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NEW REPORT DESCRIBES TECHNIQUES FOR DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN PUBLIC HOUSING COMMUNITIES

Strategies in “Creative Communities” Report Applicable to an Array of Cross-Sector Arts Education Partnerships

National Endowment for the Arts, Department of Housing and Urban Development and National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts Disseminate Findings from Three-Year, \$4.65 Million Initiative to Fund and Analyze 20 Arts Education Partnerships for Children and Youth in Public Housing Communities

New York, NY—The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts (www.nationalguild.org) has released the *Creative Communities Initiative Summary Report*. The new report summarizes strategies for successful arts education partnerships with public housing communities. Findings were gleaned from an extraordinary three-year, \$4.65 million partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and National Guild. Many of the findings are relevant to a wide range of cross-sector arts education partnerships.

“The Creative Communities Initiative did what many of us hope to do—broaden, deepen and diversify participation in the arts,” said Jonathan Katz, CEO of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). “This helpful report summarizes the lessons learned from this three-year project to build a sustaining connection between community schools of the arts and people living and working in public housing.”

Coordinated by the National Guild, the Creative Communities Initiative channeled resources from the NEA, HUD and 10 corporations and foundations to partnerships between community schools of the arts and public housing communities in 20 cities. The Initiative was successful in delivering high-quality arts instruction to more than 7,000 children and youth. Of these students, 94%

reported feelings of safety and belonging in their classes, more than 90% reported wanting to learn more about the arts, and more than 75% felt that their capacity for self-expression increased.

Evaluation results indicated that the Initiative had limited success in achieving its goal of fostering *sustained* partnerships between community schools and public housing communities. Only five of the 20 partnerships were able to sustain their programs beyond the three-year term of the initiative. Even so, a great deal was learned about what it takes to establish sustainable partnerships between community-based arts education organizations and public housing authorities. The report highlights successful strategies such as collaborative planning in which both partners are engaged from the outset; ensuring ongoing communication across multiple levels at each partner organization; publicly championing the partnership project; conducting evaluation; getting to know the population being served; and understanding the protocol, rules and regulations affecting your partner.

Copies of the *Creative Communities Initiative Summary Report* are available at www.nationalguild.org. Hard copies may be purchased for \$15 (Guild members) or \$20 (others). An electronic version, in PDF format, may be downloaded free-of-charge.

The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts is the national service organization for a diverse constituency of non-profit organizations providing arts education in urban, suburban and rural communities throughout the United States. We support the creation and development of community schools of the arts by providing research and information resources, professional development and networking opportunities, advocacy, and high-profile leadership. In this way, we advance high-quality, community-based arts education so that all people may participate in the arts according to their interests and abilities. Our 350 member schools serve more than 500,000 students in 45 states.

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