



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Roanoke Cultural Endowment Receives ARPA Grant Funds from the City of Roanoke to Spotlight Arts Impact**

*Roanoke arts and cultural sector a vibrant contributor to pandemic recovery*

**ROANOKE, VA – Feb. 17, 2022** – Grant funding was awarded from the City of Roanoke through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in the amount of \$30,000 for a Collective Arts & Cultural Marketing project.

This project, facilitated by the [Roanoke Cultural Endowment](#) (RCE), in partnership with the City of Roanoke, will use the ARPA grant funds as an investment to develop collective storytelling tools around collaborative arts and cultural events, strategies, and challenges. “The goal is to benefit the entirety of the arts and cultural community in the City of Roanoke through a recovery and resiliency marketing project,” said **Shaleen Powell, Executive Director of the Roanoke Cultural Endowment**.

The funding will be used to produce six episodes of BUZZ, a Roanoke-based public television show that features nonprofit organizations receiving pro bono marketing resources. These episodes will highlight the innovative and engaging nature of arts and cultural organizations as well as the contributions of the arts and humanities.

The initial episodes will showcase [Roanoke Arts Pop!](#) hosted by the Taubman Museum of Art on March 4-6, 2022. This event spotlights 25+ arts and cultural organizations bringing joy and vibrancy to Virginia’s Blue Ridge region. The goal is for Roanoke Arts Pop! to grow into an anchor annual event.

The first episode airs Feb. 23 at 7 p.m. on Blue Ridge PBS. It previews Roanoke Arts Pop! and will focus on attracting visitors to attend. The second episode will cover the actual event promoting participating organizations as well as future years of Roanoke Arts Pop!

The remaining episodes in this project series are still taking shape and will likely focus on collective efforts such as Arts in Healthcare, Arts in Education, Long Term Endowment strategies and need, the Year of the Artist, and the overall identity of Roanoke Arts and Culture.

**Freedom First Credit Union** is a major sponsor of this six-episode project. **Carilion Clinic** will be the presenting sponsor of one of the episodes that focuses on the healing power of the arts in the Roanoke Valley.

All six (30-minute) episodes will be produced in partnership with [Buzz4Good](#). Buzz4Good engages local advertising talent in providing marketing expertise and resources around specific needs for nonprofit organizations. Buzz4Good will also support the episodes using additional media offerings including radio, podcasts, and online stories as part of the overall marketing strategy. **Michael Hemphill, creator and host of Buzz4Good**, said “Our very first BUZZ episode was produced at the start of the pandemic and featured Southwest Virginia Ballet. Given the challenges that permeated our country during this time, the beauty and joy of the ballet's music and dancers offered comfort. That's the power of art. We're honored to share that story and bring more 'buzz' to the artists and organizations who provide that to Roanoke.”

Special thanks goes out to the [Roanoke Arts Commission](#) for advocating for the arts and administering this grant opportunity. The arts help us express our values and build bridges between cultures. The arts are also a fundamental component of a healthy community strengthening social, educational, and economic benefits that persist even in difficult social and economic times.

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About the Roanoke Cultural Endowment -

The Roanoke Cultural Endowment is a well-planned, long-term investment in the arts, with the goal to provide sustainable funding to Roanoke's arts and cultural nonprofits. Upon reaching \$20M through private and public funding, the Endowment will award operating grants to organizations in the City of Roanoke. The RCE envisions a vibrant community where arts and culture are accessible to all and valued as a critical component of a healthy economy and region, today and for future generations.