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Art-Reach Announces Recipients of the 2014 Commitment to Cultural Access Awards

On April 24, 2014, Art-Reach will honor the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and STAMP: The Virginia & Harvey Kimmel Family Teen Program of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance.

PHILADELPHIA (February 18, 2014) – Art-Reach, a Philadelphia-based arts accessibility non-profit, announced today the recipients of the 2014 Commitment to Cultural Access Awards. Each year, Art-Reach honors organizations or individuals in Greater Philadelphia who are doing extraordinary work in the area of accessibility. The Awards will be presented at the Penn Museum on Thursday April 24, to celebrate the honorees and raise funds for Art-Reach’s ongoing programs connecting underserved individuals to the arts.

The 2014 Commitment to Cultural Access honorees are: the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, whose innovative touch tour series has set a standard for serving visitors with vision loss; and STAMP: The Virginia and Harvey Kimmel Family Teen Program of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, which ensures free admittance to Philadelphia teenagers to 12 museums across the city.

“We’re thrilled and honored to receive a Commitment to Cultural Access Award, especially in the first year of the STAMP program,” said Michael Norris, Interim Executive Director of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance. “It’s a wonderful vote of confidence and acknowledgement of the impact STAMP has already achieved within Philadelphia’s highly marginalized and often isolated teen community. I know this award will inspire us to continue expanding and enhancing the program so it can have an even deeper impact on our city’s young people.”

The honorees will be recognized at the 2014 Commitment to Cultural Access Awards Celebration, which will be held Thursday April 24, at the Penn Museum, in the Egypt (Sphinx) Gallery. An anticipated 200 guests will be in attendance, and proceeds from this event will generate approximately 10% of Art-Reach’s annual operating budget, allowing them to provide arts and cultural experience to over 17,000 individuals each year of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. For more information about the Awards, visit www.art-reach.org.

Of this award, Jean Byrne, Merle-Smith Director of Learning at the Penn Museum said, “Penn Museum Touch Tours are an excellent example of working with and experiencing education for all communities. It is a pleasure to be recognized by Art Reach with this honor.”



Art-Reach Executive Director Marion Young expressed her enthusiasm about the 2014 recipients, saying, “These two worthy honorees represent a deep dedication to ensuring that the art and culture of our region are made readily available to all members of our community. These programs are well-aligned with our mission of providing experiences to traditionally underserved audiences, and we are delighted to honor them for their efforts.”

About Art Reach: Art-Reach is a Philadelphia based non-profit established in 1986 to make the arts of our region more accessible to people that lack access to our cultural organizations because of a disability, economic disadvantage, or other adversity. Through ticketed live arts events, on-site workshops, and a fine art placement program, Art-Reach empowers over 17,000 traditionally under-served individuals, of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to creatively participate in their communities, every year. For more information about how to get involved with or support Art-Reach, visit www.art-reach.org.

About University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology: Founded in 1887, the Penn Museum is one of the world’s great archaeology and anthropology research museums, and the largest university museum in the United States. With roughly one million objects in our care, the Penn Museum encapsulates and illustrates the human story: who we are and where we came from. As a dynamic research institution with many ongoing research projects, the Museum is a vibrant and engaging place of continual discovery, with the mandate of research, teaching, collections stewardship, and public engagement—the four “pillars” of what we do.

In fall 2012, the Penn Museum launched its first season of “Insights into Ancient Egypt Touch Tours,” a one-of-a-kind new outreach program which exclusively invites blind and visually impaired individuals from throughout the Delaware Valley—both adults and K-12 school children—to experience select objects from the Museum’s renowned Egyptian collection through the sense of touch. We followed with our second, more developed programming in 2013, and are developing plans to have this be an ongoing and sustainable program.

About STAMP: STAMP (Students at Museums in Philly) is a program of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, in partnership with 12 museums and attractions and a group of generous sponsors and community organizations. Our mission is to increase teens’ access to all of the incredible arts and culture Philadelphia has to offer, as a means to discovering their own identities and including culture in their menu of leisure-time options. The STAMP pass is FREE and available to any Philadelphia teen between the ages of 14 and 19. Learn more at <http://phillystamp.org/>.

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