



press release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 3, 2012

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GERALDINE R. DODGE FOUNDATION BOARD ANNOUNCES 78 GRANTS TOTALING \$3.5 MILLION IN FIRST ROUND OF 2012 GRANTMAKING

(Morristown, NJ) At its recent board meeting, the Trustees of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation approved \$3.5 million for its first round of grantmaking in 2012. This represents 78 grants to nonprofit organizations whose work in the arts, education, environment and media fields significantly impact communities throughout the state for a better New Jersey.

“The themes for our work this year are leadership, innovation and collaboration,” noted Dodge President and CEO Chris Daggett. “In this challenging economic climate, it is important for nonprofits and also for the philanthropic community to embrace collaboration and shared resources, as well as to think creatively and lead boldly.” He continued, “Dodge recently launched its new website, and one of the main features is to help nonprofits throughout the state connect with one another and share their stories of collaboration. We hope that as people use the site, new ideas will be sparked and new partnerships formed.”

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GRANTS:

ARTS

A total of 29 arts groups received nearly \$1.1 million, including new grantee Union County Performing Arts Center in Rahway. A \$50,000 grant will support the opening of the new Hamilton Stage theatre and the multiple artistic partnerships forged to help further this post-industrial city’s transformation through the arts.

The remaining 28 grants helped support a wide range of arts organizations in Dance (\$170,000), Music (\$130,000), Theatre (\$240,000), Visual Arts (\$240,000) and organizations that help “Connect Community and the Arts” (\$255,000).

Looking ahead, Arts Program Director Laura Aden Packer said, “The good news is that both state and federal funding for the arts in 2012 appears stable, and many of our grantees are reporting increases in attendance at performances and exhibits. We were thrilled that the first ever *Jersey Moves! Festival of Dance*, featuring eleven New Jersey-based dance companies at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in March, sold out and that the Centenary Stage Company’s *Dance Week* with performances, master classes and open rehearsals, was a huge hit as well.”

EDUCATION

Twenty-three organizations received Education grants totaling nearly \$1.4 million, with the largest grant (\$375,000) to help bring the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation’s Teacher Fellowship Program to New Jersey.

Wendy Liscow, who is the Education Program Officer for Dodge, notes that, “While arts education remains a major component of Dodge’s Education grants, teacher and school leadership training is a top priority as well. Our vision is to help New Jersey create schools that will spark and nurture students’ creativity, desire to learn, and ability to think independently. To do that successfully, we must re-imagine New Jersey’s schools of education, which graduate hundreds of teachers every year. We must also support ongoing, high quality training for superintendents, principals and teachers to foster leadership and creativity.”

Overall, 7 of the 23 grants (\$500,000, not including Woodrow Wilson) support school leadership training, teacher training, and professional development opportunities, while 15 grants (\$495,000) went to organizations directly providing arts education in schools and in out-of-school intensive situations. The Education grants include one new grantee, New City Kids (\$15,000), which provides music education for Jersey City school children.

ENVIRONMENT

Dodge made 21 Environment grants totaling \$845,000, with the majority of the funding (\$410,000) supporting organizations which focus on watershed protection, land stewardship and connecting people to their natural world.

There are two new Environment grantees: The New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team, which tracks emerging invasive species and supports the conservation community in eradication efforts; and Rowan College’s Geospatial Lab, which will collaborate with Dodge grantee Green Map System to improve citizen access to land use and state regulatory data that will inform community asset mapping.

In addition, there were four grants to advance sustainability initiatives (\$135,000), three grants to advance regional food systems (\$50,000), and three urban greening grants (\$250,000), which includes a grant to the Trust for Public

Land to support community stewardship organizations and efforts that have been developed through the “Newark Parks for People” initiative.

“We should pause to celebrate the success of the multi-year Newark Parks for People initiative which Dodge supported with a total of \$1.5 million over five years,” said Environment Program Director Margaret Waldock. “With community participation and input, the Trust for Public Land created 12 parks and playgrounds profoundly improving neighborhood greening and access to safe play spaces for children and families in the city. This effort is the perfect illustration of the Dodge Foundation’s goals in its environmental grantmaking, supporting community parks and public green spaces to build healthy, sustainable communities.”

MEDIA

Dodge made one Media grant to longtime partner WBGO (\$55,000) for general operating support and in recognition of JazzSet’s 25th anniversary. Dodge also released two grants (originally approved in June 2011) totaling \$250,000 to help launch a partnership between Montclair State University and WNYC’s New Jersey Public Radio to build a robust, collaborative network of media organizations that will provide access to high quality, New Jersey-focused news and information to the public.

“Dodge is spearheading an effort to improve New Jerseyans’ access to the news in their communities and across the state,” notes Director of Communications Molly de Aguiar. “In 2012, we will work with our lead partners, Montclair State University and New Jersey Public Radio, as well as other media organizations and citizen journalists, to identify and help fill gaps in coverage while also encouraging growth of the news ecosystem in New Jersey.”

2012 GRANTS

The newly-launched Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation website includes an easy-to-use, searchable grants database, which lists all grants since 2008, including all 2012 grants to date: www.grdodge.org/apply/search-grants/

The Dodge Foundation makes grants three times a year, with the second and third rounds announced in July and December, respectively.

About the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation was established in 1974 through the foresight and generosity of Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge, daughter of William and Almira Rockefeller. For nearly 40 years, Dodge has supported leadership, collaboration and innovation, with a focus on addressing the issues most pressing to New Jersey. Dodge also offers a comprehensive technical assistance program geared towards strengthening the capacity of New Jersey’s nonprofit community.

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