

RUTH HOLMBERG ARTS LEADERSHIP AWARD 2021

ARTSBUILD IS PLEASED TO HONOR ANN LAW AND MITCH PATEL AS RECIPIENTS OF THE 2021 RUTH HOLMBERG ARTS LEADERSHIP AWARD.

The annual Ruth Holmberg Arts Leadership Award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the arts in Chattanooga and who are actively engaged in the cultural life of our community—“Arts Builders” who exemplify ArtsBuild’s mission to build a stronger community through the arts, as demonstrated by their significant contributions to the arts and leadership.

The first Arts Leadership Award in 2014 recognized Ruth Holmberg for her extraordinary support of the arts and cultural community in Chattanooga over 70 years. Since 2014, the annual award has honored Mrs. Holmberg with her name. Past recipients include Mai Bell Hurley, Fletcher Bright, Sonia Young, Booker T. Scruggs II, Alice L. Smith, Warren Barnett, and Candy Kruesi.



PHOTO SHOT FOR THE SCOUT GUIDE OF CHATTANOOGA VOLUME 6 BY KYLE MACKILLOP

MITCH PATEL

MITCH PATEL, CEO of Vision Hospitality Group, has always been passionate about the arts. Growing up in Cleveland, Tennessee, Mitch cultivated his appreciation and skill in the visual arts in high school. While he did not pursue a career in the arts, his love for them has never waned.

Now as a successful hotelier, Mitch has sought out as many ways as possible to support and advocate for the arts through his businesses, especially our local craftsmen, makers, and artisans. Whether serving on the ArtsBuild Board, working to support public art programs, contributing to local arts organizations like SPLASH Youth Arts Workshop, or featuring local art in his hotels, he has consistently worked to elevate the arts in Chattanooga and help build a stronger community.

The first hotel to feature local art was the Hampton Inn & Suites downtown with its two exterior mosaics, one on 4th Street and one on Chestnut Street created by Chattanooga artist Terry Cannon using materials found on the site where the hotel was being constructed. When the opportunity arose to develop The Edwin Hotel,

Mitch wanted to center the hotel around art. He curated a collection of more than 200 pieces exclusively from Chattanooga artists—the largest known collection of Chattanooga art. With the goal of elevating the local art scene, he aspired to educate visitors on the art and added QR codes that lead guests to the websites for the artists. Mitch says he is especially happy that for some of the artists featured in The Edwin, it is the first time their work has been seen publicly. As the hotel receives more visitors from across the country and around the world, Chattanooga’s artists are getting exposure to an international audience. In addition to the gallery-like experience at The Edwin, the hotel has ongoing programs like an on-site artist of the month.

The newest hotel—Kinley Chattanooga on the Southside—features a 1,575 square-foot mural by Alecia Vera Buckles and Briah Gober. In fact, all the art in the hotel is by local female artists. The spirit at both The Edwin and Kinley is to engage not only with travelers, but also to create a space where locals are welcome. A blurring of the line between hotel lobby and the

neighborhood serves to create a welcoming community-centered space with local art on full display.

Mitch has truly uplifted the profile of the arts and artists in Chattanooga in a way that builds pride and makes our community stronger.



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WHEN ANN LAW and her husband Dr. Bruce Kaplan moved to Chattanooga from New York City in 1991, one of the first things they did was buy an old drapery shop on Dodds Avenue which would become Barking Legs Theater. They believed Chattanooga was ready for a theater presenting avant-garde dance and theater performances and music of diverse genres. It was the beginning of three decades of dedication to the arts in Chattanooga.

Ann received her MA in Dance Education from UNC Greensboro and her BA in Dance from Mills College. She is also a certified Pilates and Kinetic Awareness instructor. She has received many awards including the Distinguished Alumni Award in Dance Education from UNC Greensboro, Tennessee Association of Dance Outstanding Dance Educator, and the Tennessee Arts Commission Individual Artist Fellowship award. An improvisational dancer, dance educator and arts activist, she is Executive Director of Contemporary Performing Arts of Chattanooga (CoPAC) and Founder of Barking Legs Theater. For the past 28 years, CoPAC at Barking Legs has provided a supportive space to encourage both emerging and established artists, grow thoughtful audiences, and cultivate strong community art activism. Ann also serves on several non-profit boards, both in Chattanooga and New York City.

During her time in Chattanooga,



PHOTO BY TRUE CAPTURE STUDIOS

Ann has taught creative movement at Chattanooga School for the Arts & Sciences, movement for actors at Chattanooga State Community College, and dance at Barking Legs Theater. In 2015, after years of teaching dance, Ann developed and designed Full Circle TAP (Teaching Artists Program) to support artists in their desire and quest to become teaching artists. She designs art education curricula that engage and transform students into critical thinkers capable of social change. Ann believes that by strengthening life skills, communicating, and learning through the creative process, the experience of the arts directly relates to academic achievement.

Whether through CoPAC projects, performances at Barking Legs Theater, arts education curriculum, or mentoring artists, Ann fosters diverse, new, and transformative arts experiences for everyone. She truly believes that art is essential to our lives. She has been inclusive, embraces novelty and change, and reaches out to all areas of our city.

To Ann, the arts are for everyone in Chattanooga, and she has lived that philosophy ever since she arrived here.

“

It is our hope that this annual award honors individuals who share the same spirit and passion for the arts as Ruth did. Recipients of the Ruth Holmberg Arts Leadership Award have given selflessly of their time, energy, and resources to building a stronger community through the arts.”

**DR. MARY POSTON TANNER,
BOARD CHAIR OF ARTSBUILD**

ANN LAW



PHOTO BY TRUE CAPTURE STUDIOS

ARTS Build



OUR THANKS TO BOARD CHAIR MARY TANNER

ArtsBuild would like to thank Dr. Mary P. Tanner who is ending her term in June as Chair of the Board of Directors. Over the past three years, Mary has helped to guide the organization in this role. During her term, the Board of Directors conducted a national search and hired James McKissic as President in December 2019 after the retirement of Dan Bowers; approved a new 3-year Strategic Plan; and guided the organization through the unexpected challenges and adaptations required of the pandemic. Mary has been a steadfast leader with a true passion for the arts in our community. We appreciate everything she has done for ArtsBuild! Marcus McKamey will succeed her as Chair of the Board of Directors in July.

ARTS *Build*

ArtsBuild is a local nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established to support the arts in Chattanooga and Hamilton County. Since 1969, ArtsBuild has invested more than \$76 million in our community's many arts organizations, arts education, artists, and arts programs, supporting access to the arts in its many forms, towards a vision of more arts in more places for more people.

OUR MISSION IS TO BUILD A STRONGER COMMUNITY THROUGH THE ARTS.



SUPPORT THE ARTS IN 2021

You can support the arts with a gift to ArtsBuild's 2021 Annual Campaign. We have an ambitious goal for **100 new donors** this year! Can you help us get there?



GIVE ONLINE AT [ARTSBUILD.COM/DONATE](https://artsbuild.com/donate)

DID YOU KNOW?



ARTSBUILD INVESTED
\$1.3m in the
local arts sector last year.

650+ **DONORS SUPPORT**
ARTSBUILD

each year. All gifts to ArtsBuild go directly to fund our grant-making, arts education initiatives, arts integration workshops for teachers, arts leadership programs, advocacy efforts, and other support services—everything that builds a stronger community through the arts.



21 **ARTS ORGANIZATIONS** received Mission Support this past year as our Community Arts Partners—pillars of Chattanooga's vibrant arts community.

Remember the first time you saw a play or heard an orchestra perform? ArtsBuild gives that opportunity to every Hamilton County School grade K-5 student—



12,000+
STUDENTS EACH YEAR

—through our *Imagine!* program. We know exposure to the arts at a young age and learning through the arts at school are so important.

20+ **UNIQUE AND CREATIVE**
ARTS PERFORMANCES,
EXHIBITS AND COLLABORATIONS

are supported each year through our Community Cultural Connections small grants program. All year long, there are fun ways to engage in the arts around town!

The Hamilton County nonprofit arts and culture sector generates an annual

\$172.5m

IN ECONOMIC BENEFIT
and supports more than

6,300
FULL-TIME JOBS



PANDEMIC IMPACT
ON LOCAL ARTS
ORGS IN 2020:



\$8.4m
LOST REVENUE

PANDEMIC: RESILIENCE TO RECOVERY

Despite the challenges and setbacks of the past year, artists and arts organizations responded creatively during the pandemic, exploring new ways to engage their audiences and connect to the public through their art with online programs and new collaborations.

We believe wholeheartedly that the arts are essential to our ability to thrive and heal post-pandemic.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW WAYS ARTSBUILD IS HELPING OUR LOCAL ARTS COMMUNITY MOVE FROM A PHASE OF RESILIENCE TO ONE OF RECOVERY:

- + Allocating **Mission Support** grants for unrestricted operating funds
- + Administering the **Artists Work Grants** program in partnership with Public Art Chattanooga and Southeast TN Development District
- + Distributing an **Arts Recovery Fund** for small, grassroots arts organizations
- + Launching the new **Racial Equity Grants for Individual Artists** program
- + Offering a **Shared Services** program with webinars and consulting services to assist arts organizations with human resources, social media, fundraising, and more

ARTS IMPROVE
INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING

ARTS UNIFY
COMMUNITIES

ARTS IMPROVE ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE

ARTS STRENGTHEN THE
COMMUNITY

ARTS DRIVE TOURISM AND
REVENUE TO LOCAL BUSINESSES

ARTS SPARK CREATIVITY
AND INNOVATION

ARTS DRIVE THE
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

ARTS HAVE
SOCIAL IMPACT

ARTS IMPROVE
HEALTHCARE

ARTS FOSTER THE HEALTH AND
WELLBEING OF OUR MILITARY