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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Arts Council Launches Public Campaign**

**BATON ROUGE, LA – Tuesday, September 8 –** Today at a press conference, the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge launched the public phase of a Capital Campaign for the Cary Saurage Community Arts Center. Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome spoke at the press conference, as well as Arts Council President/CEO Renee Chatelain, Mark Drennen of Capital Area Finance Authority, District 10 Representative Tara Wicker, Mike Nizzo of b1BANK, and Donna Saurage.

“We welcome the public to join us in this campaign for an arts center in the Capital Region unlike anything our community has seen before. This building will be an inclusive, accessible, and affordable place for artists to safely gather, create, and develop work,” says Arts Council President/CEO Renee Chatelain. “We are delighted to offer a space to retain and showcase the tremendous talent in Louisiana.”

The Cary Saurage Community Arts Center is scheduled to open Summer 2021, and will afford 12,000 square footage of workspace, triple the Arts Council’s current venue capacity. The iconic triangular-shaped building will feature the Shell Gallery, an art gallery exhibition space, as well as a blackbox studio, sound/recording studio, the Turner/Fischer rooftop terrace, a kiln room, collaborative studio art workspace, multiple conference and meeting rooms, the offices of the Arts Council, and more.

“The Capital Area Finance Authority is providing upfront financing for the Cary Saurage Community Arts Center, allowing construction to be undertaken immediately,” says Mark Drennen, CAFA President and CEO. “We believe the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge addresses important needs and makes an impact in the Greater Baton Rouge community.  CAFA is pleased to support organizations such as the Arts Council, whose mission aligns with CAFA’s Trust indenture.”

As part of the public phase of this Capital Campaign, the Arts Council is hosting a Community Talkback webinar on September 15, 2020 at 12:00pm. This webinar is open to anyone in the community to ask questions and learn more about the future arts center. To register for free to attend the Community Talkback, visit [www.artsbr.org/takingshape](http://www.artsbr.org/takingshape).

To keep the voices of our artist community at the forefront of decision making, the Arts Council will look to its newly-formed Artist Advisory Board.  This diverse group of artists, representing the 11-parish region as well as the City of Baton Rouge, embodies the cultural richness and talent that will continue to be amplified through the Cary Saurage Community Arts Center. Through the board’s advocacy and expertise, the Arts Council hopes to strengthen its work as stewards and supporters of arts equity within our state.

For more information about the Cary Saurage Community Arts Center or to contribute toward the Capital Campaign, please visit [www.artsbr.org](http://www.artsbr.org)/takingshape and follow **@ArtsCouncilGBR** on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

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**Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge:** Established in 1973, the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge endeavors to promote cultural growth, economic development, and educational enhancement through the arts in the 11-parish region that it serves. As the official arts agency for the City Parish of East Baton Rouge, the organization serves as a hub for information and resources organizations and residents across the state. For more information, visit [www.artsbr.org](http://www.artsbr.org)