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Any Given Child Jacksonville awards \$5,000 to local arts education partners

Jacksonville, Fla. (June 20, 2017) – Any Given Child Jacksonville is proud to announce its second annual AGC Awards. Each year it has awarded a total of \$5,000 to six local organizations and individuals for their outstanding contributions to arts education in our community. This year’s recipients are Karen Bouton, Duval County Public Schools music educator; Hope at Hand; Cooper Morgan Dance; Dr. Mai Dinh Keisling; and The Jax Kids Mural Festival.

AGC Jacksonville intends to reward and recognize individuals and organizations that are actively involved with or demonstrating awareness of the AGC Jacksonville goals and working to respond to specific needs in the community, including improving access to and quality of arts education for students of color, LGBTQ students, English as a Second Language (ESL) students, middle school students and students with physical or developmental needs.

“The AGC Jacksonville mission simply does not exist without active partnerships and each of us progressing the goals and moving the needle forward for our students,” said Allison Galloway-Gonzalez, executive director of AGC Jacksonville. “As we all know, long journeys are accomplished one step at a time. It is so critical to celebrate along the way with each other, because ultimately it is all our steps together that get us to our collective destination.”

An award of \$2,500 dollars was presented to outstanding educator Karen Bouton at the 2017 DCPS Celebration of the Arts event in March. Members of the AGC Jacksonville steering committee and working groups then nominated and voted on recipients for the remaining \$2,500, which was awarded at \$1,000 and \$500 levels.

Dr. Mai Dinh Keisling received \$1,000 for her service in the visual arts at Paxon School for Advanced Studies, her volunteerism with AGC and the Jacksonville Public Education Fund, and her leadership and advocacy for immigrant and ESL students and families.

Cooper Morgan Dance received \$500 for its work with and contributions to the student and community programming for the Ritz Theatre and Museum’s exhibition *Dance Theatre of Harlem: 40 Years of Firsts*.

Hope at Hand received \$500 for its work with at-risk girls, facilitating poetry and altered book sessions, as well as its service to DPCS teachers through professional development opportunities.

Jax Kids Mural Festival received \$500 for its new initiatives engaging hundreds of students in mural making at school sites all over Duval County.

Previous recipients of this award include JASMYN, VSA Florida, The Ritz Chamber Players and Dr. Dana Kriznar.

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Any Given Child Jacksonville is uniting diverse stakeholders that include Duval County Public Schools personnel and students, arts organizations, artists, and business and community leaders. We have worked ceaselessly to raise awareness and build capacity to ensure every K-8 student in Duval County receives access to a high-quality arts education. Learn more at capkids.org/agcjax.

Dr. Mai Keisling, is a community activist for issues relating to Asian Americans, education and immigrant children. She is currently an art teacher at Paxon School for Advanced Studies. She was appointed to the external board of Center of Urban Education at UNF and recently received her doctorate in educational leadership at UNF. She has served six years on the board for Catholic Charities and was recently honored as 2017 EVE Award winner.

Cooper Morgan Dance Theatre was founded in 2005 by co-founders DeWitt Cooper III and Savery Morgan as a professional dance organization that strives to present the highest quality of dance performance in the city of Jacksonville, throughout the state of Florida, the United States, and beyond. Join Cooper Morgan Dance as they continue to encourage professional artists, emerging dancers, and choreographers. www.copermorgandance.com

Hope at Hand is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that provides art and poetry sessions to vulnerable and at-risk youth populations. Using creativity, language, art and therapeutic approaches, Hope at Hand facilitates healing and personal growth for children and adolescents. www.hopeathand.org

The Jax Kids Mural Festival started in 2016 as a recipient of the 2016 SPARK Grant from the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville and Florida Blue. In its first year, the organization had four kids' mural festivals in Downtown Jacksonville. The mural festival now occurs once per year in collaboration with Art Republic and will be working with Title I schools during the year to complete student-led mural projects all over the county. The next Jax Kids Mural Festival will be in November 2017. www.jaxkidsmuralfest.com