

MEDIA CONTACT:
Marie Jacinto, HAA Director of Communications, 713.581.6126 direct, 832.628.9010 mobile, marie@haatx.com
Carey Kirkpatrick, Principal, The CKP Group, 832-930-4065 x101, carey@theckpgroup.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**CO-FOUNDER OF CREATIVE ECONOMY COALITION LEADS PANEL AND WORKSHOP
ADDRESSING HOUSTON'S CREATIVE ECONOMY 2 STUDY**

THE CREATIVE ECONOMY OF HOUSTON 2

HOUSTON, TX – Christine Harris, co-founder of the **Creative Economy Coalition**, will lead a panel of experts in a workshop and panel discussion focusing on the findings of the recently released Creative Economy of Houston 2 study on **Nov. 18, 2015 at 4pm at Gensler**. The study, commissioned by the Houston Arts Alliance's Arts & Business Council, is a targeted look at Houston's creative economy and how much of Houston's economy is dependent on individuals working in the creative sector. The workshop and panel discussion – **A Look At Houston's Creative Economy and Its Impact On Our Greater Economic Growth** – will dive deep into the study, and tee up questions about how creatives and non-creatives working in creative industries can help propel the existing growth of the sector in Houston forward.

The **Creative Economy of Houston 2** study is a follow-up to a 2011 collaborative research initiative between the Houston Arts Alliance and the University of Houston. 2014 findings present a 22 percent increase in employment (creatives working in creative industries, non-creatives working in creative industries, creative working in non-creative industries) and an increase of 25 percent of total demand for creative goods and services (\$25.6 billion supplied in 2014). Of the total demand, \$10.5 billion was

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supplied locally, while \$15.1 billion was imported – a 55 percent increase over importing of services in 2011. Overall, creative occupations saw significantly more growth (+26 percent) than creative industries (+13 percent) in a ten year sample period (2004-2014). These findings cumulatively suggest that creative workers are becoming more integral to business across an array of industries.

Harris will moderate a panel discussion and workshop designed to explain these findings while also offering insight and opportunities for individuals to advance the effort. She will be joined by **Susanne Behrens**, President, Art Institute of Texas, **James E. Furr**, Managing Principal Emeritus, Gensler and **Patrick Jankowski**, Region Economist, Vice President of Research, Greater Houston Partnership. Together the group will discuss the role individual creatives play in the creative economy – what it is, who is in it, how it's measured and what it means to community and economic development. They'll also lead discussions regarding the challenges and issues faced in advancing creative practices in Houston, with the goal of developing a shared understanding of the role of the creative economy in the overall economic capacity of greater Houston.

Moderator:

Christine Harris

Harris has been working with creative enterprises and community development for over 30 years. She began focusing on the creative economy in 2009. Harris co-founded the Creative Economy Coalition, a working committee of the National Creativity Network, and designed and executed the nation's first review of defining the creative economy with the seminal work *America's Creative Economy: A Study of Recent Conceptions, Definitions, and Approaches to Measurement Across the USA*, ISBN 978-0-99085-730-3. This study profiled and inventoried how 27 communities around the nation were profiling and measuring their creative economies. As co-founder of the Creative Economy Coalition and on behalf of the National Creativity Network, she helped design the National Creative Economy Summits in Washington, D.C. in 2014 and 2015.

Harris has worked on creative sector development with the City of Austin, TX; Arts United and the City of Fort Wayne, IN; City of Lawrence, KS; City of Marquette, MI; Arts Alliance Illinois; ArtServe Michigan; Americans for the Arts; National Endowment for the Arts; National Creativity Network; Arts Wisconsin; Greater Milwaukee, and many others. She was CEO of Creative Alliance Milwaukee, where she developed a full profile of the regional creative economy and developed online resources for the sector.

Harris is considered a key national figure in this work, with a background of over 30 years in cultural administration leadership, cultural economy research and field leadership. She has been a consulted

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advisor and presenter for both the Americans for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Harris holds a Bachelor of Retailing and a Master of Business Marketing from University of Wisconsin-Madison and is a native of Milwaukee, WI.

Panelists:

James E. Furr

James E. Furr, FAIA, has been a practicing architect in Houston for nearly 45 years. Furr served as Managing Principal of Gensler's Houston office and the South Central Region for 20 years. Now, as Managing Principal Emeritus, his focus is on client relationships and community service while mentoring the next generation of leaders.

Furr holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Louisiana State University and is a Registered Architect in 24 states. He has been an active member in the American Institute of Architects for many years, and in 1987 he was elected to the prestigious College of Fellows for his contributions to architecture through his management of the creative process. He served as President of the AIA Houston Chapter in 1994, and was awarded their Chapter Citation.

Furr and his wife Jo play an active part in many Houston cultural and civic organizations. His service includes Central Houston, The Urban Land Institute, Contemporary Arts Museum and the Rice Design Alliance. A Fellow of the American Institute of Architects since 1987, he sits on the Dean's Circle for the School of Architecture at Louisiana State University and the Leadership Council of the Hines College of Architecture at the University of Houston. For the past 23 years Furr has served Senior Lecturer for the Rice School of Architecture.

Patrick Jankowski

Patrick Jankowski is a regional economist and vice president of research at the Greater Houston Partnership. He oversees the research department which provides information gathering, data analysis, database management, economic forecasting and mapping functions for the Partnership's four divisions.

Prior to working as an economist, Jankowski worked as a business writer for *Houston Magazine*, *Houston City Magazine*, *Houston Engineer* and *Houston Business Journal*. Jankowski is a frequent speaker on business and economic issues and has served as an expert witness in cases regarding local business trends.

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Jankowski is a member of the Texas Economic and Demographic Association, the National Association for the Business Economics, and the Commercial Real Estate Research Forum. Currently, he is president of The Houston Economics Club and is a past board member of the Washington-based Council for Community and Economic Research.

Jankowski has worked for the Greater Houston Partnership, and its predecessor, the Houston Chamber of Commerce, for nearly 30 years. He received his economics degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

Susanne Behrens

Behrens joined The Art Institute of Houston in 2003, where she began her career as the Executive Director of the Center for Professional Development and Internship Marketing. She was promoted to Director of Career Services shortly thereafter. From there, she was promoted to Director of High School Marketing in 2004 and Senior Director of Admissions in 2006. In 2008 she accepted the appointment as the founding President for The Art Institutes International Kansas City. In 2010 she returned to Houston and accepted the role of Campus Director at The Art Institute of Houston-North. In 2013 she accepted the appointment of President of The Art Institute of Houston.

Prior to joining The Art Institutes, Behrens served in public education for eight years as a Hospitality Education teacher and as a Career and Technology district level administrator. She earned a Master's Degree in Hospitality Administration from the University of Houston and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Hotel & Restaurant Management.

About Houston Arts Alliance

Houston Arts Alliance (HAA) is a nonprofit, public-private initiative that invests in Houston's arts and cultural sector, advances Houston's reputation as an arts and culture destination, and works to elevate the quality of life for all Houstonians through arts and culture. As the city's designated local arts agency, HAA provides programs and services for the arts and cultural sector and awards approximately 225 grants annually to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and individual artists. The Alliance is the custodian of the city's art collection; takes permanent and temporary art to Houston's public spaces; presents free Folklife + Traditional Arts programming; nurtures up-and-coming arts organizations through its capacity building programs; connects business with the arts; convenes the field as necessary, and provides the latest information and research on cultural policy, economic development and Houston's folklife.

HAA's primary partner is the City of Houston. Approximately 55% of HAA's budget comes from Hotel Occupancy Tax and 30% from the City of Houston's Percent for Art Program, which supports commissions of new civic art projects as well as conservation of existing artworks. The remaining 15% of HAA's budget comes from private fundraising (grants/contributions/other revenue) for programs and special projects. HAA is committed to raising funds for only those projects and initiatives that the Arts Alliance is uniquely positioned to provide the community.

For more information, visit houstonartsalliance.com. For events in the region, visit Artshound.com.

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A Look At Houston's Creative Economy And Its Impact On Our Greater Economic Growth

EVENT DETAILS: A Look At Houston's Creative Economy And Its Impact On Our Greater Economic Growth

When: Thursday, November 19, 2015

Location: Gensler

711 Louisiana Street, Suite 300, Houston TX 77002

Seating: The event is free and open to the public. Registration is required.

Registration:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/180000-and-counting-houstons-creative-workforce-on-the-rise-registration-19336396683>

TIMELINE: 4-5 p.m. – Panel discussion

5-6 p.m. – Reception

PRESENTER: Houston Arts Alliance

PANEL PARTICIPANTS:

Susanne Behrens, President, Art Institute of Texas

James E. Furr, Managing Principal Emeritus, Gensler

Patrick Jankowski, Region Economist, Vice President of Research, Greater Houston Partnership

PANEL MODERATOR:

Christine Harris, Co-founder, Creative Economy Coalition

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