



NDCA secures new funding for Creative Aging

For Immediate Release

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North Dakota Council on the Arts (NDCA) recently secured new funding from a national grant program to advance creative aging programs for older adults in North Dakota.

Recognizing that older adults have many contributions to make to their communities—but that they often face ageism and isolation and have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19—NDCA sought funding from the Leveraging State Investments in Creative Aging program, a joint initiative of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) and Aroha Philanthropies. NDCA secured \$60,000 for The Tiny Press Kit project.

"NASAA is proud to have NDCA in our creative aging cohort," said Pam Breaux, NASAA President and CEO. "This grant will help to grow opportunities for creative aging in North Dakota over time, facilitating lifelong learning, joy, social engagement and improved well-being for older adults."

"Aroha Philanthropies is proud to partner with NASAA to support creative aging through our

state and jurisdictional arts agencies," said Ellen Michelson, founder and president of the foundation. "This initiative marks an important step toward broadened awareness, adoption and funding of creative aging programs across the country."

NDCA is one of 36 state arts agencies receiving awards from NASAA. With this funding, each state will conduct creative aging activities tailored to the unique needs of its constituents. NDCA's *Art for Life Program* will partner with North Dakota State University's (NDSU) School of Design, Architecture and Art, as well as folk artists, to create four unique sets of art kits with sequential, skill-based art instruction videos accessible online for elders. Printmaking that incorporates folk art designs such as East Indian Warli, Swedish bonadsmålning, Norwegian skinfelling and Lakota ledger art will be the primary focus.

NDCA folklorist and director of the *Art for Life Program*, Troyd Geist states, "This is an exciting project that merges age-old traditional art forms with cutting edge technology to the betterment of the lives of older adults. The work also will form the basis of a mutually beneficial ongoing, capacity-building partnership between the talented people at NDSU's School of Design, Architecture and Art, and NDCA."

To make the kits affordable, designed and adapted for older adults mobility issues, and easily shipped, 16 3-D printers with laser cutters will be used to create working 3-D models of printing presses no bigger than a shoebox. The kits will include printing presses, art materials, creative aging resources and curriculum. The kits can stand alone with online video instruction or be used by artists to complement in-person residencies.

The printing will connect to holidays and other occasions where greeting card exchanges are part of the already existing cultural practices of the elders connecting them to loved ones. An intergenerational component is an important part of the effort with schoolchildren participating in the printmaking and card exchange with elders. A set of four kits will be distributed to paired eldercare/service organizations and schools in 36 communities statewide.

Michael Strand, Director – School of Design, Architecture and Art comments, "We are thrilled to engage faculty, researchers, students and staff with such a meaningful continuation of the Land Grant University mission at NDSU. One of the missions of the new School of Design, Architecture and Art is to imagine and implement projects within Art and Design that enable

healthy, vibrant communities across the state of North Dakota.”

For information about new creative aging activities taking place in North Dakota, visit www.arts.nd.gov/art-life-program. For more information about NASAA's Leveraging State Investments in Creative Aging initiative, visit <https://nasaa-arts.org/communication/new-initiative-expands-creative-aging-nationwide>.

This activity is made possible by a grant provided by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies in partnership with Aroha Philanthropies.

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The [North Dakota Council on the Arts](#) is the state agency responsible for the support and development of the arts throughout North Dakota and is funded by the state legislature and the [National Endowment for the Arts](#).

[NASAA's mission](#) is to strengthen state arts agencies. They are the professional association of the nation's 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies. NASAA is a national, not-for-profit, nonpartisan organization that champions public support for the arts in America. Together, NASAA and the state arts agencies advance the arts as an essential ingredient in the well-being and prosperity of our nation's individuals, communities and families.

[Aroha Philanthropies mission](#) is to awaken creative expression and build communities through the arts. Aroha (pronounced: 'AH-row-ha) is a core value of the Maori culture of New Zealand. The full meaning of the word does not exist in a single equivalent English word. Built on the foundation of love, Aroha combines selflessness, tolerance, kindness, and compassion. Aroha is the creative force that comes from the spirit and is represented in action through generosity. This word beautifully embodies the spirit and life philosophy of the foundation's founder and president, Ellen Michelson.

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