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Brooke Kidd Named the Sue Hess Maryland Arts Advocate of the Year

Joe's Movement Emporium Kicks off 20th Anniversary with Maryland Art Day Honor

Baltimore, MD (January 15, 2015) – The Maryland Citizens for the Arts (MCA) today announced its selection of Brooke Kidd, Founding Artistic Director of Joe's Movement Emporium, as the 2015 Sue Hess Arts Advocate of the Year Award recipient. Word of this honor comes on the heels of the Joe's official announcement of this year marking the organization's 20th year of dedication to arts.

Now in its sixth year, the Sue Hess Maryland Arts Advocate of the Year Award honors an individual whose work has had lasting impact on the state of public funding for the arts at all levels of government. Named for Sue Hess, a founding trustee of MCA, the award exemplifies a commitment to civic engagement on behalf of the arts sector, ensuring strong public support and public policy for the arts. The award will be presented at the annual Maryland Arts Day on Tuesday, February 10, 2015 at the President's Conference Center in the Miller Senate Building in Annapolis. To attend, please register at www.mdarts.org.

Since 1992, Brooke Kidd has championed community responsive programming at Joe's Movement Emporium. Her pioneering efforts to utilize the arts in Maryland as a vehicle for progressive education, workforce training and economic growth have made her one of the most well respected arts managers in the region. A vocal advocate for the arts, Kidd has participated in state and national panels to educate and support other leaders involved in community arts service, capacity-building innovations, and arts and entertainment districts.

A winner of the Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Award for choreography, Kidd's successful vision has created a gold standard for community-based arts organizations throughout Maryland. Local families hungry for affordable, quality childcare can find it at Joe's in their *Club Joe's* after-care program. When teens from the neighborhood came to her for jobs, she fashioned a workforce development program to train them for positions in technical theatre and digital media. Her drive and vision anchored an entire arts district – the Gateway Arts District of Prince George's County – joining small businesses and the arts community in pursuit of economic growth.

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Brooke is always looking for opportunities to bring art to both community members and businesses, facilitating events such as a singer in a hair salon, art in a Laundromat, and dancing through an abandoned building. Together with a group of other arts and community-based organizations, she helped land a \$50,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and \$240,000 grant from ArtPlace America to call attention to the richness of the Gateway Arts District through creative placemaking and business development with the “Art Lives Here” initiative.

Ms. Kidd founded Joe’s Movement Emporium in Mt. Rainier, MD with fellow artist Ajax Drayton in the 1990’s. The concept of Joe’s Movement Emporium was based on “open-door-oriented” arts centers she experienced while studying in Cameroon. It became a place where every “Joe,” – no matter their race, gender, age, or ability – could move! Since that time, Joe’s has evolved from a small, storefront studio into the largest independent performing arts center in Prince George’s County, MD, a 20,000 sq. ft. arts center widely-regarded as the cornerstone of an arts-led economic redevelopment effort in the county

Ms. Kidd graduated from American University with a B.A. interdisciplinary degree in Dance, Anthropology and African Studies, as well as a B.A. in International Relations. She also holds an M.A. in Dance, having completed a thesis titled “Revitalizing Community through Dance.”

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Joe’s will have series of major events, performances, and exhibits in honor of two decades of community impact beginning in January through October 2015. For more information on Joe’s 20th Anniversary Celebration and Gala on March 21, 2015, visit www.ioesmovement.org or call 301-699-1819.

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Joe’s Movement Emporium is the largest independent performing arts center in Prince George’s County, MD. Founded in 1992, it is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that incorporates dance, movement and performing arts traditions from around the world into exceptional educational and artistic experiences. Joe’s unique ability to utilize the arts as a vehicle for progressive education, workforce training and economic growth have made it one of the most well-respected nonprofit organizations in the region. For more information call 301-699-1819 or visit joesmovement.org.

Maryland Citizens for the Arts is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1977 to advocate for public support for the arts. MCA works to serve the entire Maryland arts sector by representing its needs to state and federal government and by working to support the organizational capacity of artists and arts organizations, thereby making them stronger stewards of both public and private investment.