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The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture Launches Arts2Work, the first Federally Registered National Apprenticeship Program in Media Arts + Creative Technologies

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Washington, DC – The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture announced today that the United States Department of Labor (DOL) awarded them federal registration for the first National Apprenticeship Program in Media Arts and Creative Technologies. Through [Arts2Work](#), for the first time in the United States, paid professional apprenticeships will be available for Creative Multimedia Producers and Digital Video Editors in participating companies, agencies and organizations across the country. In the future, additional job categories will be added, including Digital Archivist, Game Designer, New Media Director, and Audio Engineer.

Arts2Work is the first step towards realizing a bold vision for workforce development and career sustainability in the arts, a sector that has generated \$166.3 billion in economic activity, supported 4.6 million jobs and generated \$27.5 billion in revenue to local, state and federal governments. *(from Arts & Economic Prosperity Report 5, Americans for the Arts, 2015)*

The federal registration for Arts2Work is important because it qualifies this new national program to receive grants from the U.S. DOL and Department of Education (ED), as well as subsidies to defray the cost of the apprenticeship program for participating employers through the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) and State Workforce Boards, State tax credits and Employee Tuition benefits, and training support through programs like Pell Grants and the GI Bill. According to the U.S. DOL, employers who utilize apprentices report higher productivity, higher retention rates and a substantial return on investment. Until now, the arts sector has been completely left out of the national workforce development infrastructure.

Arts2Work will be embarking on a national tour later this year to build the network of Arts2Work cities, employers, pre-apprenticeship training centers, and the first cohort of Arts2Work apprentices. Arts2Work will build partnerships state-by-state to support creative career pathways, with special outreach to media artists of color, women, youth, veterans, the disabled, and formerly incarcerated.

“Filmmakers and other artists have never been afforded viable professional apprenticeship opportunities in the American economy,” says Wendy Levy, the Executive Director of The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture, the nonprofit organization that created and will oversee the Arts2Work Program. *“Arts2Work is a way for creative people to realize their career ambitions and for employers to access the support they need to hire, train and mentor valuable employees and creative leaders.”*

U.S. Senator Patty Murray also offers her support, *“Apprenticeships are an invaluable resource to train workers for high-skilled jobs of the 21st century, so I am pleased that Arts2Work is being recognized for its innovative work as a national apprenticeship program in the media arts and creative technologies. This important program will help lift up workers, their wages, and diverse voices in our creative arts.”*

When Arts2Work launches, qualified Multimedia Producer and Video Editor apprentices will be hired as fulltime staff by participating companies and organizations across the United States. They will participate in a one-year program of on-the-job learning and mentorship and pursue related supplemental instruction designed to deepen the creative and technical expertise of the apprentice. For an inner-city high school graduate with digital skills, or a journalist rejoining the workforce after raising children, or a veteran ready to enter the civilian job market, or a liberal arts college grad paying off student loans – this is a new and potentially transformative career opportunity. But Arts2Work is more than just an on-the-job training program. Arts2Work will ensure that high-quality professional apprenticeships are available in the arts just as they are in other fields like energy, construction, telecommunications and IT, hospitality, manufacturing, and health care.

Another central component of Arts2Work is that it will support participating employers as they adopt and comply with progressive equal pay, diversity and sexual harassment policies. Additionally, Arts2Work apprentices will become part of a mentorship network that includes access to professional development, grants for creative projects, lifelong learning and entrepreneurship training. Arts2Work will therefore train people for sustainable creative careers, provide pathways out of poverty, empower innovation in business, and build community resilience.

About Arts2Work

Arts2Work began as the Creative Workforce Development Initiative in 2015 at The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture. Envisioned and designed by Alliance Executive Director Wendy Levy, it came about just a year after President Obama signed the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) into law. It was a pragmatic response to the real challenges faced during many years of serving struggling artists and arts organizations, and catalyzed by series of field convenings and reports dealing with the lack of career sustainability for independent filmmakers. Levy herself was a waitress for 25 years as she built her career as a creative professional. Even after going back to school for an MFA in Cinema, and her first short film premiered at Sundance, Levy found there were no fulltime jobs available, no viable means of support for a feature film project, a dearth of fulltime teaching positions, and few grants for which she qualified. After relinquishing a filmmaking career to indulge her true calling as a futurist and passionate advocate for artists and communities, Levy began leading nonprofits and consulting for foundations and creative institutions to devise powerful and innovative public programs like The Producers Institute for New Media Technologies and the Sundance/Skoll Stories of Change Program. After developing Arts2Work for a year, Levy partnered with Raben_Impact, a project of The Raben Group, and Consultant Elspeth Revere, former Vice President of the MacArthur Foundation, as strategists and policy advisors. In 2017, Christina Orticke joined the Alliance consulting team, bringing over 25 years of experience working with large international public and private corporations, start-ups, minority-owned/women-owned enterprises, and nonprofit organizations. Orticke will oversee administration and end-to-end operations of the national Arts2Work program.

<http://www.thealliance.media/Arts2Work>

About The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture

The Alliance was founded in 1980 by an eclectic group of media arts organization leaders who realized they could strengthen their social and cultural impact by working as a united force. Their idea was as bold as it was simple: to create a national organization that would provide support services to its institutional members, and advocate for the field as a whole. Since its founding, The Alliance has worked to raise the profile and influence of the media arts on behalf of its growing and changing membership. Today, The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture welcomes individuals across disciplines, local, regional and national media nonprofits, international NGOs and strategic partners from all sectors, building an inclusive, collaborative, creative future. Core Programs include Arts2Work, The Innovation Studio and HatchLabs, Cherry Red Ventures, Creative Leadership and the National Youth Media Network. www.thealliance.media