



Our Vision

Red Wing thrives as a vibrant, creative river town that values its natural environment, welcomes all people, and unlocks opportunity for everyone.

Our Mission

We strive to create a sustainable, healthy, accessible, resilient, and equitable community where every person feels at home.

Meeting Announcement and Agenda Arts & Culture Commission Workshop Community Development, 419 Bush Street, Red Wing, MN Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at 5:30 PM

1. Roll Call

2. Workshop Items

2.A. Municipal Arts Fund Balance

The attached spreadsheet provides a detailed history of every transaction within the Municipal Arts Fund since its creation in 2023.

2.B. Creative Laureate Program Applications.

2.C. Large Jester Repair Quote.

The Commission has been evaluating repair costs for the Large Jester in Colvill Park. Updated quote information has been provide, see attached.

2.D. Committee Check-Ins.

3. Adjournment

Accommodations for signing interpreter, Braille, large print, etc. can be made. Call City Hall at 385.3600 seven days prior to the need. Hearing assistance devices are available during meetings.

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Hill, Melissa](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Creative Laureate Artist Honorarium Application
Date: Sunday, April 5, 2026 3:38:15 PM

Creative Laureate Artist Honorarium Application

Overview

Overview

The Red Wing Arts & Culture Commission is offering a \$1,200 honorarium to support a public art project or event in Red Wing. Artists from all disciplines are encouraged to apply. Deadline to submit application is 4 p.m. (Central Time) on Wednesday, April 8, 2026 (extended deadline). If you have questions, contact Arts & Culture Commission Staff Liaison Melissa Hill at [651-385-3615](tel:651-385-3615).

Contact Information

Name	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
City	Red Wing
State	MN
Zip Code	55066
Email	[REDACTED]

Project Narrative

Project Title	Ceramic Classes in Red Wing
Artistic Discipline	Ceramics
Project Description	Sharing the art of hand building ceramics with the greater Red Wing community takes an investment in materials. I have a space to create and teach ceramics at the Artisan Collective, but I do not have access to the tools required to teach a class using like for like tools and supplies.
Location or Venue (If Known)	The Artisan Collective
Intended Audience/Community	Adults and children alike, utilizing social media marketing, posters, and word of mouth connections with local business and other artists.

Impact (Engagement Plan)

Anticipated Project Date(s) 5/25/2026 - 9/30/2026

Artist Statement (Brief)

Tell us about your artistic practice and how this project connects to your work:

Through the language of art, I seek to express the beauty that surrounds us, surpassing boundaries of culture, language, and belief. Whether through ceramics, sculpture, music, or literature, I aim to ignite the imagination, provoke introspection, and evoke emotions that resonate with the universal human experience.

I aim to share my love of art with the community around me, using my artistic voice to bring our neighbors together to create an experience and environment for community engagement. I spent three years working for Mankato Area Community Education teaching ceramics in a well stocked and funded ceramics studio. I am hoping to continue my work bringing fairly priced classes to the Red Wing Community, and with this project I would be able to reduce the price of these classes, which makes the classes accessible to the entire community. I have plans for six classes over the summer - each would be priced at \$35 per person. With the proceeds, I will be able to continue offering classes for the next season.

Budget Overview

Describe how the \$1,200 honorarium will be used (materials, time, space, etc.):

Clay - 5 pounds per person, per class, five classes total, with a maximum of 8 people per class for a total of 200lbs, \$88 per 100lbs for a total of \$176

Tools - 8 beginner tool kits at approximately \$24 per kit (\$192)

Space - \$50 per space usage, each class will have 2 class periods (building and glazing), 5 classes, for a total of \$500

Time - Each class will be approximately 3 hours for building, 2 hours for glazing, for 5 hours total. Each class will have time for monitoring drying, loading and monitoring the kiln, approximately 5 hours per class. The rest of the money would cover this.

Connection to Community

In a few sentences, please describe your relationship to the Red Wing community:

I moved to Red Wing in July 2025, and I started working for the St. James Hotel in December 2025. Between July and December, I was commuting to Rochester for work, and I realized I was missing the connection to a community I'd found in Mankato. I am an artist at heart and when I started working at the St. James, I realized how lovely and welcoming the community in Red Wing is. With this grant, I hope to continue building my

presence in Red Wing and sharing my art with my new home.

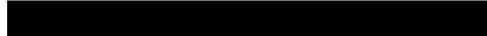
Supporting Materials

Work Samples

Use the following section to provide links and/or files of work samples relevant to the proposal. It is recommended to include at least one of the following:

- Visual Artists: images of artwork in JPG, JPEG, PNG, or GIF formats
- Musicians: songs/performance in MOV, MP4, WAV, or MP3 formats
- Writers: samples of work in DOCX or PDF formats
- Website or YouTube links
- Other

List any links relevant to your proposal.



File Upload 1

[IMG_5868.jpeg](#)

File Upload 2

[IMG_6410.jpeg](#)

File Upload 3

[IMG_3043.jpeg](#)

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)







From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Hill, Melissa](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Creative Laureate Artist Honorarium Application
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 6:43:13 PM

Creative Laureate Artist Honorarium Application

Overview

Overview

The Red Wing Arts & Culture Commission is offering a \$1,200 honorarium to support a public art project or event in Red Wing. Artists from all disciplines are encouraged to apply. Deadline to submit application is 4 p.m. (Central Time) on Monday, March 23, 2026. If you have questions, contact Arts & Culture Commission Staff Liaison Melissa Hill at [651-385-3615](tel:651-385-3615).

Contact Information

Name	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
City	Randolph
State	MN
Zip Code	55065
Email	[REDACTED]

Project Narrative

Project Title	Creative Caregiver Series: An Art Gathering for Caregivers of Children with Special Needs
Artistic Discipline	Personal Expression, All mediums

Project Description

I would like to create a creative arts gathering or workshop series in Red Wing designed specifically for caregivers of children with special needs, particularly autism, but open to caregivers of any child with developmental or medical challenges. Caregiving can often be isolating, and many caregivers put their own creativity and personal expression aside while caring for their children. My goal is to create a welcoming space where caregivers can reconnect with their creativity while also building community with others who understand their experience. The project would offer accessible, low-pressure creative activities such as:

fiber arts (crochet, knitting, sewing)
painting or mixed media art
simple craft and creative exploration
photography storytelling
collaborative art projects

Participants would not need prior artistic experience. The emphasis would be on creativity as a form of expression, stress relief, and connection rather than artistic perfection. This project would culminate in at least one community engagement event where participants could choose to share their work or stories if they wish. The goal is to highlight the creative voices of caregivers in our community and demonstrate how creativity can be a powerful tool for resilience and wellbeing.

Location or Venue (If Known)

TBD

Intended Audience/Community Impact (Engagement Plan)

Caregivers of children with special needs often have limited opportunities to participate in arts programming due to time constraints, financial pressures, and caregiving responsibilities. This project would intentionally create an inclusive space designed around their needs. By offering creative opportunities specifically for caregivers, the project would:

- reduce isolation
- foster community connection
- support mental health and wellbeing
- encourage creative expression
- expand participation in the arts for a population that is often overlooked

Red Wing has a vibrant arts culture, and this project would help extend that culture to caregivers who may not otherwise have access to creative spaces. My hope is that this project will not only reconnect me with my own creative practice, but also inspire other caregivers to rediscover their creativity and joy.

Anticipated Project Date(s)

6/1/2026 - 11/30/2026

Artist Statement (Brief)

Tell us about your artistic practice and how this project connects to your work:

I am a former portrait photographer and small business owner who was part of the Red Wing creative community for many years. I operated a successful portrait photography studio for over eight years, first in Austin, Minnesota and later in downtown Red Wing, and I also maintained studio space at the Anderson Center in Red Wing. Through my work, I had the privilege of documenting families and meaningful milestones for clients throughout Minnesota and around the world. Several years ago, my child was diagnosed with autism. As his

needs grew, I made the difficult but necessary decision to close my photography business so I could focus fully on supporting and caring for him. While it was a bittersweet transition, it was the right decision for my family.

Caregiving has become one of the most meaningful parts of my life, but I have also realized how essential creativity is to my wellbeing. I have spent my entire life as a photographer, fiber artist, and overall creative in many different mediums. Through this project, I hope to reconnect with my creative practice while creating space for other caregivers to explore creativity, build community, and rediscover joy through artistic expression.

Budget Overview

Describe how the \$1,200 honorarium will be used (materials, time, space, etc.):

Art supplies (paint, brushes, canvas, yarn, crochet hooks, sewing materials, mixed media supplies) \$400
Participant supply kits (take-home creativity kits for caregivers) \$200
Workshop facilitation stipend for artist/project leader \$350
Space rental or partnership contribution (library/community space/art center) \$100
Marketing & outreach (flyers, printing, social media promotion) \$75
Community showcase event supplies (refreshments, display materials) \$75

Connection to Community

In a few sentences, please describe your relationship to the Red Wing community:

My family of 6 recently moved to the Cannon Falls/Randolph area for our son's care needs, but had previously lived in Red Wing for 5 years. During our time in Red Wing, I owned a photography portrait studio downtown and then relocated to the Anderson Center. I currently sell my artwork at Smith & Trade down town Red Wing and our youngest attends Red Cottage Montessori where I am a 3 year board member.

Supporting Materials

Work Samples

Use the following section to provide links and/or files of work samples relevant to the proposal. It is recommended to include at least one of the following:

- Visual Artists: images of artwork in JPG, JPEG, PNG, or GIF formats
- Musicians: songs/performance in MOV, MP4, WAV, or MP3 formats
- Writers: samples of work in DOCX or PDF formats
- Website or YouTube links
- Other

List any links relevant to your proposal.

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File Upload 2

[_IKE8874.jpg](#)

File Upload 3

[IMG_5824.jpeg](#)

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From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Hill, Melissa](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Creative Laureate Artist Honorarium Application
Date: Sunday, March 22, 2026 5:22:16 PM

Creative Laureate Artist Honorarium Application

Overview

Overview

The Red Wing Arts & Culture Commission is offering a \$1,200 honorarium to support a public art project or event in Red Wing. Artists from all disciplines are encouraged to apply. Deadline to submit application is 4 p.m. (Central Time) on Monday, March 23, 2026. If you have questions, contact Arts & Culture Commission Staff Liaison Melissa Hill at [651-385-3615](tel:651-385-3615).

Contact Information

Name	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
City	Red Wing
State	MN
Zip Code	55066
Email	[REDACTED]

Project Narrative

Project Title	Between the Bricks: Tiny Stories of Red Wing
Artistic Discipline	Visual Arts – Installation and Miniature Sculpture with Narrative Elements

Project Description

Between the Bricks: Tiny Stories of Red Wing is a public art installation that transforms a narrow, overlooked downtown display space into a series of rotating miniature worlds, each telling a story rooted in Red Wing's past, present, or imagined future.

Housed within a vertical space measuring approximately two feet wide, eight inches deep, and eight feet high, the installation will feature intricately crafted miniature scenes displayed on glass shelves and illuminated from above. The physical constraints of the space are central to the concept. Its small scale invites

curiosity and requires viewers to step closer, slow down, and engage more intentionally. In a busy downtown environment, the installation creates a moment of quiet discovery.

Each scene will function as a self-contained narrative. Some will draw inspiration from Red Wing's history, such as the riverboat era, local industry, or early downtown life. Others will reflect contemporary or everyday moments, like a quiet morning coffee, a shop closing at dusk, or a fleeting interaction between neighbors. Select scenes may also explore imagined or future versions of Red Wing, creating space for interpretation and possibility.

The installation will evolve over time, with approximately four to six scenes rotated throughout the project period. This rotation encourages repeat visits and fosters an ongoing relationship between the viewer and the space. What appears at first glance as a static display becomes a living, changing story.

Community engagement is a central component of the project. Through a "Tiny Story Collection," residents and visitors will be invited to submit short reflections, memories, or meaningful moments connected to Red Wing. Submissions may be collected through a simple online form or QR code placed near the installation. Selected stories will serve as inspiration for future scenes, allowing community members to see their experiences reflected in the work.

In addition, the artist will host a public engagement activity, such as a small workshop or demonstration, offering insight into the process of building miniature environments and translating story into physical form. This provides an accessible entry point for individuals who may not typically participate in traditional arts programming.

By placing the installation directly within the downtown environment, the project remains free and accessible to all. It invites engagement across age, background, and familiarity with the arts, removing common barriers to participation.

At its core, *Between the Bricks* explores how small spaces can hold expansive meaning. Through careful attention to detail, material, and composition, the work elevates everyday moments and invites viewers to consider the layered stories that exist within their community.

In a space only inches deep, entire worlds unfold.

Location or Venue (If Known)

The narrow, tall display case between Phileo Style and Excel Financial. This has been empty for decades.

Intended
Audience/Community
Impact (Engagement
Plan)

Between the Bricks: Tiny Stories of Red Wing is designed as an accessible, public-facing art experience for a broad cross-section of the Red Wing community, including residents, downtown visitors, and individuals who may not typically engage with traditional arts programming.

Because the installation is located in a highly visible downtown space and requires no admission or prior knowledge to experience, it removes common barriers to participation such as cost, transportation, or unfamiliarity with formal arts settings. The intimate scale of the work naturally invites curiosity from passersby of all ages, encouraging spontaneous interaction.

The project is particularly well-suited to engage:

- Individuals who experience barriers to arts access due to economic limitations can access the work for free and publicly available.
- People who may feel disconnected from traditional arts spaces, offering a low-pressure, informal entry point
- Multigenerational audiences, including families, as the miniature format is inherently engaging and approachable

Community engagement will be supported through a “Tiny Story Collection” initiative. Residents and visitors will be invited to submit short reflections, memories, or meaningful moments connected to Red Wing. These submissions may be collected through a simple online form accessible via a QR code placed near the installation, as well as through community outreach.

Selected submissions will serve as inspiration for future miniature scenes, allowing participants to see their lived experiences reflected in the work. This creates a sense of shared ownership and ensures that the installation represents a range of voices and perspectives.

In addition, the artist will host at least one public engagement opportunity, such as a workshop or demonstration, focused on storytelling through miniature art. This event will provide participants with insight into the creative process and offer an opportunity for hands-on or observational learning.

The rotating nature of the installation encourages repeat engagement over time, fostering an ongoing relationship between the artwork and the community. Viewers are invited not only to observe, but to return, reflect, and contribute.

By combining accessibility, participation, and storytelling, this project strengthens Red Wing’s arts and culture landscape while creating a space where community members can see themselves and their stories reflected in small but meaningful

ways.

Anticipated Project
Date(s)

6/1/2026 - 5/31/2027

Artist Statement (Brief)

Tell us about your artistic practice and how this project connects to your work:

My artistic practice centers on storytelling, community connection, and the creation of immersive experiences through small, detailed worlds.

In recent years, I have been drawn to working in miniature to explore how scale influences attention, emotion, and meaning. Miniature environments invite viewers to slow down and look closely, creating a more intimate and reflective experience. Through careful composition, texture, and narrative detail, I use these small spaces to tell larger stories about place, identity, and everyday life.

Alongside my creative work, I bring over 20 years of experience in community development, nonprofit leadership, and public engagement in Red Wing. My professional background has focused on building initiatives that connect people to place, support local businesses, and strengthen community identity through storytelling and shared experiences.

This project sits at the intersection of these two paths.

Between the Bricks: Tiny Stories of Red Wing extends my artistic exploration of miniature storytelling into a public, site-specific installation. It also builds on my longstanding work in Red Wing by creating an accessible, community-centered experience that invites participation and reflection.

My approach to this project is both artistic and relational. I am interested not only in the creation of the scenes themselves, but in how those scenes resonate with viewers and reflect the lived experiences of the community. The inclusion of the "Tiny Story Collection" allows the work to be shaped, in part, by the voices of Red Wing residents, reinforcing my commitment to collaborative and community-informed creative practice.

Across both my artistic and professional work, I am drawn to projects that create moments of pause, curiosity, connection, and whimsy. This installation reflects that through its scale, its placement within the everyday environment of downtown, and its focus on small but meaningful stories.

At its core, my practice asks a simple question: what happens when we look more closely?

This project is an invitation to do just that.

Budget Overview

Describe how the \$1,200 honorarium will be used (materials, time, space, etc.):

The \$1,200 honorarium will be used to support the materials and labor required to design, construct, and install a series of rotating miniature scenes for *Between the Bricks: Tiny Stories of Red Wing*.

Approximately 80% of the funds (\$960) will be allocated toward materials, including:

- Miniature construction supplies (wood, fabric, paper, and found objects)
- Adhesives, paints, and finishing materials
- Small-scale props and detailing elements
- Backdrop materials and structural supports for each scene
- Lighting enhancements, if needed, to improve visibility within the display

The remaining 20% of the funds (\$240) will support artist labor, including time spent designing, building, installing, and rotating the scenes throughout the project period.

The project site is an existing display space, and no rental costs are anticipated, allowing the majority of funds to be directed toward the quality and craftsmanship of the work.

This budget approach prioritizes the creation of detailed, durable installations while ensuring the project remains feasible within the available resources.

Connection to Community

In a few sentences, please describe your relationship to the Red Wing community:

Red Wing has been the place where much of my professional and creative life has taken shape. Through years of work in nonprofit leadership, downtown revitalization, public art, and community storytelling, I have built relationships across the community and contributed to projects that strengthen connection and local identity. I am deeply invested in Red Wing's past, present, and future, and this project grows directly from that connection. I currently serve as Senior Strategic Consultant for Red Wing Downtown Main Street, following eight years as Executive Director, and I am on the board of Salsalicious, a fundraising event for the non-profits of Red Wing.

Supporting Materials

Work Samples

Use the following section to provide links and/or files of work samples relevant to the proposal. It is recommended to include at least one of

the following:

- Visual Artists: images of artwork in JPG, JPEG, PNG, or GIF formats
- Musicians: songs/performance in MOV, MP4, WAV, or MP3 formats
- Writers: samples of work in DOCX or PDF formats
- Website or YouTube links
- Other

List any links relevant
to your proposal.

Field not completed.

File Upload 1

[Red Wing Shoe Diorama.MOV](#)

File Upload 2

[Dads New Boots.MOV](#)

File Upload 3

[RW Shoe Employee Commissioned Ornament.JPG](#)

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From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Hill, Melissa](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Creative Laureate Artist Honorarium Application
Date: Sunday, March 29, 2026 3:16:32 PM

Creative Laureate Artist Honorarium Application

Overview

Overview

The Red Wing Arts & Culture Commission is offering a \$1,200 honorarium to support a public art project or event in Red Wing. Artists from all disciplines are encouraged to apply. Deadline to submit application is 4 p.m. (Central Time) on Wednesday, April 8, 2026 (extended deadline). If you have questions, contact Arts & Culture Commission Staff Liaison Melissa Hill at [651-385-3615](tel:651-385-3615).

Contact Information

Name	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
City	Red Wing
State	Minnesota
Zip Code	55066
Email	[REDACTED]

Project Narrative

Project Title	Ourr Stories: OUTLOUD
Artistic Discipline	Live Literature (Theater)

Project Description OUTOUD is a local story and literature performance company created by Jessica Zuehlke, playwright, performer, educator, to provide and perform high quality literature "live."

The first OUTLOUD production, MARK TWAIN: OUTLOUD, recently finished its fourth season as a tribute to the Mississippi River history in Red Wing and in conjunction with the Big Turn Music Festival.

This application is for funding a next step. "Our Stories: OUTLOUD" is a pilot project to create an ongoing venue, a stage/space, for quality literature, locally written and effectively

performed live in the Red Wing area.

Project Description:

"Our Stories: OUTLOUD" would involve three performance events, located in easily accessible comfortable locations (previous venues for OUTLOUD), and free to the public.

Each performance would include 2-3 local writer/performers to present 10 minutes of their story. The hour long program would also include informal information regarding current storytelling trends, writing, and performing. This information builds the audience's understanding, knowledge, and interest in not only the art form but also the artists. After each performance there will be open time for conversation between the audience and the writer/performers.

Need:

In order for professional writers/performers to grow they need to present their work regularly in a quality curated setting. That means that we writers/performers in Red Wing have to travel to venues in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Travel has certainly limited the number of venues in my repertoire and certainly has prevented local audiences willingness to attend. I participate actively in metro venues, which keeps me fresh, growing and connected to my artistic community.

Red Wing has resources to see and watch excellent touring theater at the Sheldon, and to hear national writers at the Anderson Center and the library, however these sites do not provide an accessible affordable venue for local professional writers/performers to grow.

I believe a curated ongoing "live literature" venue for local writers/performers and audiences would be a terrific hit and addition to the visual art opportunities of our area.

Jessica Zuehlke will serve as organizer, promoter, emcee, hostess, and one of the writer/performers.

Location or Venue (If Known)	Mandy's (back up venue: Three Sisters Community Room. I certainly would like to explore how the Sheldon might engage in this theater project.
Intended Audience/Community Impact (Engagement)	Goals: 1. To build upon the community interests and successes of OUTLOUD in its fourth year as a local live literature performance

Plan)

organization.

2. To promote literacy in an engaging setting through local writers, stories, and performers that stimulate community conversation face to face.
3. To launch a pilot program that demonstrates the need and interest in developing an ongoing performance venue for local writer/performers and audiences. Currently there is no such venue locally.
4. To create opportunity for writer/performers to share and refine their work, thereby developing their skills and deepening their artistry. Live venues are fundamental for this kind of artistic work.
5. To honor and preserve our stories by local writer/performers in this place at this time.

Outcomes/Measurements:

1. Audience turnout and their responses/feedback. [OUTLOUD has totaled over 530 listeners during 10 free local performances.]
2. Feedback from guest writer/performers.
[Currently there is no ongoing venue for local writer/performers in the Red Wing area.]
3. Feedback from venue owners/businesses. For example, throughout the five performances by OUTLOUD at Mandy's, the owner has related customer stories, interest, and how it has made a positive stamp on her mission.
4. Feedback for OUTLOUD to apply for and receive additional funding.
Support from the Creative Laureate program will grow local writers and offers the community opportunities to engage in the process.

Anticipated Project Date(s)	6/1/2026 - 10/1/2026
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Artist Statement (Brief)

Tell us about your artistic practice and how this project connects to your work:

Jessica's artistic process:

For "Our Stories:OUTLOUD" there are several roles that I will serve: producer, writer, and performer. Each of these roles has an artistic process, which I will address as a whole.

My theater art practice includes inspiration, imagination, defining the goal(s) [i.e. why do this], and creating the scaffolding/outline for the work [how to achieve the goal/results]. Then the process requires organization, discipline and skills (writing, rehearsals, performance), and commitment. Following the performances there is a final step of assessing the results and integrating growth.

Supporting me/my theater art are the years of excellent training, repeated professional experiences, fellow colleagues/ artists, and history. It still requires courage and risk, however knowing that my projects have always resulted in growth for others and my own artistic growth is ground to stand on; a history of which I am proud. My projects happen at the best level possible.

As an artist, I continue engagement in my profession at all levels and disciplines of the theater. This includes trips to NYC theater, dance, storytelling; twin cities theater (Guthrie, Children's Theater Company, Playwrights Center, storytelling) and music; as well as local educational productions.

As a writer, performer, producer, my work centers on the story, it's worth, and how best to present it. Perhaps it is told boldly in a production with the fullness of all the theater arts, or it is told beautifully by a single performer, no set or props, in a simple setting such as a Mandy's.

Jessica is a member of Story Arts of MN and the Dramatists Guild of NYC, where her agent is.

Budget Overview

Describe how the \$1,200 honorarium will be used (materials, time, space, etc.):

Budget: Out Stories: OUTLOUD

In Kind Contributions:

Venue Rental: Mandy's \$75/hr x2 hr x 3 events = \$450.00

Rehearsal Space: Stoney End \$60/hr x 2 hr x 3 events= 360.00

Guest Performers: 2 at each event \$ 75 x 2 x3 events= 450.00

Tech and microphones: \$ 90 x3 events= 270.00

Stylist: Nicole Reuter [Roots Salon] (\$ unknown yet)

TOTAL IN KIND: \$1530.00 +

TOTAL HONORAIUM REQUEST: \$1200.00

Jessica Zuehlke: producer, promoter, organizer, hostess, emcee, writer/performer

Connection to Community

In a few sentences, please describe your relationship to the Red Wing community:

Red Wing is home for my husband Jim Stowell and myself these past decades. We enjoy living in the historic district with diverse homes, professions, and families. Our neighbors and friends watch out for each other and keep each other informed. We have easy quick access to the river and parks which are an important

part of our life, as well as soaking up the history of the area.

As an educator I know the school district, families, and hundreds of my students very well. Of the over 50 school productions I directed the projects with the Prairie Island community still remain a highlight. Continuing to promote growth for our students and community is important to me, especially literacy and theater arts. Being active in several community projects, at the YMCA, at Universal Music Center, and the library, keeps me informed and meeting more people in my community.

Though the professional theater opportunities pull me to the Twin Cities, creating opportunities here for myself and others to grow became possible a few years ago when my parents passed and no longer needed my care.

Our local business associates did not bat an eye when asked for funding help with the 2024 Mark Twain: OUTLOUD production. Those ten businesses just reached for their check books and asked, "How much?"

I was very moved. This is the Red Wing that I know. That our plumbers, electricians, carpenters, mechanics, who know what we do, support Jim and I as artists.

Of course, our city has problems. However, I believe that theater and local stories help us all become better acquainted by telling, listening, and conversation. Doing this, we overcome myths and misunderstandings to make meaningful connections and to have a great time.

Supporting Materials

Work Samples

Use the following section to provide links and/or files of work samples relevant to the proposal. It is recommended to include at least one of the following:

- Visual Artists: images of artwork in JPG, JPEG, PNG, or GIF formats
- Musicians: songs/performance in MOV, MP4, WAV, or MP3 formats
- Writers: samples of work in DOCX or PDF formats
- Website or YouTube links
- Other

List any links relevant to your proposal.

[Facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556181153421](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556181153421)

File Upload 1 [Mark Twain Outloud \(1\).png](#)

File Upload 2 [The Beadwork Trail 3 20 26 c l grant app support.docx](#)

File Upload 3 [BIO jz 3 26 CL RW.doc](#)

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

MARK TWAIN: OUTLOUD

The Mississippi River is the main character in this live performance of Twain's book, LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI. Renowned performing artists Jim Stowell and Jessica Zuehlke bring life to steamboat era characters and Twain's Mississippi.



TUESDAY

FEBRUARY 17 - 6:00 PM

Lake City Public Library

This program is made possible by a generous donation from the Lake City Friends of the Library



SATURDAY

FEBRUARY 21 - 1:00 PM

Red Wing Public Library



The Beadwork Trail

By Jessica Zuehlke

Copyright 2018

Drivin', drivin', drivin' North on 169:

Anoka, Onamia, Grand Rapids.

Drivin', drivin', drivin' West on US # 2:

Ball Club, Bena, Bemidiji.

Drivin' north on 89:

Red Lake, Redby.

Drivin' east on #1:

Ponemah.

Between 1976-1994 I am employed as an Artist in Residence for the MN State Arts Board, teaching theater and directing children's plays across Minnesota.

On one of my residency trips North, I stop in Onamia, and open the museum door to the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. I meet one of the most famous Anishinabe elders and beadwork artists, Maude Kegg, who looks straight at me and says: "You. Come home with me." I do.

From then on, beadwork artist after artist is introduced to me. Native home after home, opens to lucky me. These are the most prominent Ojibwe artists. Maude, is beading a bandolier bag for the Smithsonian a three year project. Recently the National Endowment for the Arts names her, Maude Kegg, as a National Living Treasure.

I continue to make regular stops at my artist friends' homes during my theater teaching trips. They feed me traditional food: fry bread, venison stew, bison, wild blueberries, and "mahnomen". They instruct me about their lives: bead by bead.

In December, 1991. My Mom Nancy is traveling with me on the Bead Work Trail to transport beadwork to an art sale in St. Paul. We head to the Kegg family in Onamia. Betty and Darrell have their items ready to go, including luscious loomed belts. Maude shows us her progress on her phenomenal bandolier bag and teaches us to find the "mistake." The mistake, is the incorrect color of bead in traditional work, breaking the pattern.

Driving on to Bena, we pick up porcupine quill beaded medallions from Ida Losh. She is surrounded by huge pots, pans, and buckets of quills soaking in every

color of dye: red, yellow, orange. Her son, Melvin, a world class quill artist, is working on his quilled birch bark boxes. Melvin says, “Jessica, your quill box is ready.”

“But, Melvin, you told me I am three years down the waiting list.”

“Too bad,” says Melvin, “you will just have to take it now. When I started this box it just kept saying: ‘Jessica, Jessica.’”

“Don’t worry we have lots of quills. The sheriff drops off porcupine road kills, so we have been harvesting and dying thousands of quills.” “Thousands,” says Ida, “My son is trying to kill me with all this dying.”

“Melvin, mom Nancy creates from nature.”

Nancy explains: “As a housewife and mother of four in a prairie town, with no money of my own to start a business, I go to nature to find free materials. I learn to see the prairie, see its beauty in the cattails and milkweed pods.”

“Mom designs elegant wreaths and dramatic bouquets from the beautiful prairie grasses.” I boast, “No-one was doing this in the 70’s.”

Nancy says: “Just yesterday we found a ditch full of Silver Prairie Sage.”

“Sage.” Ida chirps. “Good.”

Melvin and Nancy share a look, as artists, who make beauty from things that most people would ignore. Road kill. Prairie weeds.

Back in the car we head to Red Lake and Redby via Bemidji. I call McKinley Auginash, elder and artist, maple syrup man, to set up a meeting time: “Anin, Jessica!”

“Bozho, Mac. I’m headed your way with my mom. Does today work for you? Meet at the café?”

“Jessica, are you on white time or red time?”

My beadwork friends and now business partners understand that sometimes I am in the area doing theater for extended periods of time and we find each other, as Mac calls it, on red time. Mom and I scoot up to Redby and meet McKinley on white time.

Mac is in his winter gear: northern woods grey wool pants with the thin green stripe. Red Suspenders. Wool plaid shirt. Red wool lumber jack cap. His thinning white hair braided down his back.

Mac escorts us to his home to peruse local Ojibwe arts: both traditional and contemporary.

Exquisite: hair ties, barrettes, vests, dance regalia, beaded ball caps by the Stilldays, dolls, rattles. Golden maple syrup and maple sugar candy. Authentic dream catchers. Crisp white birch bark containers, baskets, and miniature canoes.

Nancy asks spot on questions: “Mac, how do you bend the birch bark?” Knowledgeable as she is about Lakota art, mom is clearly interested in this high level of craftsmanship. “What is brain tanning? How do you do that to the deer hide?”

Mckinley seems to be impressed by mom, keenly watching how she touches items, notices detail, and sniffs the sage and sweet grass.

The three of us study the loom beadwork designs marveling at the floral patterns and remarkable replicas of local plants. We search for the signature bead. Maude taught me: “The mistake bead is because no one, no human can be perfect. Only the great creator is perfect.”

The smoldering sweet grass drifts upward, delicately forming a smoke wreath ring around my mom’s head. She doesn’t notice. Mac and I do. He looks at me, winks,

and points at her with his lips and chin. We grin. She grins.

We load up the artwork to be sold at the curated show in St. Paul. There customers will be willing and able to pay premium prices for this collectable Ojibwe art. Mom Nancy and I purchase stunning beadwork by the Stilldays insisting on paying more. “Artists never charge enough,” says mom. Mac laughs.

“You got that right,” he says. “Jessica can get us double or more compared to what we can charge here. That’s why we call her the Bead Lady.”

As we bundle up to leave when Mac says, “I have something for you and your mother. “

We follow him into the living room where sage is burning. He brings out a huge object covered in a well-worn native blanket. “This is a special day that you are here. That you both appreciate and understand our culture and can help present this artwork to the right people. So today, I play an honor song for your mother and for you, Jessica. For your spirits.”

Mac sets the large drum on the floor, takes in a deep breath, closes his eyes. He rolls the beater with its soft deer hide head around in his hand. Mom and I see the

connection he makes in his body, through the beater and to the drum.

Boom -boom, boom -boom, boom -boom, setting a steady rhythm.

The aromas of the wood burning stove and the cleansing sage, fill me up. My bones feel the pulse and my head tilts towards the sky as my solar plexus expands through the top of my head.

My mind flies from the room up into the white pines joining eagle, migizi, flying over Ponemah. Migizi, calls: "eehhh, eeahh."

Circling, circling, higher and higher. I see Red Wing. Prairie Island. I hear the voice of Amos Owens teaching me: "The drum is the heart beat of our mother, the earth. We touch the earth with our feet in respect. In honor. We dance to heal. We dance to be strong."

Mac's singing brings me back. "Hey ya. Hey ya ya. Hey ya. Hey ya ya. Hi ya ya. Hi ya yaaahhh..."

In harmony with the world, humbled by McKinley's honor song, the three of us wrap the drum. "Migwich."

None of this would have happened if I had not opened the door to the Mille Lacs Museum. Or if Maude had not looked straight into me and said: “Come home.”

These things happened because of love. Love of the north woods, the waters, my school children since my first full time teaching position in 1972 at Bemidji High School.

I fell in love with the Ojibwe people: the Losh’s, the Keggs, the Auginash’s.

I fell in love with Ojibwe culture and their astonishing artistry. Their artwork opened my soul and they could see me.

I drive mom through Ponemah, a sacred area for the Red Lake Res. We trudge through the snow out onto Ponehma Point, a thin peninsula that juts north between Upper and Lower Red Lake. We leave the car running as it is 10 below.

We bring tobacco. Mom giggles: “What do we do with the tobacco?”

“Not sure, mom, let’s place it on snow covered beach. Migwich.”

Two white chicks... on the Bead Work Trail.

JESSICA ZUEHLKE

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Red Wing, MN 55066
651-301-5152
churchbasementladies@yahoo.co

April 10, 2026

After earning my theatre and English degrees from Concordia College in Moorhead and my Masters in Education from St. Mary's University in Winona, I worked extensively in dance and theatre in the St. Paul/Minneapolis metropolitan area with some of the most imaginative companies in the area. The Children's Theatre Company, The Southern Theatre, and the Nancy Hauser Dance Company, to name a few, all gave me an intensive theatrical and literary foundation both on and off the stage.

Also, as a Minnesota artist-in-the-schools from 1984-1994, I had the opportunity to lead hundreds of theatre residencies that served administrators, teachers, community theatres, and thousands of primary and secondary school children from Grand Rapids to Edina, from Medford to the Red Lake Indian Reservation. It is important to note that I am able to deliver language arts and theatre education to all types of schools, from the elite to the humble. Because of my background, I fully understand the needs of schools, teachers, and children and how to meet those needs as well as how to take them to places in art that they have never before experienced.

As head of the Theatre Department for Red Wing High School from 1994-2001, I had the opportunity to administer, direct, and stage a wide variety of productions, from Shakespeare to "Oklahoma." Working in partnership with CAPP and the Minnesota Orchestra, I was also instrumental in introducing hundreds of Red Wing high school students to master classes and performances in dance, music, and opera. In addition, I collaborated with elders of the Prairie Island Native American community to produce a play for children and families of my own adaptation of John Niehardt's classic, Black Elk Speaks.

Since 2001 I have been intensively involved in rewriting and delivering a comprehensive Language Arts Curriculum for grades 10-12 at Tower View High School, an Alternative Learning Center for teens at risk. Focusing on reading and writing skills and development has opened yet another world to me as educator of the special child.

Because both my professional and personal life has been organic as well as a purposeful involvement with many cultures, I am capable and comfortable working with diverse populations. My work with COMPAS and the Minnesota State Arts Board included multicultural and multidisciplinary projects through the performing arts. I have also been exposed to populations through my love of languages, extensive travel, and by working in arts education in Latin and South America, including the Amazon Rainforest.

These areas of my career have been memorable because of my commitment, expertise, and my ability to successfully communicate by means of planning, writing, and implementation. I have always considered it a privilege and a joy to work with teachers and children of all ages as well as with established and emerging artists. I have long believed that art is the most profound means of human communication.

Thank you for this opportunity. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jessica Zuehlke

Creative Laureate Program: Project Proposal Evaluation Form

Project Name: _____

Artist/Applicant Name: _____

Reviewer Name: _____

Date of Review: _____

Scoring Rubric

Please use the following scale to score each category (for a grand total of 50 points):



1. Artistic Excellence (Max 10 pts) - Score (1-10):

- a) The quality of the works of art and the services involved in the project.
- b) The relevance of the project in relation to the audience or community intended to serve through the grant activities.

Comments:

2. Artistic Merit (Max 10 pts) - Score (1-10):

- a) The value and appropriateness of the project to the organization's mission, artistic field, artists, audience, community, and/or constituency.
- b) Clearly defined goals and/or proposed outcomes and an appropriate plan to determine if those goals and/or outcomes are met. This includes, where relevant, measures to assess student and/or teacher learning in arts education.

Comments:

3. Community Impact (Max 10 pts) - Score (1-10): (ACC Vision Statement: "Red Wing thrives as a creative, regional arts and culture hub where everyone can participate.")

- a) Engagement with individuals whose opportunities to experience and participate in the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economic status or disability.
- b) Ability to strengthen the arts sector through knowledge sharing and resources.

Comments:

4. Feasibility and Budget Appropriateness (Max 10 pts) - Score (1-10):

- a) The ability to carry out the project based on such factors as the appropriateness of the budget, clarity of the project activities, resources involved and qualifications of the project's personnel and/or partnerships.

Comments:

5. Artist's Relationship with the Red Wing Community (Max 10 pts) *Applicant lives or works within Red Wing School District #256 or is a resident of Goodhue or Pierce Counties.*

Score (1-10):

Comments:

TOTAL SCORE (Max 50 pts): / 50

Conflict of Interest Disclosure:

Does the reviewer or applicant have any actual or perceived conflicts of interest?

Yes No

If yes, please describe:



City of Red Wing Arts & Culture Commission

Creative Laureate Program: ACC Responsibilities

Since the Creative Laureate program was begun in the Finance Committee, the Finance Committee will take the lead during the first implementation but would like assistance from other committees. In the second year, it would be appropriate for the Public Art Committee to take over responsibility for the program.

Marketing Plan

The Finance Committee requests that the Marketing Committee develop a Marketing & Communications Plan for the Creative Laureate Program. This may include:

- Create Creative Laureate Webpages on the ACC Website
 - Description
 - Application Form
 - Features on Selected Artists and Their Projects
- Promote via City E-Newsletter & Social Media
- Issue Press Releases
- Create Flyers, Poster & Print Materials
 - Encourage local art organizations and businesses to promote the program within the community.
- Events to be promoted:
 - Call for Artists
 - Announcements of Awardees
 - Public Events by the Laureates

Artist Selection Process

The Finance Committee will work with the City Liaison to determine how to create the online application and where those applications will land. The Finance Committee will review applications for completeness and bring forward all applications that are complete.

It is suggested that two Public Art Committee members and two Finance Committee members review all completed applications and bring their top six applications forward to the whole commission for review and selection during a workshop meeting. At the next voting meeting, the commission will vote to recommend up to 3 finalists for awarding.

Each project proposal will be reviewed and scored for total of 50 points on the following criteria (*scoring rubric/criteria adapted from the National Endowment for the Arts*):



1. Artistic Excellence (10 pts)

- a) The quality of the works of art and the services involved in the project.
- b) The relevance of the project in relation to the audience or community intended to serve through the grant activities.

2. Artistic Merit (10 pts)

- a) The value and appropriateness of the project to the organization’s mission, artistic field, artists, audience, community, and/or constituency.
- b) Clearly defined goals and/or proposed outcomes and an appropriate plan to determine if those goals and/or outcomes are met. This includes, where relevant, measures to assess student and/or teacher learning in arts education.

3. Community Impact (10 pts) *(ACC Vision Statement: “Red Wing thrives as a creative, regional arts and culture hub where everyone can participate.”)*

- a) Engagement with individuals whose opportunities to experience and participate in the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economic status or disability.
- b) Ability to strengthen the arts sector through knowledge sharing and resources.

4. Feasibility and Budget Appropriateness (10 pts)

- a) The ability to carry out the project based on such factors as the appropriateness of the budget, clarity of the project activities, resources involved and qualifications of the project’s personnel and/or partnerships.

5. Artist’s Relationship with the Red Wing Community (10 pts)

All applicants must live or work within the City of Red Wing Area as defined by School District #256, or must be a resident of Goodhue or Pierce Counties. Note that you will be required to disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest. All voting will be documented and archived. Active Arts & Culture Commissioners are ineligible to apply.

The Finance Committee will work with City staff to develop Creative Laureate contracts.

Each awarded applicant will be assigned a commissioner who will attend the commission meeting where the applicant is awarded, answer questions, schedule / attend mid-project check-ins and attend all Creative Laureate events of the applicant throughout their term.

Mid-Project Check-in will be attended by Laureate assigned Commission Member and one other Commission Member from the Public Art Committee. It is recommended that as many Commission Members as possible attend the Creative Laureate public events.