



PRESS RELEASE

Enchanted Circle Announces Organizational Pause Aiming to Strengthen Future Operations

Holyoke, MA – [June 24, 2024] – Enchanted Circle is announcing a strategic pause in operations beginning July 1, 2024. This decision comes as part of a broader initiative to strengthen the organization's operational strategies to better serve the community in the long term amidst financial uncertainty. The pause is expected to last for approximately one year, during which time the organization will retain its 501c3 status and the Board of Directors will develop new business and financial models.

Understanding the Need for a Pause

The financial challenges posed by the end of COVID-related aid have prompted this necessary pause. "While emergency relief funding enabled us to sustain our activities through unprecedented times, the non-renewal of these funds has created a significant shortfall in our budget," explained Melissa Redwin, Enchanted Circle Board President. "Enchanted Circle is not alone in our struggle. We are a local example of a national crisis. Peer institutions in the community arts education ecosystem, such as the [University of the Arts](#), have announced closures in the wake of unprecedented challenges and financial strain. We are pausing operations while we can, as an attempt to avoid closure in the future."

The pandemic has brought the vulnerabilities of our sector to the fore – underscoring the need for creativity, resilience, and holistic and sustained support. This period will allow the board to develop robust business and financial models to sustain operations moving forward.

Engaging Community Members and Planning for the Future

During this pause, Enchanted Circle will engage the community through discussions with Holyoke youth, families, educators, artists, and community partners. "Our goal is to align our future operations with the needs and values of our community, ensuring that we continue to make a meaningful impact," stated Iohann Rashi Vega, Vice President of the Board.

The organization will continue to support the community by facilitating connections between local partners and a roster of teaching artists available as independent contractors. Additionally, the board will use this pause to plan for the recruitment and hiring of a new Executive Director to lead the organization starting Summer 2025.



How the Community Can Help

During this transition, Enchanted Circle welcomes the continued support and feedback from donors and community members. Financial contributions during this period will be crucial for funding the strategic planning process, facilitating community listening sessions, financial planning, and the hiring of a new Executive Director. Enchanted Circle will retain its tax exempt status as a 501c3 during this pause.

“Your support helps us prepare for a robust comeback and sets us up to serve our community even better than before,” added Redwin.

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Enchanted Circle bridges the arts, culturally responsive education and social emotional well being. We are dedicated to centering diverse and marginalized voices, and building equitable and inclusive learning spaces. Enchanted Circle will provide updates throughout this period. Community members are encouraged to engage, provide input, and stay informed through regular communications via email and the organization’s website.

For more information or to make a donation, visit enchantedcirclearts.org