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MCC receives grant to support 2015 community festival

OMAHA, Neb. — The National Endowment for the Arts has awarded Metropolitan Community College a grant to support Great Plains Theatre Conference PlayFest 2015, a free contemporary theatre community festival.

Held annually at the end of May, PlayFest explores how theatre can be produced in a nontraditional way and seeks to deepen the connection between the community and the arts. Plays are held in uncommon spaces with a connection to the play being performed. MCC is recommended for a \$30,000 grant and is one of 886 nonprofit organizations nationwide to receive an NEA Art Works grant.

"The NEA is pleased to announce that MCC is recommended for an NEA Art Works grant," said NEA chairman Joan Shigekawa. "These NEA supported projects will not only have a positive impact on local economies but will also provide opportunities for people of all ages to participate in the arts, help our communities to become more vibrant and support our nation's artists as they contribute to our cultural landscape."

Art Works grants support the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts and enhancement of the livability of communities through the arts. The NEA received 1,515 eligible applications under the Art Works category. Of those applications, 886 are recommended for grants for a total of \$25.8 million.

"We are deeply appreciative of this award," said GPTC producing artistic director Kevin Lawler. "PlayFest is uniquely positioned to create work that increases our understanding of how we perceive and affect the world around us."

For a complete listing of projects recommended for Art Works grant support, visit the NEA website at arts.gov. For more information on the Great Plains Theatre Conference, visit mccneb.edu/gptc, facebook.com/GreatPlainsTheatreConference or twitter.com/gptc2014.

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Metropolitan Community College, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, is a comprehensive, public community college that offers affordable and quality education to all residents of Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy and Washington counties. Founded in 1974, MCC has the largest enrollment out of six community colleges in Nebraska and is the second largest postsecondary institution in the state. MCC serves more than 40,000 students annually.