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**** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ****

Seven Area Artists Receive Individual Artist Awards

The Central MN Arts Board is excited to announce the Individual Artist Award (IAA) recipients for 2022!

The Individual Artist Award provides awards in recognition and support of outstanding artists living in the Minnesota counties of Benton, Sherburne, Stearns or Wright (Region 7W). Funding for the program is generously provided by the McKnight Foundation.

Artists are invited to apply for this award once each year in January and may receive up to \$5,000 in Individual Artist awards in a lifetime. A panel of arts professionals reviewed and scored each application. Those with the highest average score were recommended to the CMAB Directors for awards. CMAB Directors accepted the review panel's recommendations at their March 10, 2022, board meeting with a total of \$22,000 in awards.

The 2022 Individual Artist Award recipients are:

- **Mike Odden**, Visual Artist, painting; Stearns County
- **Kiera Faber**, Visual Artist, photography; Stearns County
- **Tracy Rittmueller**, Literary Artist, Poetry; Benton County
- **Susan Davies**, Visual Artist, painting; Wright County
- **Kathryn Blommel**, Visual Artist, drawing & painting; Stearns County
- **Vatsalaa Jha**, Literary Artist, Poetry; Stearns County
- **Desi Murphy**, Visual Artist, Ceramics; Stearns County

To view samples of the winning artists' work, visit the Central Minnesota Arts Board website at www.centralmnartsboard.org.

The 2022 Individual Artist Award reviewers included:

Board of Directors, Joyce Lyons: Vocalist, actress and vocal coach with a B.A. in Voice Performance/Theater from Colorado Women's College University of Denver; adjunct for the Artist-in-Residence program at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado; vocalist for the West Metro Big Band and New York City Jazz Trio; Advisory Board, Buffalo Community Orchestra and Co-Chair of the UUCM Performing Arts Committee in Wayzata.

Dodie Logue: MFA from Bard College, BA from the University of MN; working artist for over 25 years, managed Art Gallery in Manhattan. Grant panelist for the MN State Arts Board; board of directors for the Lake Pepin Art and Design Center; Worked for UCCCA, non-profit state Arts Council, New York.

Katie Ruprecht-Wittrock: Humanities and Social Sciences Degree, College of Saint Benedict; Arts Programming at Boys & Girls Clubs of Central MN; Participant in a national research study with Boys & Girls Clubs of America, The Wallace Foundation Teaching artists; Graduate of the Community Arts and Leadership Institute, Guild of Community Arts Education; Fundraising and Audience Development manager at College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University's Fine Arts Series; Advocate for the arts in Central MN

David Hood: Musician; Trumpet, School of Music at Northwestern University, IL; member of the 451st Army Reserve Band at Ft. Snelling, founded Twin Cities Brass Quintet; taught private music lessons, performance coaching; freelance work in Germany; served as an adjudicator for the Young Artists Award program, Butler University; At-Large Board

Member, Bells of the Lakes; At-Large Board Member, Delano Community Band, Trumpet player for North Hennepin Community College Jazz Band and Concert Band, West Metro Big Band, Delano Community Band; Conductor/Music Director, Delano Community Band

Keshia Anderson-King: Resource Navigator, United Way of Central Minnesota; SVP grant panelist, Jugaad Leadership, Stearns County Human Advisory Board.

Betsy Steichen: Northern Illinois University, DeKalb IL - B.S Art Education; Auburn University, Auburn AL - Master Certificate in Project Management 2010; gallery assistant at The Whit Gallery; Broken Color - Still Image Travel Stories and Art; Phoenix Art Museum exhibition, "Violet Protest", Group Exhibition and Public Engagement and special honor "Square of the Week"; Northside Arts Collective (NAC), Heritage Park Center, Minneapolis, MN, Group Exhibition "The Things We Love"; Business Analytical Support, Project Management, Information Technology, IT Systems Security Compliance and Management Consultation.

Thomas Berger: Co-Producer at Masterpiece Media working with Belville Productions/Bons Tempos Theatre and Lynn Lohr production of 'Qaddafi's Cook' by Lance S. Belville and Carlos Ambrosi at the District Theatre in IN and Brava Theatre in CA in September 2022, and San Francisco International Arts Festival in 2023; Co-Produced a world premiere play with music 'The Cowboy and The Widow' by Lance S. Belville featuring music by Eric Peltoniemi, Dolan Ellis and Wayne Hamilton; 2018 Production Manager/Tour Director/Designer for 'Atlanta Burning: Sherman's Shadows' by Lance S. Belville; Managing Director, General Manger, Production Manager, Stage Manager Tour Director, Educational Project Director and Designer.

The Central Minnesota Arts Board (CMAB) strives to enhance appreciation of the essential economic and social roles the arts play in Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, and Wright counties by providing grants and professional development services to arts and community organizations, schools, government units and individuals.

For more information about the Central MN Arts Board, visit <http://www.centralmnartsboard.org> or call the office at 320-968-4290 or toll free at 1-866-825-1471.