



Champions of Inclusion

On July 12, 2018, the Lehigh Valley Arts Council will present Champions of Inclusion, an afternoon trade fair highlighting the cultural organizations and human service agencies that have pioneered greater cultural access in the Lehigh Valley. The program will feature presentations on best practices from experts in the field, followed by a reception with the vendors, and a performance by comedian Josh Blue. The *(continued on pg. 2)*

Incentives for New Audiences

by Zach Kleemeyer

With the New Year finally here, the Arts Council will once again administer funding for two community arts grants, the PPA Project Stream Grant and the Greater Inclusion Matching Grant. Primarily, both grants seek to reach the marginalized communities living in the Lehigh Valley by engaging them in the arts. Limited funding is available. Visit LVArtsCouncil.org for more information and example of last year's recipients.

PPA Project Stream Grant

Application Deadline: June 20, 2018

Individuals and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply for this grant opportunity, awarding up to **\$2,500** for arts projects with a community component. Savvy applicants will focus their attention on developing high public engagement with the community they are targeting. Even savvy potential applicants will attend one of the three informative workshops for the grant, to be held in May 2018. (Dates to be announced in March 2018)

A community panel made of regional artists, arts administrators, and arts patrons will convene in August to assess the submitted applications based on three criteria:

Quality, Access, and Management. Awardees will be recognized publicly and receive their grants in October at ArtsCOUNT, the Arts Council's annual arts rally. In 2017, there were 26 grants awarded in the Lehigh Valley, and just like last year **\$39,709** will be distributed in 2018.

Greater Inclusion Matching Grant

Application Deadline: Ongoing, submissions due nine weeks prior to event in 2018

Cultural organizations can reach new audiences by providing accommodations for the first-time to a specific community with disabilities. There is **\$6,000** available across three funding streams: up to **\$350** for producing an accessible event, up to **\$500** for hiring an artist with a disability, and (NEW) up to **\$1,000** for developing an artistic performance or exhibition with a group of people living with a disability.

Funded organizations must provide matching support for their grant award, as well as complete customer service training for their staff and volunteers prior to producing their public event. In 2017, the Arts Council awarded five greater inclusion grants.

ARTS COUNCIL MATTERS

(continued from pg. 1)

event will be held at the Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts in Bethlehem, from 1–4:30PM. Admission to the trade fair is FREE to the public, but the performance is a separate and ticketed event and Local resources that routinely provide accommodations are invited to secure a vendor table to promote their programming and services and network with the disability friendly community. Vendors will receive a table with signage, a free listing in the Cultural Accessibility Resource Guide, and ten tickets to Josh Blue's performance. Vendor's fee is \$75.

To cap off the day's activities, Josh Blue, the celebrated comedian who uses his own affliction with cerebral palsy as part of his routine, will perform at 3:45pm in the Charter High

School Theatre. "We are delighted that Josh is returning to the region," says Executive Director Randall Forte. "His irreverence and energy strike the right tone to kick our butts and move cultural accessibility forward."

Blue was the grand prize winner at the Las Vegas Comedy Festival, has appeared on NBC's Last Comic Standing and is a favorite on the college comedy circuit. He is known for his ability to improvise and encourage his audience to overcome preconceived notions about people who are labeled as "disabled."

Single tickets for the Josh Blue performance are limited and cost \$10 for Lehigh Valley Arts Council members and \$20 for nonmembers. For more information, visit the website at LVArtsCouncil.org

Art Is Learning...and Fun

by Lauren Beck

Art, they say, is important to a child's intellectual development. An artist is one who can solve problems, collaborate with others, and present their unique voice in the world. There's no question – creative children are the visionaries of the future!

Providing children the tools to explore the arts early in life builds a foundation for a curious and confident adult. Art education programs in schools do give kids a taste of fine art, but how can we do more as parents to harness our child's creative potential?

Parents, you are in luck! The Lehigh Valley happens to be alive with opportunities for children to discover a love of art and an appreciation of different cultures. From our experiences, many parents are unfamiliar with the diverse arts community around them, especially when it comes to offerings for their youngsters.

Young at Art was created by the Lehigh Valley Arts Council as a response to the need to bring youth arts programming directly to the community. On March 10, 2018, we will be celebrating our third year, and families are invited to join our day of creative exploration at Penn State Lehigh Valley in Center Valley from 10am to 2pm with FREE admission!

The expo showcases twenty-five arts and cultural businesses

in the region that offer a wide range of children's programming, both for beginners and for kids at an intermediate level. Among them include The Baum School of Art, Touchstone Theatre, ArtsQuest's Banana Factory, The Art Establishment, and Girl Scouts of Eastern PA.

Kids will have many chances to try out being a dancer, actor, musician, author or visual artist. Parents get to witness first-hand how the arts ignite their children's imagination, while also gathering valuable information about educational programs.

In addition to the informational tables throughout the venue, there will be a jam-packed schedule of arts demonstrations, activities, crafts, and performances at three staging areas within the event. You won't want to miss performances by Puertorrican Culture Preservation, Community Music School, The Swain School, and Lehigh Valley Martial Arts! Complimentary face painting will be provided by Funtastic Faces, Inc., and a Passport Game will guide guests through the fun with an interactive map. Lunch and snacks are available for purchase in the cafeteria.

As parents, we want our kids to have choices in life. Young at Art offers a variety of creative possibilities for your child to explore and sets them on a path of success.

Inside the Arts is a bimonthly publication of the Lehigh Valley Arts Council, 840 Hamilton St., Suite 201, Allentown, PA 18101.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Randall Forte

Call for submission guidelines: New items must be received by the fifth of the month preceding publication.

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Our Mission:

To promote the value of the arts, foster collaboration in the community, and encourage arts engagement for all people in the Lehigh Valley.

The Lehigh Valley Arts Council is a Pennsylvania Partner in the Arts, a program of the PCA.



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THE INSIDE TRACK

Friends of Music in Bethlehem announce the appointment of Lynn Godfrey as

President of the Board of Directors.

Diane Scott has been named Interim Director at the **Allentown Symphony Association**.

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ONE LAST THOUGHT

Through the Arts & Access Always program, the Lehigh Valley Arts Council is slowly raising awareness about the importance of removing barriers to arts engagement for persons with physical, cognitive, or sensory disabilities. Arts advocacy takes many forms, but ensuring access to the arts for people of all abilities is a value that every cultural organization should champion.

Unfortunately, there are only a few performing arts groups, museums and galleries in the Lehigh Valley offering Audio Description, Open Captioning and ASL services to people with vision and hearing loss. Even fewer institutions offer sensory friendly environments for children with autism. Accessible parking also remains a challenge.

The arts cannot afford to be viewed as unwelcoming. As an arts community, let's resolve to advance greater inclusion in 2018. It doesn't take a new building, just a heartfelt commitment to serve our entire community.

Randall Forte

HOW HAVE THE ARTS TOUCHED YOUR LIFE?

Your story, no matter how big or small, provides evidence that the arts are essential.

TELL YOUR STORY IN SUPPORT OF THE ARTS!

lvartscouncil.org/story