



**The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Announces  
Harrisonburg, Virginia as Partner City for  
*Any Given Child*  
Program Creates a Long-Range Arts Education Plan  
for Students Grades K-8**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts has chosen Harrisonburg, Virginia as the 15th site for *Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child*, a program that creates a long-range arts education plan for students in grades K-8. The program will incorporate existing resources of the Harrisonburg City Public Schools, along with those of James Madison University, local arts organizations, and the Kennedy Center to create a plan for arts education specific to the city.

*Any Given Child* seeks to bring access, and equity to each student’s arts education, using an affordable model that combines the resources of the school district, local arts and community organizations, and the Kennedy Center. With the assistance of expert consultation services provided by Kennedy Center staff and other professionals, community leaders develop a long-range plan for arts education that is tailor-made for the school district and community.

“For five years, the Kennedy Center has worked to ensure that every child receives a solid, meaningful arts education from kindergarten through eighth grade. A consistent arts education improves students’ intellectual, personal, and social development,” said Kennedy Center President Michael M. Kaiser. “We are grateful to Mayor Byrd and Dr. Kizner for their commitment to this program.”

“It is extremely gratifying that the City of Harrisonburg has been selected as the next partner for Any Given Child through the Kennedy Center,” said Harrisonburg Mayor Ted Byrd. “This program will provide our youth with an incredible opportunity and serve as a resource for our local arts community. I look forward to seeing this program thrive in Harrisonburg and watching our arts community continue its success.”

“The importance of the arts cannot be underestimated for our children and the community,” said Dr. Scott Kizner, Superintendent of Harrisonburg City Public Schools. “Arts

education is a critical component in our quest to provide excellence and equity and to educate the whole child.”

By working with other local arts organizations and using existing resources, the program aims to minimize administrative overhead, thus remaining affordable. The Kennedy Center covers the majority of the cost, and also requires sites to contribute \$25,000 toward the first four years of the program. The first phase of the program is a comprehensive audit of existing arts education resources and needs assessment by Kennedy Center staff and consultants. A review of the community and the school system will reveal what arts education resources currently exist and where the gaps are for students. Based on this information, a plan is created to bring more access to arts education for all K-8 students. The audit process takes approximately nine months.

During phase two of the program, a committee of community members makes recommendations to the school district and local arts groups on how to best implement the recently-created long range plan, focusing on increasing arts opportunities for K-8 students. In addition, educators and artists can take advantage of a wealth of resources available from the Kennedy Center, such as supplemental lessons with online interactive learning modules and videos available at [www.kennedy-center.org/artsedge](http://www.kennedy-center.org/artsedge), and professional development for teachers and teaching artists. The goal of this second phase is to provide a tapestry of arts education, strategically weaving together existing arts resources within the schools with those available from community providers and the Kennedy Center in order to reach every child.

Since the program’s inception, *Any Given Child* sites have reported numerous successes: some school districts have hired additional teachers or added staff positions; new sources of funding for arts education have been established; communities have expanded arts offerings for students; and sites have provided professional learning for classroom teachers, arts specialists, and local arts organizations to build their capacity to deliver high quality arts education to students.

In 2009, the Kennedy Center and Mayor Kevin Johnson announced the first formal *Any Given Child* program in Sacramento, California. In February 2010, Springfield, Missouri became the second school district to participate in the program. Portland, Oregon joined the program in June 2010; and Southern Nevada joined in December 2010. Tulsa, Oklahoma joined the program in May 2011; Sarasota, Florida joined in June 2011; Austin, Texas joined in August 2011; Iowa City, Iowa joined in August, 2012; Baltimore, Maryland joined in September 2012; Fresno,

California joined in October 2012. Juneau, Alaska joined in February 2013; Madison, Wisconsin joined in July 2013, and Missoula, Montana and Jacksonville, Florida joined in August 2013. The Kennedy Center accepts applications between January 1 and March 31 of each year for a program start in the fall of the same year.

In February, the Kennedy Center announced a \$1 million gift from Newman's Own Foundation in honor of A. E. Hotchner and his many contributions to the success of Newman's Own. The grant established an endowment to help underserved communities participate in the Center's *Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child* program.

### **ABOUT EDUCATION AT THE KENNEDY CENTER**

The Kennedy Center retains its commitment as the nation's cultural center to educating and enlightening children and adults in Washington and around the country. The Center's national education programs include: *Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child*, which works with 14 municipalities and their school districts around the country to develop a long-range strategic plan for arts education; ARTSEdge, a website that offers standards-based materials for use in and out of the classroom, Partners in Education, which forges relationships between an arts organization and its neighboring school systems to build effective arts education programs for teachers and teaching artists; Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network works with 33 state organizations on arts education policy issues; Explore the Arts, which provide insight into the cultural and historical context of the works presented on stage and sparks dialogue between audiences and the artists who have created the performances through participatory workshops, demonstrations, panels, master classes, and open rehearsals; and the Kennedy Center Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Awards, which acknowledge teachers of grades K-12 whose efforts have made a significant impact on their students.

In and around DC, the Kennedy Center's programs include *Changing Education Through the Arts*, a program that works with 15 schools in the area to affect long-term change in school culture through professional learning in arts integration; Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers, which trains Washington-area educators to teach the arts or other subject areas through the arts; and Washington, D.C. Partnership Schools, where the Center provides resources and teaching artist residencies to 20 elementary, junior, and senior high schools in Washington, D.C. The Center also mounts more than 100 events and performances of theater, music, dance, and opera throughout the season for more than 100,000 local school-aged children.

In addition, the Center offers multiple skill development programs for young artists and professionals both locally and nationally, including the National Symphony Orchestra's Youth Fellowship Program, Summer Music Institute, and High School Competition; Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, Opera Institute, and Kids Create Opera Partnership; the biennial New Visions/ New Voices forum for development of new plays for young people; Exploring Ballet with Suzanne Farrell; Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead; VSA's Playwright Discovery Program, Young Soloists, and Visual Arts Programs; arts administration internships; and the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival which impacts

hundreds of thousands of college-aged theater students across the country and marks its 47th anniversary in 2015.

**FUNDING CREDITS:**

*Any Given Child*, part of the *Rubenstein Arts Access Program*, is generously funded by **David and Alice Rubenstein**.

This program is also funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional support provided by David Gregory and Beth Wilkinson; the President's Advisory Committee on the Arts; and the U.S. Department of Education.

**For more information about *Any Given Child*,  
please visit [www.kennedy-center.org/education/anygivenchild](http://www.kennedy-center.org/education/anygivenchild)**

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**PRESS CONTACT:**

Amanda Hunter  
The Kennedy Center  
(202) 416-8441  
[aehunter@kennedy-center.org](mailto:aehunter@kennedy-center.org)