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Community Foundation convenes arts and culture advisory group Sept. 8

Group input to shape funding for local arts and cultural initiatives

SPRINGFIELD –The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts (CFWM) is the proud recipient of a planning grant to enhance its capacity to invest in trainings and grants for the Pioneer Valley’s arts and creativity nonprofits. Funding for planning as well as grantmaking is provided by the Boston-based [Barr Foundation](#), as part of its efforts to elevate the arts and enable creative expression to engage and inspire a dynamic, thriving Massachusetts. With assets of \$1.7 billion, Barr is among the largest private foundations in New England and has contributed more than \$834 million to charitable causes since 1999.

CFWM is one of five community foundations across the state that Barr selected for this initiative, which is designed to provide capacity-building training and systems-building efforts within the regional arts and creativity community. The Barr grant also provides CFWM with the opportunity to make investments in innovative initiatives that go beyond the scope of our current grant programming. We are engaging in this work directly with leaders from the arts and cultural nonprofit community, local artists and a range of individual and institutional funders.

“We are thrilled that the Barr Foundation selected us to convene this effort in the Pioneer Valley,” said CFWM President and CEO Katie Allan Zobel. “Many of our own contributors are committed to supporting arts and creativity which are such a vital component of the economy and quality of life in our region. Funding from Barr will significantly contribute to CFWM’s ability to strengthen nonprofit arts groups in building their own capacity, as well as the network of arts and culture organizations in the Valley and Hilltowns.”

CFWM has convened an [advisory group](#) consisting of 30 individuals representing local arts and cultural nonprofits, artists, funders, and other cross-sector initiatives to help guide our thinking on new ways to build the field’s capacity to adapt, take risks, and engage changing audiences and to foster opportunities to connect the arts to other disciplines and sectors. The work of the group will enable us to develop new, impactful grantmaking opportunities for Franklin Hampshire and Hampden Counties.

The group will convene Sept. 8 at CFWM, 333 Bridge St., Springfield, at 12:30 p.m. to review and discuss data collected through three regional gatherings and a survey of 211 of the Pioneer Valley's arts and culture nonprofits.

You are invited to attend the Sept. 8 meeting at CFWM, 333 Bridge St., Springfield, at 12:30 p.m. and find out how this grant, under CFWM's leadership, will impact arts and culture in the Valley.

Founded in 1991, the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts administers a charitable endowment and advised funds consisting of nearly 600 separately identified funds (\$132 million) serving the three counties bordering the Connecticut River in western Massachusetts (Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties). Our mission is to enrich the quality of life of the people of our region by:

- Encouraging philanthropy*
- Developing a flexible endowment*
- Assessing and responding to emerging and changing needs*
- Serving as a resource, catalyst, and coordinator for charitable activities*
- Promoting efficiency in the management of charitable funds*

The Barr Foundation's mission is to invest in human, natural, and creative potential, serving as thoughtful stewards and catalysts. Based in Boston, Barr focuses regionally, and selectively engages nationally, working in partnership with nonprofits, foundations, the public sector, and civic and business leaders to elevate the arts, advance solutions for climate change, and connect all students to success in high school and beyond. With assets of \$1.7 billion, Barr is among the largest private foundations in New England and has contributed more than \$834 million to charitable causes since 1999. For more information, visit barrfoundation.org or follow @BarrFdn.