



NORTHERN MANHATTAN ARTS ALLIANCE RECEIVES UMEZ GRANT

Contact: Verdery Roosevelt, 212-410-0030 x 209

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Kenneth J. Knuckles, President & CEO of the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corp. (UMEZ) announced that the Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance (NoMAA), an arts service organization providing support to the arts communities in Washington Heights and Inwood, has received a two-year, \$250,000 grant. NoMAA will use the grant to leverage approximately \$500,000 in additional public and private funds for a total project budget of \$750,000.

The funding, allocated through the UMEZ Cultural Industry Investment Fund, will be used to support infrastructure development for the nascent organization as it provides professional development and re-grant services to its constituency. Following a three-year incubation under the Hispanic Federation, NoMAA is now in its first year of operation as an independent organization. The two-year grant from UMEZ will provide NoMAA with a stable base from which to continue its develop.

“Our primary mandate here at UMEZ is to facilitate the economic revitalization of our communities,” said Mr. Knuckles. “Supporting the Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance provides us with the opportunity to reach a community of artists and arts organizations that we otherwise would not be able to serve.”

The Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance is the only service organization providing direct support to individual artists and emerging arts organizations in Washington Heights and Inwood. With the assistance of UMEZ support, NoMAA offers professional development opportunities such as workshop and symposia, provides gallery space to community artists, and administers a regrant pool of capacity-building grants totaling \$70,000.

UMEZ funding will be used specifically to support a new director of development position, a program assistant to administer its regrant program, and one consultancy to implement NoMAA’s first membership campaign.

Sandra Garcia-Betancourt, NoMAA’s executive director, said, “NoMAA and the Northern Manhattan arts community are deeply grateful to the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone, not only for realizing years ago that our uptown communities couldn’t progress and flourish without their artists or their cultural expressions, but for initiating and continuing to help sustain programs and services that have dramatically improved the professional capabilities of artists and organizations.”

ABOUT UPPER MANHATTAN EMPOWERMENT ZONE:

UMEZ’s mission is to sustain the economic revitalization of all the communities of Upper Manhattan through job creation, corporate alliances, strategic investments and small business assistance. UMEZ seeks to revitalize distressed communities by using geographically targeted public funds and tax incentives as catalysts for private investment. In Upper Manhattan, the communities that lie within the Empowerment Zone's borders include Harlem, East Harlem, Washington Heights and Inwood.

ABOUT THE CULTURAL INDUSTRY INVESTMENT FUND

UMEZ’s CIIF celebrates Upper Manhattan’s rich past while creating new legacies. The work of the CIIF is two-fold: community building through a cultural and economic lens; and, a marketing of place that repositions Upper Manhattan as one of New York City’s primary cultural districts. The goals of the CIIF are sustaining the local economy by promoting development, revitalization and tourism; making strategic cultural investments; and, strengthening the cultural ecosystem.

CIIF seeks to fund service organizations that can significantly position and promote local arts and culture as an integral component of cultural history, contemporary art production, and the local cultural industry and economy; build the artistic and administrative capacity of local arts and cultural players; provide technical assistance; develop programmatic links and collaborations with other groups in Upper Manhattan, city-wide, and/or nationally; and, service the arts across disciplines.

ABOUT NORTHERN MANHATTAN ARTS ALLIANCE

The Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance (NoMAA) is a non-profit arts service organization launched in 2007 with the support of the Hispanic Federation and the Upper Manhattan

Empowerment Zone. NoMAA's mission is to cultivate, support and promote the works of artists and arts organizations in Northern Manhattan. Since its inception, NoMAA has implemented programs designed to strengthen the professional capacity of individual artists and community arts organizations in Washington Heights and Inwood. Among NoMAA programs and services are the Regrant Program, Technical Assistance Institute, Uptown Arts Stroll, NoMAA Gallery and the Artists Salon. NoMAA has successfully partnered with local businesses and institutions to promote collaboration with artists and arts organizations in an effort to revitalize the cultural life and effect change in our communities uptown.

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