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Theatre Arlington to Receive \$10,000 Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

Arlington, TX, January 10, 2023:

Theatre Arlington is pleased to announce it has been approved by the National Endowment for the Arts to receive a Challenge America award of \$10,000 in 2023. This grant will support ACTUPS, the theater's outreach program in partnership with the Arlington Independent School District for fourth and fifth graders in Title 1 elementary schools. This grant is one of 262 Challenge America awards totaling \$2.62 million announced by the NEA as part of its first round of fiscal year 2023 grants.

"The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support arts projects in communities nationwide," said NEA Chair Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD. "Projects such as Theatre Arlington's strengthen arts and cultural ecosystems, provide equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice, and contribute to the health of our communities and our economy."

ACT UPS (Applied Creative Thinking Using Performance Skills) has taken arts education into Title 1 elementary schools for 27 years. Instead of focusing on talent and performance techniques, ACT UPS teaches creative problem-solving and critical thinking using performance activities and skills as teaching tools. Theatre Arlington's teaching artists guide students through social issues and relevant curriculum topics using creative exercises, as well as instructing students in improvisation, creative dramatics and musical theater. The goals of the program are to develop imaginations, increase confidence, improve communication skills and to foster a sense of belonging in each student. Students in ACT UPS have experienced improvement in school participation and attendance. They also consistently stay in school through graduation. ACT UPS is currently in six Arlington elementary schools with plans to add two schools in 2023, thanks to grant funding from organizations like the NEA.

"Theatre Arlington wants to make available to under-served, at-risk students what is available to ALL youth in the community," said Executive Producer Steven D. Morris. "Because of their economic restrictions, Title I students are unable to participate in extracurricular arts enrichment programs, but Theatre Arlington believes all students should be able to benefit from the arts no matter their household's economic circumstances."

For more information on other projects included in the NEA's grant announcement, visit [arts.gov/news](https://www.arts.gov/news).

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ABOUT THEATRE ARLINGTON:

Located in the center of Arlington's Cultural Arts District, Theatre Arlington is one of the largest semi-professional, non-profit theaters in the Southwest with roots that date back to 1973 and a gypsy theater group known as The Potluck Players. Fifty years later, the staff and board of directors are still as dedicated to *enhancing the quality of life in North Texas by presenting superior, diverse, artistic experiences through performance, production and education* as they were during their humble beginnings.

In addition to a regular season featuring seven productions, an all-youth musical and a club series, the theater runs a year-round theater school including spring break and summer camps, and partners with the Arlington ISD and local community organizations to provide free and low-cost art enrichment programs for area children and teens. The theater is also proud to perform under an Actors' Equity Small Professional Theatre contract. Theatre Arlington has become a key player in enriching the city's cultural environment.