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**CULTURAL ARTS COUNCIL AWARDED COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT:
Community Foundation's Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund Launches Arts Recovery Initiative**

Douglasville, Georgia – The Cultural Arts Council of Douglasville/Douglas County is pleased to announce that it will receive \$25,000 in general operating support through the Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund's new Atlanta Arts Recover initiative -- a two-year, \$2.5 million program designed to keep metro Atlanta's small and midsized arts organizations stable as they face unprecedented financial challenges. The Arts Fund, an initiative of The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, also announced the first round of 2009 grants to arts organizations in the 23-county region.

“Our purpose is to keep the arts a part of our region's vitality, providing education and vibrant programs while offering creativity and fresh ideas during a new and challenging time,” said Lisa Cremin, Arts Fund director. “We are focusing on arts organizations with budgets less than \$2 million a year; these organizations do not have endowments or a financial cushion. With this enhanced funding, the Arts Fund will support arts organizations with great plans to adapt during this crisis so they can continue to provide innovative programs.”

The first grants, totaling \$500,000, were awarded today to 11 arts organizations in 6 counties across the region. Ranging from \$10,000 to \$75,000, the grants will support general operations, giving the recipients the flexibility to address their most pressing needs. In addition to the Cultural Arts Council of Douglasville/Douglas County, Inc., those funded included: Actor's Express (Fulton County), \$60,000; Atlanta Chamber Players (Fulton County), \$20,000; Dad's Garage Theatre Company (Fulton County), \$45,000; Georgia Shakespeare (DeKalb County), \$50,000; Madison Morgan Cultural Center (Morgan County), \$70,000; the Quinlan Visual Arts Center (Hall County), \$40,000; Theatre in the Square (Cobb County), \$75,000; True Colors Theatre Company (Fulton County), \$75,000, and the Youth Ensemble of Atlanta (Fulton County), \$30,000.

“This was a very competitive grant situation,” stated Laura Lieberman, CAC director. “More than 50 organizations applied, and we were very excited to be among less than 20 finalists. In addition to having our biggest fundraiser Taste for Douglasville rained out this year, we have lost support from the county and we anticipate cutbacks from the city -- so these dollars mean we can continue to keep our doors open and our arts programming and outreach ongoing.”

CAC Board President Allen Culpepper added, “We are very proud of receiving this grant. We certainly thought we had a strong site visit during the application process. Not only does this bring us much needed funding from the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, but the award is also an important recognition that we are one of the top local arts agencies in the greater metropolitan Atlanta area. This is our second grant to be awarded from MAAF in the past four years, and we think this is the result of the CAC's hardworking and dedicated Board as well as a professional and experienced executive director.”

Expanding on the Arts Fund's previous program of grantmaking, management consulting and loans to strengthen arts organizations, the Atlanta Arts Recovery initiative will include two grant cycles each year in 2009 and 2010 with each cycle distributing \$500,000 in general operating support. Professional consulting projects through the Arts Stabilization Toolbox awards will help organizations implement scenario planning, update strategic plans, build stronger boards and improve financial plans. In addition, the Arts Loan Fund will increase the maximum size of loans from \$25,000 to \$40,000 and extend the timeframe that organizations have to pay back loans. The Arts Fund is encouraging arts organizations to consider implementation of new program or operating models that help them adapt to the new economic environment.

"Our goal is to strengthen and support nonprofit organizations in the 23-county region," says Alicia Philipp, president of The Community Foundation. "Providing general operating support, management consulting and loans to arts organizations allows them to focus more on creating new ideas and tools for their business while we support operations. We look for organizations that demonstrate good planning, produce exciting programs embraced by the community and exhibit a willingness to collaborate and adjust."

Carol Tomé of Home Depot and Bahnson Stanley of Ellis, McQuary & Stanley are co-chairing the fundraising drive for the Atlanta Arts Recovery initiative. The first funding partners of the initiative are the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, the Kendeda Fund, Zeist Foundation and Bank of America providing a total of \$1.8 million. "We are pleased to support this initiative to strengthen the arts during challenging times. The arts are an essential part of a healthy Atlanta," said Russ Hardin, president of the Woodruff Foundation.

The Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund is a partnership between the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta providing support to small and mid-sized arts organizations in the 23-county region. Since 1993, the Arts Fund has funded more than \$7 million in grants and management consulting awards to 84 arts organizations, creating more than 50 new staff positions in arts groups across the region. The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta connects donors, nonprofits and community leaders to strengthen the Atlanta region through philanthropy by providing quality services to donors and innovative leadership on community issues. In 2008 The Community Foundation awarded more than 4,600 grants totaling an estimated \$75 million throughout 23 counties in the greater Atlanta region.

The mission of the Cultural Arts Council of Douglasville/Douglas County is to nurture, guide and stimulate the enjoyment of and participation in the arts among Douglas County residents by providing an atmosphere conducive to the arts, broadening the spectrum of quality exhibits and performances available to the community, and fostering individual interactions with the arts through a wide range of satellite organizations. The Cultural Arts Council and its exhibitions at the Cultural Arts Center are supported by its members, sponsors, the City of Douglasville, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners, and Georgia Council for the Arts through appropriations from the State General Assembly. The GCA is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes a great nation deserves great art.

The Cultural Arts Center is located at 8652 Campbellton Street in historic downtown Douglasville, Georgia, located about 20 miles from Atlanta and just off I-20 (exit 36). Hours of operation are Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday hours are no longer offered due to public funding reductions. For more information, please call 770/949-2787 or visit our web site --- www.artsdouglas.org.