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Awardees of Inaugural Delaware Arts Advocacy Awards Announced

Wilmington, DE (October 18, 2016) – Delaware Arts Alliance (DAA) Executive Director Dr. Guillermina Gonzalez, in collaboration with the University of Delaware and the Delaware Division of the Arts, announced the awardees for the inaugural Arts Advocacy Awards which were held on Monday, October 10 at Mitchell Hall on UD's Newark campus. The event brought out 250 members of the arts community to celebrate leadership in the arts.

The 2016 Arts Advocacy Award Recipients were:

- **Education:** Joann Browning, Associate Dean for the Arts, College of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Theatre, University of Delaware (Nominated by the University of Delaware).
- **Leadership:** Marcia DeWitt, President, Board of Trustees, Biggs Museum of American Art (Nominated by the Biggs Museum) and Nancy Lynch, President, Board of Directors, Delaware Shakespeare Festival (Nominated by Delaware Shakespeare Festival).
- **Philanthropy:** John Schoonover, Trustee, Biggs Museum of American Art; Frank E. Schoonover Studios (Nominated by the Biggs Museum).
- **Volunteerism:** James Hartzell, Board Member and Director Selection for the Artistic Committee, Possum Point Players (Nominated by Possum Point Players).
- **Lifetime Achievement Award:** Robert Grenfell, Former Executive Director, First State Ballet Theatre (Nominated by the Arts Advocacy Awards Panel).

Dr. Gonzalez congratulated the awardees saying, "The inaugural 2016 Awards Advocacy Awards paid tribute to these outstanding individuals who showed an inspired commitment to the arts in Delaware. We are fortunate to have these champions of the arts, whose dedication has enriched the cultural landscape of the State."

The program included performances from artists in New Castle, Kent and Sussex Counties: Vocal Point (UD co-ed *a capella* group); Sankofa African Dance Company (comprised of students from Inner City Dover and Central Delaware); and Anne Colwell and James Keegan (literary/theatre artists from Milton, DE). The Delaware Division of the Arts and the Delaware Community Foundation were sponsors of the program.

The Awards also marked an important milestone for the Delaware Arts Alliance, which this year reached 700 plus Individual Members—an increase from 126 Individual Members at the start of the January 2014 membership campaign.

The Delaware Arts Alliance is the unifying voice for the arts and arts education throughout the state, advocating for the central role of the arts in advancing dynamic communities and a creative citizenry. DAA firmly believes that a strong creative culture enhances education, the economy, and civic life. Since its founding in 2009, the Alliance has made presentations to the Joint Finance Committee of the Delaware legislature, hosted speaking events, and organized advocacy programs throughout the state. For more information, please visit www.delawareartsalliance.org.

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