



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Announces**

Peoria Unified Governing Board of Glendale, Arizona

Receives \$10,000 KCAAEN and NSBA Award

National Award Recognizes Outstanding School Board Support of the Arts

(WASHINGTON, D.C.)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced the Peoria Unified Governing Board in Glendale, Arizona, will receive the 26th annual Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAAEN) and National School Boards Association (NSBA) Award. The award, which includes a \$10,000 prize, will be presented today at the National School Boards Association’s Annual Conference in New Orleans. Since 1989, this prestigious national award has recognized individual school boards for their outstanding support of arts education.

The Peoria district was chosen from nominees around the country for its support of high-quality arts education. Finalists for the award include: Owensboro Public Schools Board of Education (Owensboro, KY); Roanoke City Public Schools School Board (Roanoke, VA) and Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education (Ann Arbor, MI).

“We are pleased to recognize the Peoria Unified Governing Board for their dedication to providing high quality arts education—despite budget cuts and other challenges,” said Darrell M. Ayers, Vice President of Education at the Kennedy Center. “Our work with hundreds of schools around the country repeatedly demonstrates that a consistent arts education improves students’ intellectual, personal, and social development.”

The 2013 Peoria Unified Governing Board was led by President Hal Borhauer, Clerk Joe McCord, Matthew Bullock, Kathy Knecht, and Tracy Livingston. The school board stood out by their clear, demonstrated commitment to teaching and learning through the arts. The school board actively promoted the district’s arts programs and established arts integration in Title 1 schools. Despite significant budget cuts, the school board continued to offer diverse and practical arts courses for the district’s students at every grade level. Additionally, they sought out partnerships with local, state, and national arts organizations to increase arts opportunities for students. The school board’s positive arts

messaging and focus on the education of the whole child testify to their on-going goal of arts education for all students. The Peoria Unified Governing Board will use their award to continue funding effective arts education programs.

“Peoria Unified Governing Board is a national model of school board leadership to develop innovative arts education programs to benefit student learning,” said NSBA Executive Director Thomas J. Gentzel. “Even in tough economic times with school district budget cuts, Peoria Unified Governing Board recognized the value of arts education as a district-wide priority.”

Each year, a national review panel selects the first place school district from a pool of nominees selected by State Alliances for Arts Education and State School Boards Associations. School districts selected for this national honor must demonstrate support for all four core disciplines in arts education programs: visual arts, music, theater, and dance. Instruction and programming must be available for all students throughout the district. The ways in which the school district develops collaborative partnerships with the cultural resources available in the community are also an important consideration in reviewing nominations.

ABOUT EDUCATION AT THE KENNEDY CENTER

The Kennedy Center retains its commitment as the nation’s cultural center to educating and enlightening children in Washington and around the country. The Center’s national education programs include: *Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child*, which is currently working in 14 municipalities and their school districts around the country to develop a long-range strategic plan for arts education; ARTSEdge, a website that offers standards-based materials for use in and out of the classroom, Partners in Education, which forges relationships between an arts organization and its neighboring school systems to build effective arts education programs for teachers and teaching artists; Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network works with 33 state organizations on arts education policy issues; *Explore the Arts*, which provide insight into the cultural and historical context of the works presented on stage and sparks dialogue between audiences and the artists who have created the performances through participatory workshops, demonstrations, panels, master classes, and open rehearsals; and the Kennedy Center Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Awards, which acknowledge teachers of grades K-12 whose efforts have made a significant impact on their students.

Locally, the Kennedy Center’s programs include Changing Education Through the Arts, a program that works with 15 schools in the area to affect long-term change in school culture through professional learning in arts integration; Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers, which trains Washington-area educators to teach the arts or other subject areas through the arts; and Washington, D.C. Partnership Schools, where the Center provides resources and teaching artist residencies to 20 elementary, junior, and senior high schools in Washington, D.C. The Center also mounts more than 100 events and performances of theater, music, dance, and opera throughout the season for more than 100,000 local school-aged children.

In addition, the Center offers multiple career development programs for young artists both locally and nationally, including the National Symphony Orchestra’s Youth Fellowship Program,

Summer Music Institute, and High School Competition; Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, Opera Institute, and Kids Create Opera Partnership; the biennial *New Visions/ New Voices* forum for development of new plays for young people; *Exploring Ballet with Suzanne Farrell*; Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead; VSA's Playwright Discovery Program, Young Soloists, and Visual Arts Programs; internships and fellowships; and the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival which impacts hundreds of thousands of college-aged theater students across the country and marks its 47th anniversary in 2015.

NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

The National School Boards Association is the leading advocate for public education and supports equity and excellence in public education through school board leadership. NSBA represents state school boards associations and their more than 90,000 local school board members throughout the U.S. Learn more at: www.nsba.org .

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PRESS CONTACT*:

Amanda Hunter
(202) 416-8441

ahunter@kennedy-center.org

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