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More than \$1 Million Goes to Fund Arts in National Parks *Includes \$20,000 awarded to Monmouth Arts*

RED BANK, NJ – May 11, 2016 – Today, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Park Service announced \$1,067,500 in support of 50 grants in 27 states, including an award of \$20,000 to Monmouth Arts to welcome and involve diverse communities through an array of participatory visual and performing arts and family activities that highlight the environment, history and beauty of Fort Hancock. Imagine Your Parks is a grant initiative from the National Endowment for the Arts created in partnership with the National Park Service to support projects that use the arts to engage people with memorable places and landscapes of the National Park System. These awards are part of a larger National Endowment for the Arts announcement also made today in which the agency will make 1,142 awards totaling \$80.9 million to organizations in all 50 states and five jurisdictions.

“As part of the NEA’s 50th anniversary, this year we are celebrating the magnificence of America’s national cultural treasures through art,” said NEA Chairman Jane Chu. “The Imagine Your Parks grant program unites our mission with the National Park Service by connecting art projects with the natural, historic and cultural settings of the National Park System and will inspire a new generation to discover these special places and experience our great heritage.”

“The ‘Imagine Your Parks’ grants are really helping us celebrate the NPS Centennial and the NEA’s 50th Anniversary with some incredibly diverse and interesting projects that continue to inspire more Americans of all backgrounds to connect with their national parks,” said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. “The grants already awarded are already demonstrating the success of the program through a variety of inspiring projects. A new generation of artists is connecting to national parks through their work, and motivating others to do the same.”

“This is an exciting project that will bring together environmental artists and environmental groups to create public art from garbage collected by Clean Ocean Action at their beach sweeps to highlight the problem of waste in our National Parks,” said Monmouth Arts Executive Director Mary Eileen Fouratt. “With the final Zero Waste Arts Fest in September we look forward to inviting Monmouth County residents and visitors to experience the arts, environment and historical treasures available out at Fort Hancock.”

Follow “Imagine Your Parks” on Twitter @NEAarts and @NatlParkService, #ImagineYourParks #NEASpring16.

Monmouth Arts will collaborate with the U.S. National Park Service, Gateway National Recreation Area, Sandy Hook Unit, NJ on Gateway to the Arts to engage the public in their local urban national park

through the visual and performing arts. A summer installation of temporary public art, pairing artists with environmental groups at several park locations, will lead up to a two-day Zero Waste Arts Fest. Zero Waste Arts Fest will engage diverse communities through an array of arts, environmental and historical education activities, games and camping. The Fest will be zero-waste as one artist will create a growing sculpture through recycled refuse amassed during the two days—making a statement piece on waste and individual responsibility. Monmouth Arts is proud to partner with **Clean Ocean Action, American Littoral Society, NJ Sea Grant Consortium,** and the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** as well as with local artists **Laura Petrovich-Cheney, Manda Gorsegner, Angeles Cossio,** and **Lisa Bagwell.**

Monmouth Arts is a nonprofit organization and the official County Arts Agency formed in 1971 to enrich the community by inspiring and fostering the arts. The vision of Monmouth Arts is a vibrant arts community that enhances the quality of life throughout the county. Monmouth Arts supports artists and arts groups through networking and resources, ArtHelps, the MoCo Arts Corridor, the Monmouth Teen Arts Festival, Local Arts Program Grants and by highlighting arts performances and exhibitions throughout Monmouth County on Monmoutharts.org and social media. Monmouth Arts' programs and the groups it supports serve over 700,000 people each year and bring over 2,600 arts events to Monmouth County.

This program is made possible through funding from the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders, through the County Historical Commission, and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State.

Information in this release is current as of May 11, 2016.

Up-to-the-minute information on events and Monmouth Arts news, online at www.monmoutharts.org.

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