



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION of Southeastern Massachusetts

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The Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts awards \$125,000 to support Arts & Culture Organizations and Artists

NEW BEDFORD — The [Creative Commonwealth Initiative](#) of the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts awarded \$125,000 in unrestricted grants to arts and culture nonprofits to support organizations and artists in the SouthCoast. For the past three grant cycles, the Creative Commonwealth has been committed to supporting organizations and projects that are youth-centric and are focused on increasing the artistic expression of culturally diverse and immigrant communities. As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Community Foundation decided to divert from the originally planned grant round to offer immediate unrestricted financial support to the organizations have been, and continue to be, helping to ensure that their audiences are represented and celebrated.

There is a total of 24 grants ranging from \$3,000-\$7,000 that will be administered to support nonprofits. For some with strong ties to the artist community, portions of their grant will be utilized to pay artists directly or to commission them for collaborative programming. In addition to these grants, the Community Foundation is exploring ways of offering technical assistance to organizational leaders. Among the grantees, The New Bedford Symphony Orchestra continues to stay connected during this difficult time of COVID-19.

“One thing the COVID-19 shutdown has made so apparent is that our mission is as much about bringing people together as it is about presenting great art. The first impact of COVID-19 was: if people can’t gather, we can’t do what we do.” Said Dave Prentiss, President and CEO of New Bedford Symphony Orchestra. “I think this is something that we always need to keep at the center of our focus - art connects people to each other. That being said, the shutdown is making us develop new ways to connect with people and to help them connect with each other (including our musicians). Live stream concerts by NBSO musicians and providing online educational content to families and schools are a few ways of bringing people together where they can share an experience and interact with each other. I don’t see this as a replacement or threat to the in-person experience of art; rather, it’s allowing us to be multifaceted in how we fulfill our mission. The New Bedford Symphony Orchestra is very appreciative of this support.”

"YEAH (Youth Experiencing Artistic Hope) is truly grateful to be receiving such a generous grant from CFSEMA during these difficult times. Our mission is to provide the youth of Greater Fall River with life-changing opportunities through employment in the arts, and these funds will help us continue to do that. It is an investment in not only the future of these teens, but also the

communities they are a part of." Said Tom Flint, Executive Director of YEAH! Corps in Fall River.

"All throughout our Creative Commonwealth work these past few years, we have come to appreciate that the arts are essential. We knew that before this crisis and we are all the more certain of it as the arts are sustaining us, entertaining us, inspiring us, and ultimately, will be the means through which we make sense of this. We look to our artists to lead the way and these organizations are doing just that", said John Vasconcellos, President of the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts.

The Community Foundation is dedicated to increasing accessible and equitable grantmaking. As one of the Foundation's Strategic Pillars, Arts and Culture has been and will continue to be a priority in their work. Now more than ever, people have been turning to the arts for comfort, solace, and hope. The Community Foundation is proud to support arts and culture in Fall River and New Bedford.

Details of each grantee's work can be found listed [here](#). Grants for general operating support ranging from \$3,000 to \$7,000 were distributed to the following organizations:

Grantees:

- **3rd Eye Youth Empowerment**
- **AHA! New Bedford**
- **Cape Verdean Association in New Bedford**
- **Cape Verdean Recognition Committee**
- **DATMA**
- **Day of Portugal Fall River**
- **FABRIC Arts Festival**
- **Fall River Symphony Orchestra**
- **Gnome Surf**
- **Greater Fall River Art Association**
- **Mass Apsara Dance Troupe**
- **Narrows Center for the Arts**
- **New Bedford Art Museum**
- **New Bedford Ballet**

- **New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center**
- **New Bedford Historical Society**
- **New Bedford Symphony Orchestra**
- **Our Lady of Light Band**
- **Seaglass Theater Company**
- **Southcoast LGBTQ Network**
- **Superflat NB**
- **YEAH! Corps**
- **Your Theatre, Inc.**
- **Zeiterion Performing Arts Center**

The Community Foundation is extremely grateful to their partnership with the Barr Foundation which makes the Creative Commonwealth Initiative possible.

Along with our separate initiative, the SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund – which is now more than \$1.2M, The Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts is proud of the support within the community during this time of crisis. For more information on how you can support the [SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund](#), visit our website or contact Tricia Grime at pgrime@cfsema.org

For general questions and inquiries about the Fund, please direct your inquiry to emergencyfund@cfsema.org. If you are an interested partner or would like to make a donation, please contact the Community Foundation's Development Manager, Tricia at pgrime@cfsema.org. Lastly, for media inquiries and interview requests, please contact Jasmyn Baird at jbaird@cfsema.org.

About the Community Foundation

Our Community. Your Foundation. Since 1995, area residents have been turning to the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts to make their philanthropic giving as effective as possible. The Community Foundation is a public charity serving thousands of people who share a common concern – improving the quality of life in Southeastern Massachusetts. To date, the Community Foundation has distributed over \$25 million from over 175 funds to humanitarian, educational and cultural organizations in the region. More information about the Foundation can be found at www.cfsema.org.

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