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MKAF HOSTS ATLANTIC COAST THEATRE – 1,800 KIDS INSPIRED FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Destin, Florida – October 13, 2014 – All Kinds of Art (AKA), a Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation (MKAF) K-12 educational outreach program, hosted the Atlantic Coast Theatre in a 3-day artist residency inspiring over 1,800 elementary students at six schools (Bay, Butler, Plew, Destin, Edwins and Silver Sands) in Okaloosa and Walton counties. This program was made possible through funding support from Regions Bank and The Rotary Club of Destin.

This multi-cultural presentation of “Our America” combined literature, theatre, music, audience participation, character education and history. Folktales and folksongs from the American experience were brought to life by Tall Tale heroes Mike Fink & Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett. Children were mesmerized by stories from Asian American, Latin American, & Native-American cultures along with the history of the Underground Railroad bringing freedom to enslaved African-Americans.

MKAF is a pro-active education partner to Okaloosa and Walton County School Districts, children’s charities such as the Emerald Coast Autism Center and United Way agencies of at-risk and low-income children. The impact for children of special needs is far greater where arts education provides an avenue of self-expression, and because of heightened sensory needs, they respond well to the multi-sensory stimulation and the hands-on approach inherent in art. MKAF CEO, Marcia Hull stated, “Schools that produce the highest academic achievement in the United States today are spending 20% to 30% each day on the arts. However, in rural and underserved communities in Okaloosa and Walton counties, elementary and middle school students are exposed far less with only about 30 minutes a week or just twice a month. That’s where we come in raising the awareness and funding these art enrichment programs at no cost to the children, school districts or other children’s agencies.”

The Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation is a not-for-profit charitable organization founded on the beliefs of the late Destin Matriarch, Mattie Kelly, with a mission to be a champion for cultural arts and education in Northwest Florida. Since 1995, *All Kinds of Art* has inspired over 26,000 students in 57 schools across Okaloosa and Walton Counties through cultural education programs where art curriculum is severely limited. MKAF is not affiliated with the Mattie Kelly Arts Center or Northwest Florida State College. Become a “Friend of AKA” today by contacting the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation at (850) 650-2226 or donating directly online at www.mattiekellyartsfoundation.org.