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AUSTIN, Texas, Sept. 8 /PRNewswire/ -- On Thursday, September 2, in its quarterly commission meeting, the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) approved \$3,455,325 in grants to arts organizations for fiscal year 2005.

The Commission received and processed 446 eligible applications from 309 arts organizations in 86 Texas cities for this initial round of funding. Of these, the Commission supported 440 grants or 98 percent of the eligible applications with more than \$2.5 million in grants to arts and cultural organizations and for arts education. Another \$891,657 was allocated for mini-grants, initiatives and partnerships.

Funding for TCA grants comes from a variety of sources including state General Revenue, the National Endowment for the Arts, support from the Texas Cultural Trust Council, and revenue earned by TCA through sales of the State of the Arts specialty license plate. Additional funds for music education are provided through TCA's participation in the Texas Music Project.

The Texas Music Project (TMP) provided a total of \$100,000 for TCA's FY 2005 budget. Of this amount, \$25,000 is distributed for music education projects and \$60,000 is allocated for disbursement throughout the fiscal year through TCA's mini-grants program. The remaining \$15,000 will support the Texas Cultural Endowment Fund, building support for music education programs of the future.

The Texas Music Project provides TCA with a long-term opportunity to work with private sector partners toward a shared goal of impacting arts education, especially in the area of music, for school children throughout the state. The latest in the popular series of music CDs, "Don't Mess with Texas Music - Volume Two(TM)" has just been released and features performances from Pat Green, Los Lonely Boys, Clint Black, Beyonce, Bonnie Raitt, Eric Clapton and many others.

"During the 78th legislative session, TCA experienced a significant budgetary reduction," said Gaye McElwain, Director of Marketing and Development.

"Fortunately, TCA has responded with entrepreneurial projects that have received widespread public support."

The Texas Cultural Trust Council, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing a stable funding source to enhance the cultural quality of life in Texas, provided \$41,000 to the Endowment in support of TCA's Young Masters program. Approximately \$450,000 in revenue from TCA's best-selling State of the Arts specialty license plate is also included in the FY 2005 grants budget.

"Approximately 16 percent of TCA's total FY 2005 budget will be earned by the

agency from a variety of private sector sources," said Executive Director Ricardo Hernandez. "We are a unique state agency in the sense that we secure private sector funding to meet public sector mandates."

TCA was organized in 1965 by the Texas Legislature to develop a receptive climate for the arts in Texas. TCA provides funding and other supportive measures, such as arts education and cultural tourism programs, for a variety of arts-related activities, including visual and literary arts, film and multi-media, music, dance and theater. For more information on TCA and its programs, please visit <http://www.arts.state.tx.us/> .

Editor's note: A full list of the organizations and cities where TCA distributed grants is currently available on the TCA web site at <http://www.arts.state.tx.us/> .

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