

For Immediate Release

**FREE Awesome Arts Festival unites West Carleton community through the arts**



**June 6, 2017, Ottawa** – MASC's Awesome Arts is a community-engaged workshop series and festival that allows participants of all ages to connect with each other and explore important issues through the arts. Held in partnership with Stonecrest Elementary School and the Ottawa Public Library – Carp Branch, more than 40 West Carleton residents have experienced over 30 long-term, intensive, artistic workshops delivered by professional artists in various art forms such as slam poetry, animation, music, dance and video. Participants created poems, original song, dance choreography and animation videos exploring the theme of Diversity and Inclusion.

The talents of the participants as well the professional artists will be showcased in a free Awesome Arts Festival for the entire community, inspiring them to remain connected with each other, the arts and the issues. Professional artists include Ottawa's English Poet Laureate Jamaal Rogers, Cody Coyote, Beatboxer Julia Dales, Work N Play dance troupe and Road to Bluesfest youth artist Mia Kelly.

"We believe the MASC Awesome Arts program will help build community relationships and celebrate the vibrant community that is West Carleton." said Audrey Churgin, Executive Director of MASC. "The Awesome Arts Festival on June 15<sup>th</sup> will be filled with a joyous and proud community, a true celebration of the arts. It is an event not to be missed!"

**MASC-Awesome Arts invites the community to join us on June 15, 2017, 6PM at Stonecrest Elementary School to celebrate arts and culture.**

Since 2012, the Awesome Arts program has been bringing communities together through the arts. This is MASC first Awesome Arts program in a rural community. This project in West Carleton is supported by the City of Ottawa's Rural Initiative Fund, an Anonymous Donor and Arts Ottawa East's Neighbourhood Arts 150 (AOE).

*MASC Awesome Arts is part of AOE Arts Council's Neighbourhood Arts 150, an official Canada 150 and Ontario 150 community-engaged arts project. Twelve local professional artists and arts groups are joining communities from all corners of Ottawa for Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday. Ottawa residents are invited to participate in free arts experiences from April to October to celebrate their communities and express what it means to be Canadian.*

*Neighbourhood Arts 150: Celebrating Ottawa Communities is supported by The Government of Canada, Ontario 150; and Partners with Ottawa 2017. Sponsors are the Community Foundation of Ottawa, Metroland Media, Trinity Development Foundation, the Danbe Foundation and Jewel 98.5 FM.*

*AOE Arts Council strongly believes that the Arts are catalysts to help build strong communities and amplify diverse voices. AOE Arts Council is a dynamic, bilingual arts service organization with a 30-year history of engaging Ottawa's artists and performers with the community.*

**For more information, please contact:**

Micheline Shoebridge, Community Engagement Program Director, 613 725 9119 x 225