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**Veterans to showcase original artwork in public exhibition December 19
Arts in Service program receives \$75,000 grant from The Boeing Company and \$54,000
from the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community**

Funds to support Mesa Arts Center's free Arts in Service program for veterans and service members



Nov. 13, 2019 (Mesa, AZ) – Mesa Arts Center today announced the continuation of the Arts in Service program for the winter/spring session of 2020 and beyond, thanks in part to a **\$75,000 grant received from The Boeing Company** and a **\$54,000 grant from the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community**. The program provides creative pathways for veterans and service members to use studio arts experiences in reaching their personal goals, whether those are finding a supportive community, stress relief, working toward overall health and wellness, or pursuing career interests in art making.

"I can't explain enough how this experience has fully enriched my life," said one participant. "Doing this has been the utmost positive experience I've had in years." **The fall 2019 Arts in Service participants will showcase their artwork and be celebrated in a free public reception held Dec. 19, 5-7 p.m. in Mesa Arts Center's Art Studios.** Registration for the winter/spring 2020 sessions begins on Dec. 6.

To date, over 300 individuals have participated in Arts in Service arts classes offered through the program, which is also generously supported by the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services. Examples of classes offered through the Arts in Service include Intro to Printmaking, Beginning Welding, Beginning Blacksmithing, Introductions to Clay, The Science and Art of Photography, Jewelry (beginning and intermediate), Beginning Bellydancing, and Playwriting among others.

"I think these programs are really what makes a big difference in veterans and service members lives. It gives them that camaraderie again, it gives them that chance to try something new and challenge themselves," said Kelly Anne Wilde, army veteran and Assistant Director of Programs for Arizona Coalition of Military Families."

"We are so excited to offer these programs and to further engage those who serve our country," said Cindy Ornstein, Executive Director of Mesa Arts Center. "There is tremendous evidence

from both research and experience that the arts offer many kinds of benefits, from reducing feelings of isolation to providing new means of self-expression, in addition to offering fun, relaxation, and creative exploration."

The winter/spring Arts in Service sessions will begin in January and March 2020. No arts experience is necessary for participants. Winter/spring class offerings will be available at mesaartscenter.com/artsinservice.

Those seeking additional information about the available programs or with questions are encouraged to contact engagement@mesaartscenter.com, or 480-644-6581.

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About Mesa Arts Center

The Mesa Arts Center mission is to inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible, and relevant. Owned and operated by the City of Mesa, Arizona's largest arts center is recognized as an international award-winning venue. The unique and architecturally stunning facility is home to four theaters, five art galleries, and 14 art studios and an artist cooperative gallery. For more information, visit mesaartscenter.com.

About The Boeing Company

Chicago-based Boeing is the world's largest aerospace company and leading manufacturer of commercial jetliners and defense, space and security systems. A top U.S. exporter, the company supports airlines and U.S. and allied government customers in 150 countries.

About the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community

The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRP-MIC) is a sovereign tribe located in the metropolitan Phoenix area. Home to two tribes, the Akimel O'odham and Xalychidom Piipaash, Salt River was established by Executive Order on June 14, 1879. The Community operates as a full-service government and oversees departments, programs, projects, facilities and several successful enterprises.