**Local Arts Leader Has a New Name and Broader Mission**

***Business Consortium for Arts Support is now Arts Alliance***

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**Norfolk, VA – Feb. 21, 2022 -** For more than 30 years, the **Business Consortium for Arts Support** has done exactly what its name implied: Collected and distributed donations from businesses and foundations to fund local non-profit arts organizations through grants. Originally based on a national “United Arts Fund” model of pooling resources, the approach became more and more dated as corporations shifted their own funding models or relocated to different areas. Simultaneously, a new need for overall regional arts leadership has emerged to view the sector as a whole and to unite and organize arts projects and local advocacy.

The newly named **Arts Alliance** adds leadership, advocacy and services to its historical financial funding. Since its establishment in 1987, the organization has granted over $25 million in general operating support to over 65 arts and cultural organizations in the South Hampton Roads area. “Arts Alliance is a new name, but our belief remains that art is crucial to the creation of a vibrant community,” stated Walker Phillips, President of Arts Alliance. “We welcome businesses, foundations and individuals to join us in celebrating and supporting our local arts groups.”

“For decades the Business Consortium for Arts Support has supported the arts in Hampton Roads. It’s exciting to see what the future holds under the new name of Arts Alliance with their expanded role,” said Robert W. Cross, Virginia Arts Festival Executive Director and Perry Artistic Director. “The leadership and staff are embracing the challenges and opportunities created by the pandemic with the goal of strengthening local arts organizations both artistically and financially.”

Arts Alliance will seek to stand as a backbone of arts sector leadership with the creation of a new Advisory Committee. With the goal of attracting passionate arts patrons to partner on specific projects, Advisory Committee Chair Lewis Webb stated, “Growth happens when business and volunteer arts leaders collaborate in support of the arts and our incredible arts groups. We are committed to bringing arts advocacy and new ideas to our region.”

Under the new name, Arts Alliance will continue to provide services for artists and arts employees such as *Wills for the Arts*, an annual program hosted by member law firms to provide life and estate planning documents for eligible artists and arts group employees. More than 70 arts families have been assisted through this program during the last three years. Additional services (coming soon!) will include financial planning and budgeting seminars, as well as artist networking events and collaboration platforms.

Arts Alliance is funded through business and foundation support that is distributed annually to local organizations who apply and demonstrate artistic quality and fiscal responsibility. Beginning in 2022, the organization will also accept individual contributions to be allocated through grants to these deserving arts groups. For more information on how to become a member or make an individual tax-deductible donation, visit ArtsAllianceVa.org

**About Arts Alliance**

Business Consortium for Arts Support (doing business as Arts Alliance) is a 501 (c)3 organization whose mission is to foster a strong, vibrant and inclusive community through arts leadership, advocacy, services and support.

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