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TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST AWARDS \$25,000 IN GRANTS TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN FINE ARTS EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL INSTRUCTION

AUSTIN, TX – The Texas Cultural Trust awarded 11 fine arts teachers a total of \$25,000 in vital funding to implement the Arts & Digital Literacy (ADL) initiative in their schools. Digital literacy is the future of communication and ADL provides free, innovative, TEKS aligned online curricula to enhance fine arts learning through digital mediums. This curricula transforms how fine arts teachers educate the youth of today and prepares them for the technologically advanced workforce of tomorrow. The Classroom Technology Grants are awarded annually to certified fine arts teachers to help purchase technology or assist with expenses associated with implementing ADL curricula. **Since 2015, the Texas Cultural Trust has awarded more than \$75,500 in 29 grants to 23 certified fine arts teachers. ADL courses are being taught to over 5,000 students in 217 classrooms in 116 schools across the state.**

“The Trust’s own research shows that **students who are enrolled in the arts have up to 15 percent higher pass rates on standardized tests and are half as likely to drop out**, said Heidi Marquez Smith, Executive Director of the Texas Cultural Trust. “The arts keep students engaged, encouraged, and most importantly, in school. ADL uses the arts as a medium to teach technology, which in turn provides students with integrated, relevant skills that will prepare them for a the 21st century workplace.”

Congratulations to the 2017-2018 Classroom Technology Grant Recipients:

Elisa De La Rosa, MacArthur Ninth Grade School, <i>Aldine</i>	\$3,500
John Reimund, Vidal M. Treviño School of Communications & Fine Arts, <i>Laredo</i>	\$3,500
Carrie Johnson, Universal Academy Charter School, <i>Irving</i>	\$2,500
Laura Castañeda, Raul Yzaguirre School for Success, <i>Houston</i>	\$2,500
Brian Cheslik, Texas School for the Deaf, <i>Austin</i>	\$2,000
Miriam Leanne Blackwell, Canyon High School, <i>New Braunfels</i>	\$2,500
Hugo Nuñez, Coronado High School, <i>El Paso</i>	\$2,500
Maria Miller, Weslaco East High School, <i>Weslaco</i>	\$2,000
Brittany Skillern, Westwood High School, <i>Round Rock</i>	\$1,500
Jeanne Stewart, Westwood High School, <i>Round Rock</i>	\$1,500
Jenna Stephenson, Canyon High School, <i>New Braunfels</i>	\$1,500

The Classroom Technology Grants are generously funded by Texas Women for the Arts, a private giving circle of the Texas Cultural Trust that supports arts and arts education programs across the state. The Arts & Digital Literacy initiative was developed in partnership with The University of Texas at Austin College of Fine Arts.

ABOUT THE TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST

The Texas Cultural Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to be the leading voice for the arts in education, advocacy, and economic impact in Texas, spotlighting the artistic excellence of our

state. Programs of the Texas Cultural Trust include the biennial Texas Medal of Arts Awards, Texas Women for the Arts, the Texas Young Masters, Arts & Digital Literacy, and Art Can. The Trust also supports the programs of the Texas Commission on the Arts and other qualifying state agencies. **Since 2008, the Texas Cultural Trust has invested more than \$3.2 million into arts awareness and education, bringing the total investment to more than \$4.9 million.** For more information, please visit www.txculturaltrust.org

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