

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MetLife Foundation and National Guild Award \$80,000 in Grants to 12 Creative Aging Programs

Arts education program designed to improve well being of older adults

New York, NY—MetLife Foundation and the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts (National Guild) have announced the grant recipients of this year's MetLife Foundation Creative Aging Program. Grants will support the design and implementation of sustainable creative aging programs, which provide participatory, skill-based arts education for adults age 60 and older. In addition, technical assistance will be provided for the implementation of best practices detailed in the National Guild's [Creativity Matters: The Arts and Aging Toolkit](#) and program evaluation. Grants have been awarded to 12 community arts education organizations in 10 states.

The Creative Aging Program was initiated in 2009 by MetLife Foundation and the National Guild in response to the rapid population growth of Americans aged 60+, as well as the research demonstrating the potential health benefits of professionally-led, participatory arts programs for older adults. In fact, on average participants in last year's program realized a statistically significant improvement in their moods reinforcing the findings in more controlled research on creative aging, such as the National Endowment for the Arts' 2006 [Creativity and Aging Study](#).

"MetLife Foundation is committed to making quality arts education accessible for all Americans," stated **Dennis White**, president and CEO of MetLife Foundation. "We are proud to partner with the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts to develop and expand effective arts programming for older adults. Guild members are doing exemplary work in this area. "

The MetLife Foundation Creative Aging Program is designed to:

- Increase the capacity of community arts education providers to serve older adults
- Provide models of high quality creative aging programs to the field; and
- Raise public awareness about the benefits of creative aging programs.

Grants were awarded to the following National Guild member organizations:

- **Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge**, Baton Rouge, La. (visual arts)*
- **Baltimore Clayworks, Inc.**, Baltimore, Md. (visual arts/ceramics)*
- **CityDance Ensemble**, Washington, D.C. (dance)
- **Kairos Dance Theatre**, Minneapolis, Minn. (dance, theater, music, and story arts)
- **Longy School of Music**, Cambridge, Mass., (music)*
- **MacPhail Center for Music**, Minneapolis, Minn. (music)*
- **Nevada Senior Services**, Las Vegas, Nev. (dance)
- **New Orleans Ballet Association**, New Orleans, La. (dance)*
- **The Phoenix Conservatory of Music**, Phoenix, Ariz. (music)
- **Village of Arts & Humanities**, Philadelphia, Pa, (photography)
- **Brooklyn-Queens Conservatory of Music**, Brooklyn, N.Y. (choral music); and
- **Progressive Arts Alliance**, Cleveland, Ohio (media arts)

[Click here for descriptions of each program.](#)

Grantees will provide a minimum of 90 minutes of sequential, participatory instruction weekly to at least 20 adults aged 60 or older. First-time grantees will provide instruction for 12 or more weeks between February 1 and June 30, 2010. Returning grantees (*) will provide instruction for 24 or more weeks between February 1 and December 31, 2010.

"Through the MetLife Foundation Creative Aging Program, we will continue to enhance our members' capacity to launch, expand, evaluate and sustain successful creative aging programs, and share what they learn with the field," said **Jonathan Herman, Executive Director of the National Guild**.

The Creative Aging program is part of the National Guild's multi-year Creative Aging Initiative, which, in partnership with the National Center for Creative Aging and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, published *Creativity Matters: The Arts and Aging Toolkit* in English and Spanish (www.artsandaging.org) and which also produces training institutes for community arts education leaders. For more information on the Guild's Creative Aging Initiative, visit www.nationalguild.org/programs/creativeaging.htm, or call (212) 268-3337 ext. 18.

The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts supports and advances access to lifelong learning in the arts so that all people may participate according to their interests and abilities. The Guild's 400+ member organizations include neighborhood music schools, dance studios, arts centers and community arts education divisions of museums, universities, and theater companies. They are located in urban, suburban and rural communities in 45 states. In concert with this dynamic network, the Guild researches and promotes best practices, provides opportunities for professional development and dialogue, advocates for broad access, and makes grants to the field. Collectively, the Guild's 400 + member institutions offer direct instruction to one million students

each year. In addition to providing classes and lessons within their own facilities, most members also collaborate with senior centers, hospitals, public schools, and other agencies to increase communities' access to arts education. www.nationalguild.org

MetLife Foundation was established by MetLife to continue the company's long tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation supports programs that improve education, promote health, encourage parental involvement and family engagement, help revitalize neighborhoods and stress accessibility and inclusion. Recognizing the vital role the arts play in building communities and educating young people, the Foundation contributes to arts and cultural organizations across the United States, with an emphasis on increasing opportunities for young people, reaching broad audiences through inclusive programming, and making arts more accessible for all people. For more information about the Foundation, please visit its web site at www.metlife.org.

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