



ESTABLISHED 1981

PRESS RELEASE CONTACT:

Maria Gatewood

[maria@newarkarts.org](mailto:maria@newarkarts.org)

973-643-1625

## **Newark Arts Council Receives Historic \$1 Million Grant from The Prudential Foundation**

**Grant supports citywide cultural plan, community engagement, and capacity-building**

*Announcement coincides with naming of new Council head Jeremy Johnson, and the honoring of  
Newark historian and arts champion Clement Price*

Newark, NJ – April 11, 2016 – Today, the Newark Arts Council announced it is receiving a historic \$1 million grant from The Prudential Foundation, the largest gift in the Council's 34-year history. The grant will support the creation of a citywide cultural plan and provide organizational capacity over three years to drive economic vitality through the arts in Newark. The grant was announced at the council's gala to celebrate the life and times of the late Dr. Clement Price, a champion of the arts and cherished Newark historian at Rutgers University-Newark.

"Prudential is proud to support the Newark Arts Council, which is a connector, supporter and advocate for the city's arts community," said Lata Reddy, Vice President of Corporate Social Responsibility at Prudential and President of The Prudential Foundation. "This grant helps support Newark's vibrant and growing arts community, further enhancing our collective efforts to make Newark a cultural destination over the long term."

Arts and community leaders responded enthusiastically to the announcement. "This is a game-changer," said Jeremy Johnson, the Council's newly named Executive Director and former Philanthropic Liaison for the city. "Prudential's grant will enable the Newark Arts Council to be intentional and strategic about engaging residents, artists, and other stakeholders in the city's cultural growth," he said.

"Art is important," said Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, son of the late writer and renowned poet Amiri Baraka. "I believe all of our residents, especially our youth, deserve to experience the arts in a way that enhances their lives, strengthens their education, and uplifts our communities," he said. "Advancing Newark as a center for artists and the arts is a very important part of our strategy to attract new businesses to all areas of our city."

"Newark is an arts-rich town," said John Schreiber, President and CEO of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. "Just look at the hundreds of arts-related activities and events that are part of Newark Celebration 350, our city's yearlong birthday party. NJPAC is proud to join the Newark Arts Council in continuing to unite the arts communities under one umbrella," Schreiber said.

"Prudential's investment in the Newark Arts Council epitomizes the phenomenal cross-sector collaboration undergirding the arts in Newark," said Nancy Cantor, Chancellor of Rutgers University-Newark. "Supporting the Council's leadership in developing a cultural plan in partnership with the City of Newark reveals the same visionary thought and action we see in the important role Prudential is playing in the re-invention of the Hahne & Co. building, where Rutgers-Newark also is forging cross-sector partnerships in the arts and culture to create the 'Express Newark' collaborator," she said.

"As creative placemakers and lead developers of a sustainable arts district in Lincoln Park, built on the neighborhood's deep history in music rooted in African American culture, coupled with our LEED-certified affordable housing, urban farming and historic preservation of South Park Presbyterian Church Facade, we look forward to the Newark Arts Council's leadership for a citywide cultural plan," said Anthony Smith, Executive Director of Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District.

Victor Davson, Executive Director of Aljira, A Center for Contemporary Art, commented, "Newark's growing reputation as an artistic hub needs to be carefully nurtured. Creating a citywide cultural plan will help our city continue to blossom artistically amidst the city's booming downtown developments."

"As one of the city's oldest cultural institutions that has grown into one of America's greatest museums, we salute corporate support that recognizes the essential role of the arts in our community," said Steven Kern, Director of The Newark Museum. "Prudential's grant to the Newark Arts Council to develop a citywide cultural plan will help underscore our mission to serve the community and to attract visitors from around the world," he said.

The co-founder of Gallery Aferro, Evonne Davis, said, "We're thrilled that Newark is seen as a nurturing community for artists to grow and flourish. This grant will strengthen and unify plans for creative placemaking across the city."

"A cultural plan will help us solidify plans and opportunities for people to visit the city of Newark more often," said Sheila McKoy, President of the Newark Arts Council and retired director of the Transit Arts Program for New Jersey Transit.

Joseph Della Fave, Executive Director of the Ironbound Community Corporation, said, "we are excited about the Newark Arts Council's citywide effort and cultural planning. It can fortify our mission to engage and empower residents to create a just, vibrant and sustainable community."

Gwen Moten, the city's Executive Director for Arts, Cultural Development and Tourism, remarked, "The arts mean business. A comprehensive plan will help accelerate the economic engine that is driven by arts and culture, while bringing vitality to our neighborhoods, and fostering youth development," she added.

The Newark Arts Council will issue a request for proposals in mid-April for the cultural plan administrator. For further information, visit [www.newarkarts.org](http://www.newarkarts.org).

### **About the Newark Arts Council**

The Newark Arts Council is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization created to advance and expand the artistic and cultural resources of the City of Newark, New Jersey. The Council's mission is to bring the transformative power of the arts into the lives of those who live in, work in, and visit Newark. The Council is the umbrella for the Newark Arts Education Roundtable (NAER) and is a partner with the Mayor's Office of Cultural Development, Arts, and Tourism. The Council awards neighborhood grants through its ArtStart program and sponsors the citywide Open Doors Festival every October. For more information, visit [www.newarkarts.org](http://www.newarkarts.org).

### **About The Prudential Foundation**

The Prudential Foundation is a nonprofit corporation supported by The Prudential Insurance Company of America, an insurance subsidiary of Prudential Financial Inc. of the U.S. The Prudential Foundation advocates for systemic change focused on eliminating barriers to financial and social mobility in the areas of connecting people to quality jobs, building personal assets and transforming communities. As a strategic investor, the Foundation makes long-term commitments that yield tangible results through both grants and program-related investments.

**-END-**