



**COLORADO
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Office of Communications

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For Immediate Release

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**Fine Arts Center at Colorado College and School District 11
and
UCCS Presents and Academy District 20**

**Selected to Participate
in Kennedy Center's Partners in Education Program**

Partnership Promotes Arts-based Professional Development for Teachers

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. –March 21, 2018 – Two Partnership teams in Colorado Springs, the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College and School District 11, along with UCCS Presents: The Ent Center for the Arts and Academy District 20, are among the seven teams nationwide selected to join the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Partners in Education, a program designed to assist arts organizations throughout the nation to develop or expand education partnerships with their local school systems. A primary focus of these partnerships is to provide sustainable and robust arts-based professional development for teachers. Longtime Imagination Celebration Executive Director Deb Thornton supported both Partnership Teams' applications to the program through a recommendation letter as part of the process.

[Numerous](#) studies point to the value of arts education in improving student outcomes yet teachers may not have the resources, access, or training to implement arts integration across the curriculum. Partnering with teachers is fundamental to arts-based learning. By the community strategically partnering to support and provide teachers with high quality and continuous arts-based professional development, teachers and students are exposed to new access points for learning.

“The arts engage the whole child in creative thinking, collaboration, cross-cultural understanding, and communication. It inspires and transforms students supporting them in becoming life-long learners as well as future citizens,” said Mario Rossero, Senior Vice President of Education at the Kennedy Center. “Essential to engaging the student is



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empowering educators with tools and skills to incorporate the arts into classrooms. Partners in Education not only assist with providing these tools but the learning experiences through the program foster and develop stronger collaborative relationships with the community. It is rewarding to see the impact on the students as teachers grow professionally through the arts.”

“It is a testament to our community’s support for the arts and education that two partnerships in Colorado Springs — each consisting of an arts institution and school district — have been selected to participate in the Kennedy Center’s Partners in Education Program,” says Colorado Springs Mayor John Suthers. “This program will help promote and expand arts-based educational programs in the area, providing professional development for teachers and helping students foster imagination and creativity. Teachers’ professional learning is an essential component of any effort designed to increase the creativity and artistic literacy of young people.”

As the entry point for the program, the two partnership teams consisting of representatives from the Fine Arts Center at Colorado College and District 11 and UCCS Presents and Academy District 20 will participate in the Partners in Education Institute on April 23–26 at the Kennedy Center. During the four-day intensive, team members will develop a customized plan for how the partners will work together in their community to create or further establish arts-based professional development programs for area teachers. Teams receive a detailed planning guide, attend performances, and meet with national education leaders and guest artists while at the Kennedy Center. A variety of interactive workshops, presentations, and classroom modeling demonstrations also will be offered to exhibit innovative and imaginative approaches to educating students. Information learned at the Institute has proven invaluable to past participants who have left the Kennedy Center with more confidence in their ability to create their own professional development programs for teachers.

The two new teams from Colorado Springs join the nearly 100 teams from 39 states and the District of Columbia already participating in the Partners in Education program, now in its 27th year. In addition, partnership teams receive national support from the Kennedy Center through access to Center resources including its roster of teaching artists to work directly with the school and students; follow-up consultation and ongoing communication to assist teams in program and partnership development, as well as annual multi-day convenings and intensive seminars. For more information, visit www.kennedy-center.org/partners.



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ABOUT THE ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College believes the arts are a critical part of any community. Building upon its history as a cultural pillar, the Fine Arts Center strives to inspire community vitality through performing arts, visual arts and arts education. In 2016, the FAC announced an historic alliance with Colorado College and on July 1, 2017, became the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College. For more information, visit <https://www.csfineartscenter.org/>

UCCS Presents: The Ent Center for the Arts supports culture and community through its professional arts programs: Theatreworks, Galleries of Contemporary Art, and the Artist Series. For more information, visit <http://uccspresents.org/>

ABOUT THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Colorado Springs School District 11, the largest school district in El Paso County, believes that when schools and communities deliver high quality learning opportunities in, though, and about the arts for children, extraordinary results occur. It has a long history of collaborating with Imagination Celebration to provide professional development around the arts and arts integrated learning.

Academy District 20, founded in 1957, is the second largest school district in the Pikes Peak Region. With more than 35 schools, the district serves approximately 25,000 students. Considered the “The Peak of Excellence,” Academy District 20 has been Accredited with Distinction by the Colorado Department of Education for eight straight years. In 2016 the district passed a \$230 million bond measure providing improvements to all schools, while simultaneously building two new elementary schools, a middle school and the Center for Modern Learning.

ABOUT EDUCATION AT THE KENNEDY CENTER

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is the national champion for arts learning and creativity. Committed to increasing opportunities for all people to participate in, learn about, and understand the arts, the Center offers programs and events that strive to reflect the nation and its communities, and that are accessible and inclusive for all. From the Center’s stages to classrooms and communities across the country, to online resources accessible nearly anywhere, the Center serves the burgeoning artist, the curious explorer, the student (of any age), the teacher and teaching artist—any person interested in arts learning and utilizing the arts for positive change.



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As an essential component of the living memorial to President Kennedy, the Center's Education programs utilize the arts to embrace the ideals of service, justice, freedom, courage, and gratitude, and cultivate the Citizen Artists in all the people we serve. For more information, please visit kennedy-center.org/education/.

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About Colorado College

Colorado College is a nationally prominent, four-year liberal arts college that was founded in Colorado Springs in 1874. The college operates on the innovative Block Plan, in which its approximately 2,000 undergraduate students study one course at a time in intensive 3½-week segments. The college also offers a master of arts in teaching degree. For more information, visit www.coloradocollege.edu