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Local Coordinator Anna Lisa Escobedo Joins Bay Area Arts Readiness Network (BAARN) Project

San Francisco, CA - NCAPER, the National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response launched the "Bay Area Arts Readiness Network (BAARN)" program, supported by an \$845,000.00 grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, in January 2025. The initiative provides resources and training to enhance artists' resilience and emergency preparedness while fostering the growth of artist-run networks across ten Bay Area counties.

On May 12, Bay Area arts leader Anna Lisa Escobedo began her role as BAARN's first Local Coordinator, bringing experience in the arts community, advocacy skills, and many local connections to the project. A dynamic creative leader and cultural strategist, Anna Lisa Escobedo is a visual artist, muralist, activist, event producer, cultural worker, and networker. Raised in Los Angeles, CA, she moved to San Francisco in 2008 to pursue her education, becoming the first in her family to graduate from college.

BAARN Project leaders talked with Escobedo about her interest in the project:

Why do you feel that BAARN's work is essential to Bay Area artists today? "I've witnessed and been part of how artists from historically marginalized communities—are often left vulnerable when crises strike. I am a believer that if we equip artists with readiness tools and strategies, they will be empowered to be decision-makers and mutual aid builders in their networks. That's not just practical—it's transformative."

What are you looking forward to in this work with BAARN? "I look forward to building trust and connections across diverse artist communities, helping shape localized training, and bringing visibility to underrepresented voices in the arts. Most of all, I'm eager to help grow BAARN into a model of resilience that honors the cultural wealth of the Bay Area and ensures artists are not just surviving crises—but leading through them."

With over a decade of experience, Anna Lisa has played a pivotal role in shaping the cultural fabric of the San Francisco Bay Area. She is the co-founder of Calle 24 Latino Cultural District and served as the chair of its Cultural Arts and Assets Committee, where she led efforts to

preserve and celebrate the Mission District's rich cultural heritage. Her leadership extended to revitalizing community events such as Fiestas de Las Américas, where she successfully raised funds and fostered partnerships to sustain vibrant public celebrations.

A passionate advocate for public art and equity, Anna Lisa has contributed to significant projects, including the restoration of The Women's Building "MaestraPeace" mural and part of the creation of "Alto Al Fuego." She spearheaded the nationally recognized San Francisco Creative Corps project, which employed artists to deliver health and healing messages during the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative inspired similar programs statewide and is now a case study in using art for social impact.



Anna Lisa has worked with prominent organizations such as the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, where she managed engagement programs, produced large-scale performance events, and expanded creative opportunities for BIPOC artists. Her commitment to public service is further reflected in her work with the San Francisco Arts Commission, where she recontextualized civic monuments and was appointed to the District 9 Graffiti Advisory Board.

Through her work, Anna Lisa combines artistic vision with strategic planning to create inclusive, transformative programs and events. She excels in building cross-sector collaborations, activating public spaces, and fostering a profound sense of belonging in the communities she serves. Whether curating exhibitions, producing festivals, or advocating for artists, Anna Lisa's dedication to making art and culture accessible remains at the core of her practice. The BAARN project combines the experience and resources of the nation's two leading organizations promoting readiness, response and recovery in the arts sector: NCAPER and Performing Arts Readiness. Since 2006, NCAPER has promoted policies which embed the arts in community readiness and crisis response, delivered educational programs which build bridges between the arts and emergency management sectors, and created publications and techniques to speed the recovery of those in the arts and creative sectors. One of NCAPER's core functions is organizing Response Facilitation Calls following a widespread disaster, allowing those impacted to connect with one another, and with a 'brain trust' of those who have disaster experience and expertise to share. For this project, NCAPER is teaming up with the Performing Arts Readiness project (PAR). Since 2017, PAR has been adapting and applying the emergency management expertise of the cultural heritage community to the country's performing arts sector. PAR grants have supported the creation of "Circuit Rider" mentoring programs in rural and urban communities, and individual readiness plans for dozens of performing arts organizations. An expanding roster of professional development offerings ranges from fire safety and cybersecurity to festival security, archiving legacy materials, and community recovery through arts and culture. Particularly relevant to the BAARN project is PAR's work in developing and funding readiness and response networks in rural and urban communities, and NCAPER's relationships and experience with the arts funding community. The BAARN project is

the most recent, and most ambitious, of their collaborative efforts to pilot and model new practices to strengthen the arts sector.

For more information, visit www.ncaper.org/BAARN or email info@ncaper.org.

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About NCAPER

The National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response (NCAPER) is a voluntary task force composed of national, regional, state, and local arts organizations, public agencies, and foundations. Founded in 2006 in response to the devastation caused to artists and creative economies by 21st-century disasters, NCAPER promotes readiness and effective emergency response within the arts sector. By fostering relationships between the arts and emergency management fields, NCAPER advances the arts as a vital component of community health and recovery.

About the Performing Arts Readiness Project

Performing Arts organizations are uniquely vulnerable to a wide range of emergencies, leading to potential loss of income and assets. The Performing Arts Readiness (PAR) project empowers these essential community hubs by offering educational and informational resources. Through the PAR project, performing arts organizations across the nation learn how to protect their assets, sustain operations, and be better prepared for emergencies.

About the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation invests in creative thinkers and problem solvers who are working to ensure everyone has an opportunity to thrive. The Performing Arts Program makes grants to support meaningful artistic experiences for communities throughout the Bay Area. Its aim is to ensure Bay Area communities honor and support their own and each other's artistic and cultural vibrancy, and the power of the arts and artists to advance individual self-expression and collective self-determination.