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CONTACT: Brenda Peek
(248) 227-1350
bvpfreedom@aol.com

Summer Fine Arts Master Classes and Showcase Concert For Young Aspiring Artists of All Races and Abilities

Aspiring young artists learn to create, innovate and excel, despite personal challenges.

DETROIT - New Generation Fine Arts Foundation (NewGen) is excited to make its debut as a performance and visual arts foundation with the purpose of showcasing youth from underrepresented groups. Registration is open to the public for NewGen's inaugural event, Blaqk BoxSM 2018 through their website, www.BlaqkBox.org.

Blaqk BoxSM 2018, occurring July 20-21, consists of 22 beginner to advanced level master classes and a spectacular showcase concert. Master classes include multi-genres of dance, vocal, painting, and stage confidence taught by internationally renowned fine arts industry professionals like Debbie Sledge from the Grammy-nominated vocal group Sister Sledge, Emmy and American Choreography award winner, Jason Samuels Smith, Detroit natives, Gina Ellis, who appeared in the Malcom X movie and the Josephine Baker Story, and Corey Whitfield, Detroit Pistons dancer/choreographer and acro-dunker for the Harlem Globetrotters to name a few. Classes will take place at Legacy Dance Studio in Southfield, MI on July 20-21. The Blaqk BoxSM 2018 Showcase Concert will be one of the summer's most exciting live, local performances and exhibitions featuring esteemed faculty and visual and performing student artists. The concert will be held on July 21 at the Ford Community and Performing Arts Center in Dearborn, MI.

The vision for Blaqk BoxSM 2018 represents an ongoing advocacy effort by New Generation Fine Arts Foundation's Founder, Kendall Owens. Kendall, currently an honors college student, dual major in dance and nursing, and Presidential Scholar at Western Michigan University, has performed in dance the majority of her life and envisions a vehicle to promote the arts while also giving back to the youth of her community. She created NewGen with a mission offer greater accessibility and opportunity for underserved, aspiring artists, including those with developmental disabilities and mental health concerns in emerging generations. NewGen's vision is for all artists to have endless opportunities and resources that inspire cultivation of their craft and cultural awareness for greater community engagement. Kendall states, "I feel that it's very important to not only expose young artists to the possibilities within the fine arts industry but also to show fine arts industry professionals the amazing talent we have in the Metro-Detroit area!"

Owens, experienced in all genres of dance, has traveled the country as a performer, instructor, and choreographer. In her travels, it became evident that something was missing - the presence of other underrepresented groups. Research shows participation in the arts has long helped individuals cope with a wide range of symptoms including physical, emotional, and mental health concerns. "Through nursing clinicals and academia, I've learned more about alternative care and using the arts as therapy, in conjunction with medical treatment," says Kendall. Since childhood, she has been dedicated to caring for and cultivating the lives of others. Kendall goes on to say, "As a fourteen-year old assistant dance instructor of Down syndrome students, I developed a passion and interest in the effects of fine arts on individuals with developmental disabilities and realized that the arts do not discriminate their powerful impact on any people. I noticed access to opportunities presented challenges to some youth from underrepresented and developmentally disabled groups. I intend to use my foundation to make opportunities available to everyone."

Owens has introduced the Blaqk BoxSM 2018 project to young artists at Cass Tech, Renaissance, Mumford, and other Detroit-area high schools and found largely receptive responses. “It’s been exciting to see the student’s reactions and the enthusiasm they have for this great opportunity,” she says. Kendall strongly believes that “We’re all artists and we must support and strengthen each other.”

New Generation Fine Arts Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization created for educational and charitable purposes and is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a public charity having exempt status. NewGen takes a holistic approach to presenting fine arts and its core activities to underserved youth and those with developmental disabilities or mental health concerns. Owens explains “Our motto is learn, grow, share. We continue learning to expand our knowledge and abilities in what we are passionate about. This allows us to grow as artists and share all that we have learned with others, resulting in a continuous cycle of learning, growing, and sharing. Essentially, this is what NewGen stands for!”

To request interviews media may contact Brenda Peek at (248) 227-1350 or via e-mail at bvpfreedom@aol.com. Additional information is available at www.NewGenFineArts.org.

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