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Americans for the Arts Announces the 2014 'BCA 10' Honorees

Hallmark among 10 to be honored at New York event in October

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (June 5, 2014) -- **Americans for the Arts**, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education, has named Hallmark Cards, Inc., as one of the nation's best businesses partnering with the arts through its Business Committee for the Arts (BCA) division. The **BCA 10 Awards** are presented annually to 10 U.S. companies to acknowledge their commitment to the arts through grants, local partnerships, volunteer programs, matching gifts, sponsorships and board membership.

"As a **creatively based company**, the arts are intrinsic to Hallmark's vision, culture and spirit. It's an honor to be recognized on a national stage for something that is part of our DNA," said Donald J. Hall, Jr., Hallmark president and CEO. "As the highest expression of the human spirit, the arts give form to profound insights and bridge cultures and generations. They stimulate creative thinking and create vibrant communities for us all."

Since the late 1970s, Hallmark has made more than \$35 million in cash contributions to arts and culture organizations in and around the Kansas City area. Among other examples of the company's support of the arts cited by the BCA 10 committee:

- A significant portion of the estimated **48,000 volunteer hours** Hallmark employees contribute to the community each year serves arts organizations, ranging from jazz museums and choral groups to dance troupes, art galleries and improvisational theater.
- Hallmark's "50/50" ticket program, which matches employee and retiree ticket purchases for select cultural arts presentations, generates audiences and financial support for arts organizations and stimulates employment for local actors, dancers and musicians.
- More than 8 million children have experienced the joy of creative expression through Hallmark's free **Kaleidoscope** program since its inception in 1969.
- The **Coterie Theater**, named by *Time* magazine as one of the top five theaters for young people in the country, receives office and performance space at no cost as well as other support through Hallmark's **Crown Center** subsidiary.
- The Hallmark Art Collection, one of the earliest and most enduring corporate collections in the country, represents the work of more than 1,000 artists in its nearly 4,000 pieces, including those of Alexander Calder, Louise Nevelson, Sol LeWitt, David Park, Jennifer Steinkamp, Barbara Kruger, Norman Rockwell, Kehinde Wiley and others.
- Hallmark's internal creative staff consists of more than 500 artists, designers, stylists, illustrators, writers, editors, web designers, calligraphers and photographers dedicated to product development, based in Kansas City. They are part of a larger in-house creative staff of about 900 who also develop product packaging and merchandising, advertising and marketing materials, website content and serve the company's many other creative needs.

The full list of 2014 BCA 10 honorees includes:

- AC Entertainment (Knoxville, TN)

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- Hallmark Cards (Kansas City, MO)
- Milliken & Company (Spartanburg, SC)
- PECO Energy Company (Philadelphia, PA)
- Thrivent Financial for Lutherans (Appleton, WI)

Awards are to be presented at a black-tie gala October 1 in New York City.

"Each year, the BCA 10 sets the standard for other businesses by upholding the arts as an integral part of office culture, the community, and the local economy, says Robert Lynch, President and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "Through financial and in-kind support, employee volunteer hours, and workplace arts initiatives, these businesses ensure arts access for current and future generations."

Adds Edgar Smith, chairman of the Business Committee for the Arts Executive Board and chairman and CEO of World Pac Paper: "The exceptional partnerships this year's honoree companies have forged both locally and nationally, truly highlight the benefits of arts to business, as well as the benefits that arts and business partnerships bring to the communities in which they operate, spend time, visit, live, work and play."

For information regarding the BCA 10: Best Businesses Partnering with the Arts in America, please contact Patrick O'Herron, Business Committee for the Arts Coordinator at (212) 223-2787 or via e-mail at poherron@artsusa.org.

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Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

About Hallmark Cards, Inc.

Hallmark makes the world a more caring place by helping people express what's in their hearts and connect in emotional ways with others. In the U.S., innovative Hallmark greeting cards and gifts are sold through the network of Hallmark Gold Crown® specialty stores, leading mass retailers and online. Worldwide, Hallmark offers products in more than 30 languages available in 100 countries. Millions of households enjoy family friendly television programming offered by cable's top-rated Hallmark Channel and fast-growing Hallmark Movies & Mysteries. Hallmark's Crayola subsidiary inspires artistic creativity in children through Crayola® crayons and markers as well as other innovative art tools, crafting activities and creative toys. Privately held Hallmark is based in Kansas City, Mo., and continues to be led by members of the founding Hall family. Visit <http://corporate.hallmark.com> for more details. Connect at [Hallmark.com](#) and on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#).

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The work of legendary artists and writers like Grandma Moses, Saul Steinberg, Maya Angelou, Andrew Wyeth, Salvador Dali, and Norman Rockwell has appeared on Hallmark cards.