



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Ann Gillette, [agillette@charterarts.org](mailto:agillette@charterarts.org)

## **Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts to Receive \$10,000 Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts**

BETHLEHEM, PA— The Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts (Charter Arts) has been approved for a \$10,000 Grants for Arts Projects award to support a 10-day dance residency program, “Passion Fruit Seeds: Focus on Black Excellence” with the Passion Fruit Dance Company. This project will provide dance instruction, lectures and conversations for students designed to promote a greater understanding of how dance and social justice issues intersect. The school’s project is among 1,248 projects across America totaling \$28,840,000 that were selected to receive this first round of fiscal year 2022 funding in the Grants for Arts Projects category.

“The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support arts projects like “Passion Fruit Seeds: Focus on Black Excellence” dance residency program that helps support the community’s creative economy,” said NEA Acting Chair Ann Eilers. “The Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts in Bethlehem is among the arts organizations nationwide that are using the arts as a source of strength, a path to well-being, and providing access and opportunity for people to connect and find joy through the arts.”

“We are honored to receive recognition and funding from the National Endowment for the Arts,” says Charter Arts Superintendent & CEO, Dr. Carise Comstock. “This grant will help to support the incredible work that we do every day to provide a rigorous arts-centered curriculum for our students and to develop the next generation of collaborative artists and innovative thinkers who will impact the world with their unique vision and voice.”

Passion Fruit Dance Company is a street/club dance theater and educational company founded by Tatiana Desardouin, Artistic Director & Choreographer, that promotes the authenticity of street/club dance styles, using hip-hop and house cultures to highlight black culture, heritage and contribution to society. The company also explores the human experience, addresses social issues and thrives to inspire young artists to share their voices. A key component of the company is Passion Fruit Seeds, an educational program led by Tatiana, Mai Lê Hô (Core member) and Lauriane Ogay (Core member), that explores social issues through dance. The 10-day residency will be a dynamic, creative experience that will build upon the school’s ongoing equity, diversity and inclusion work by providing a new outlet to foster conversations about race, celebrate black excellence through art, and connect the school to social justice issues in the world. (Information provided by Passion Fruit Dance Company.)



For more information on other projects included in the Arts Endowment grant announcement, visit [arts.gov/news](http://arts.gov/news).

ABOUT THE LEHIGH VALLEY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS (Charter Arts):

Charter Arts is an audition-based public charter school that provides a comprehensive curriculum for high school students, grades 9-12, who have a passion for the arts. Students major in one of seven creative or performing arts disciplines that include: dance, instrumental music, literary arts, production arts, theatre, visual arts, or vocal music.

Charter Arts' rigorous curriculum fosters both academic and artistic excellence for its students. The school's impressive Future Ready PA Index ranking, Advanced Placement (AP) exam statistics, Keystone Exam statistics, SAT scores, prestigious artistic accolades, and graduation rate, are testaments to the outstanding education that Charter Arts provides.

Charter Arts is proud to celebrate its nineteenth year as one of the most respected high schools for the arts in the nation. Charter Arts was named a 2018 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education. The school has also earned the Title I Distinguished School designation for four years, placing it in the top 5 % of all Title I high schools in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Recently, Charter Arts was ranked #1 Best Public High School Teachers in PA and #1 Best Charter High School in PA on Niche's 2022 Best Schools in America Rankings.

Charter Arts is located at 321 East 3rd Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015.

For more information about the school or upcoming auditions for the 2022-2023 school year, visit [www.CharterArts.org](http://www.CharterArts.org).

###