



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 4, 2017

**The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts**  
*presents the*

**Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD®)  
Awards**

**Presented during the 17th Annual Kennedy Center  
Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability Conference  
August 6–10, 2016 in Austin, Texas**

**Four Emerging Leaders in the  
Field of Arts and Disability to be Recognized at  
Awards Ceremony during Conference**

(WASHINGTON)— The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts presents its Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD®) Awards during the 17th Annual Kennedy Center Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability Conference, August 6-10, 2017, at the J.W. Marriott in Austin, Texas.

The LEAD® Awards, presented during the conference, recognize outstanding arts administrators and institutions whose leadership and work furthers the field of accessibility. The 2017 Emerging Leader Awardees are **Brandon Cordrey**, Executive Director, Visual Arts Exchange in Raleigh, North Carolina; **Jamie Katz Court**, Communications and Programs Manager, PineCone - Piedmont Council of Traditional Music in Raleigh, North Carolina; **Dawn Koceja**, Accessibility Coordinator, Milwaukee Public Museum in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and **Nicole Smith**, Membership and Data Coordinator, Missouri History Museum in St. Louis, Missouri.

The LEAD® Award for Emerging Leaders was created in 2008 to acknowledge arts administrators who are motivated by the LEAD® conference to become an advocate for accessibility within their own organizations and communities. These individuals have

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successfully applied what they learned at previous LEAD® conferences to shape opportunities that are inclusive of people with disabilities and older adults in the cultural arts.

The VSA & Accessibility Office, part of the Kennedy Center's Education division, creates opportunities for people with disabilities of all ages to learn through, participate in, and enjoy the arts. The conference brings together and empowers professionals from organizations in the field of arts, access, and disability to create welcoming, inclusive, and accessible arts experiences through hands-on workshops, engaging discussions, and the exchange of ideas and best practices. Space for the conference is limited, and preference is given to staff at cultural arts organizations or cultural arts service and government agencies that are directly responsible for making programs and facilities accessible to people with disabilities.

For information about registration and schedule please visit the LEAD® Conference [website](#) and the Kennedy Center [website](#).

### **About The Office of VSA & Accessibility at the Kennedy Center**

The Kennedy Center has been at the forefront of making the performing arts accessible to persons with disabilities. Serving the international disability and arts community, the Office of VSA and Accessibility, a Jean Kennedy Smith Arts and Disability program, provides opportunities for people with disabilities of all ages across the globe to learn through, participate in, and enjoy the arts. The Office focuses its efforts on arts and special education initiatives; accessibility services for patrons and visitors with disabilities; professional development for educators and cultural administrators; and career opportunities in the arts for people with disabilities. For more information, please visit <http://education.kennedy-center.org/education/#Access>.

### **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, [Education at the Kennedy Center](#) offers programs and events that strive to reflect the nation and communities and that are accessible and inclusive for all. From performances and exhibits on the Center's stages and in the community, to classroom and community partnerships, including the recent addition of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities Turnaround Arts initiative, to online resources accessible nearly anywhere, the Center serves the burgeoning artist, the exploring student of any age, the teacher and teaching artist, and even the local and national infrastructure—any person interested in arts learning and utilizing the arts for positive change. As an essential

component of the living memorial to President Kennedy, the Center's Education utilizes the arts to embrace the ideals of service, justice, freedom, courage, and gratitude, and to activate and support the Citizen Artists in all our audiences. For more information, please visit [kennedy-center.org/education/](https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/).

**Funding Credits:**

Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts and the President's Advisory Committee on the Arts.

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#KCLEAD

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