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Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation Turns 18 And Unveils New Look

DESTIN, Fla.--Feb. 28, 2013-- The Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation (MKAF) was created 18 years ago as a 501-c-3 not-for-profit charitable arts organization to bring rich art and cultural experiences to the residents and visitors of Okaloosa and Walton Counties. Founded in 1995 on the cultural, educational and spiritual beliefs of the late Destin Matriarch Mattie Kelly, MKAF's mission is to be the leading art advocate supporting cultural arts and student educational outreach in Okaloosa and Walton Counties in Northwest Florida.

For 18 years, the MKAF has created and presented cultural programs, bringing art enrichment, education and entertainment for the literary, performing and visual arts to audiences of all ages. The organization has grown up with the community and celebrated many milestones. From creating annual cultural events, including Concerts in the Park, Destin Festival of the Arts and Sounds of the Season, to the development of the All Kinds of Art educational outreach program, MKAF has enhanced the quality of life for residents and visitors of the Emerald Coast through cultural enrichment.

Over the years, MKAF has grown into the one of the leading arts advocates along Northwest Florida's Gulf Coast. More than 250,000 children in over 55 schools in Okaloosa and Walton counties have been inspired through the MKAF's All Kinds of Art (AKA) educational outreach programs. AKA has hosted renowned authors and artists, including David Greenberg, Hands on with Zig, Odds Bodkin, Adrian Fogelin, and George and Wendy Rodrigue, as well as many touring theatrical productions. AKA provides supplemental art instruction, regional theatre touring productions, summer art and theater camps and has been recognized by the Florida Department of Transportation with the Florida Commissioner of Education Award of Distinction.

As MKAF turns 18, it is adapting to serve the region's needs and growth and as such it is fitting that the organization evolve its brand. This week, MKAF unveils a new logo. The new design reflects a more sophisticated look while building upon the playful color palate for which MKAF has become known. The design embraces the organization's initials, shortening the lengthy Foundation name. The new MKAF design also helps to differentiate the organization from its art alliance partner, the Mattie Kelly Arts Center at Northwest Florida State College, which also honors Mattie Kelly, but is a separate entity from MKAF.

In addressing the needs of the community, MKAF is completing an important capital project this year, through the development of the Dugas Pavilion and Village Green, which will become the centerpiece of the Mattie Kelly Cultural Arts Village. This cultural infrastructure will fulfill a critical need along the Emerald Coast, serving as a premier location to host large cultural events, concerts and community gatherings. Through the generous capital improvement grant by the Dugas Family Foundation, Destin and the surrounding region will gain a stronger quality of place and enhanced economic impact for generations to come.

To ensure MKAF is best serving the community, the organization conducted primary research to determine the community's interests in cultural programming. Based on this research, MKAF will focus on bringing high-caliber, culturally diverse programming, including concerts and music festivals that feature diverse genres of music including jazz, pop, rock, classical and country as well as art festivals, comedy and performance art. MKAF will continue to focus on education through All Kinds of Art educational outreach programs and is launching a partnership with Emerald Coast Theater Company this year. MKAF is also launching a membership drive, encouraging individuals and businesses to join the MKAF arts community during this milestone year to enjoy complimentary access to MKAF signature events and help ensure Northwest Florida is a culturally rich coast for future generations.

For more information, visit www.MattieKellyArtsFoundation.org or call 850-650-2226.

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