



Monroe County Legislature

Vincent R. Felder
Democratic Minority Leader

Ernest Flagler-Mitchell
Black & Asian Caucus Leader

Frank Keophetlasy
Legislator – District 28

May 10, 2021

To the Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
407 County Office Building
Rochester, New York 14614

Subject: Authorize the Allocation of Emergency Grant Funding to Support Arts Organizations Negatively Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic

OFFICIAL FILE COPY	
No.	210165
Not to be removed from the Office of the Legislature Of Monroe County	
Committee Assignment	
URGENT	-L

Honorable Legislators:

Monroe County has always been a leader in the world of art and cultural. Home to a vibrant and diverse community; we have always been trailblazers in the arts community. From the renowned Eastman School of Music to the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra to the Memorial Art Gallery and so many other large-scale art organizations, our area has fostered creativity and expression through the arts. Unfortunately, there are a number of valuable smaller arts programs that are all too frequently left to fend for themselves, not receiving the support they need and deserve.

According to the National Center for Arts Research, arts and culture provides \$93 million into the Monroe County economy annually while supporting over 1,500 full-time jobs, 2,100 part-time jobs and roughly 6,600 volunteers. The City of Rochester has appeared on the organization's annual list of "The Top 40 Most Vibrant Arts Communities" three out of the last six years. While these findings were concurred by the Center for Governmental Research in 2019, this review also found shortcomings that have held our community back, particularly a lack of public financing for mid-sized arts.

This year's Monroe County budget allocates just \$1.4 million for arts funding – an amount without a sufficient increase from years past. For too long our local artists and organizations have not received the adequate funding that truly corresponds to their community worth. In nearby Erie County, their 2021 Budget allocates over \$6 million for arts – funding that truly displays the areas commitment to their artists. Each year, Monroe County has continued to fail its local artists and the community that benefits so much from their work by its lack of funding and lack of funding diversity. Monroe County gives three-quarters of its arts allocation to two organizations and one-fifth of it to another seven. In particular, mid-sized arts groups receive barely 3-percent of the arts allocation and for several years, the same groups each year have split the amount.

It is time for Monroe County to commit to its vibrant and diverse art community by support mid-sized arts organizations. Further, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this lack of funding – forcing organizations and artists into fiscal ruin – and further displaying this point. Funding for the arts should match the immense value it brings to our community while ensuring diverse funding for all the artists and organizations our community has to offer, particularly mid-sized art groups.

The specific legislative actions required is to authorize the President of the Legislature, or his designee, to execute grant agreements, contracts, or applications, and any amendments thereto, with the organizations listed below, for Monroe County to provide funding to arts organizations negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic that have not previously received County funding or received insufficient

funding through the Mid-Sized Arts Grant budget allocation, in the total amount of \$131,000, for the period of January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Organization

The Avenue Blackbox Theatre	\$20,000
Rochester Contemporary Art Center	\$10,000
Rochester Community Television	\$20,000
Borinquen Dance Theatre	\$20,000
Legacy Drama House	\$10,000
Rochester Latino Theatre	\$10,000
Blackfriars of Rochester Inc.	\$3,500
Boa Editions Limited	\$3,500
Deep Arts	\$2,500
Flower City Arts Center	\$3,500
Garth Fagan Dance	\$4,000
Landmark Society of WNY Inc.	\$4,500
Push Physical Theatre	\$3,000
Rochester City Ballet	\$5,500
Rochester Oratorio Society	\$3,000
Visual Studies Workshop Inc.	\$3,500
Writers And Books	\$4,500

Total: \$131,000

This is a Type II Action pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617.5(c) (26) ("routine of continuing agency administration and management, not including new programs or major reordering of priorities that may affect the environment") and is not subject to further review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

Funding for these agreements are included in the 2021 operating budget of the Monroe County Legislature, Community Contingency Fund, general fund 9001, funds center 1001020000, Community Contingency Fund.

All the above organizations are not-for-profit agencies, and the records in the Office of the Monroe County Treasury indicate they do not owe and delinquent Monroe County property taxes.

We recommend this matter be referred to the appropriate committee(s) for favorable action by this Honorable Body.

Respectfully Submitted,



Vincent R. Felder
Monroe County Legislature
Democratic Minority Leader



Ernest Flagler-Mitchell
Monroe County Legislature
Black & Asian Caucus Leader



Frank Keophetlasy
Monroe County Legislator
District 28

By Legislators _____ and _____

Intro. No. _____

RESOLUTION NO. ____ OF 2021

AUTHORIZING ALLOCATION OF EMERGENCY GRANT FUNDING TO SUPPORT ARTS ORGANIZATIONS NEGATIVELY IMPACTED BY COVID-19 PANDEMIC

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE COUNTY OF MONROE, as follows:

Section 1. The President of the Legislature, or his designee, is hereby authorized to execute grant agreements, contracts, or applications, and any amendments thereto, with the organizations listed below, in the total amount of \$131,000, for emergency grant funding related to the COVID-19 pandemic, for the period of January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Organization

The Avenue Blackbox Theatre	\$20,000
Rochester Contemporary Art Center	\$10,000
Rochester Community Television	\$20,000
Borinquen Dance Theatre	\$20,000
Legacy Drama House	\$10,000
Rochester Latino Theatre	\$10,000
Blackfriars of Rochester Inc.	\$3,500
Boa Editions Limited	\$3,500
Deep Arts	\$2,500
Flower City Arts Center	\$3,500
Garth Fagan Dance	\$4,000
Landmark Society of WNY Inc.	\$4,500
Push Physical Theatre	\$3,000
Rochester City Ballet	\$5,500
Rochester Oratorio Society	\$3,000
Visual Studies Workshop Inc.	\$3,500
Writers And Books	\$4,500
Total:	<u>\$131,000</u>

Section 2. Funding for these agreements, contracts, or applications is included in the 2021 operating budget of the Monroe County Legislature, general fund 9001, funds center 1001020000, Community Contingency Fund.

Section 3. This resolution shall take effect in accordance with Section C2-7 of the Monroe County Charter.

Matter of Urgency
File No. 21-_____

ADOPTION: Date: _____

Vote: _____

ACTION BY THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

APPROVED: _____ VETOED: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

EFFECTIVE DATE OF RESOLUTION: _____