with the mission of promoting the Valley of the Sun through sports. For more information on The Thunderbirds or the 2020 Waste Management Phoenix Open, visit www.wmphoenixopen.com. For more information on Thunderbirds Charities, visit www.thunderbirdscharities.org.

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