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## **Houston Arts Alliance Announces New Officers for 2016-2017 Board of Directors**

**HOUSTON** – The Board of Directors of Houston Arts Alliance (HAA), the city’s designated local arts and culture agency, announces its new officers headed by HAA Board Chairman Philamena Baird.

Ms. Baird is an instrumental part of the Houston community having chaired over 100 charity events benefitting arts and culture organizations, children’s organizations, health care for children, and major sporting events. Numerous Houston mayors have recognized her talents and her ability to “get things done” by appointing her to lead and develop plans on improvement projects for the City. Most recently, Ms. Baird served as co-chair of the City of Houston’s Arts and Cultural Plan.

“Philamena Baird is a civic-minded, results-oriented leader with a compassionate heart who loves Houston,” said Mayor Sylvester Turner. “HAA is in good hands with Philamena at the helm and will no doubt benefit from her broad community perspective and extensive nonprofit governance experience.”

“My intention during my tenure as HAA Board Chair is that we will represent the City of Houston Mayor’s Office as a catalyst and conduit to encourage the artistic community and its expression,” stated Ms. Baird. In addition to her new role on the HAA Board, she serves on 13 other boards across the city and has been recognized and received awards by many organizations for her outstanding leadership in the community.

Also serving as HAA Board officers are Leigh Smith as vice chair; Suresh Raghavan as treasurer; and Michael Cordúa as secretary. Marc Melcher serves as immediate past chair, following his service as board chairman for the past four years.

For more information about HAA, visit [www.houstonartsalliance.com](http://www.houstonartsalliance.com).

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### **About Houston Arts Alliance**

Houston Arts Alliance (HAA) is the city's designated local arts and culture agency. We invest in Houston as a place to visit, live, work, honor, and create. We do this by:

- providing grants to arts, culture, and community organizations and individual artists;
- commissioning, conserving and promoting public art and enlivening public spaces;
- highlighting and celebrating the region's rich folklife and diverse cultural traditions through programming and documentation;
- helping arts and culture organizations develop business acumen;
- engaging neighborhoods and civic partners to advance equity in and access to arts and culture;
- furthering the arts and culture field through research and convenings;
- funding, in part, cultural tourism initiatives; and
- endeavoring to expand the overall creative economy.

Ultimately, HAA works to improve the quality of life for Houstonians and visitors alike, while advancing Houston as a premier arts and culture destination.

HAA is a nonprofit, public-private initiative whose 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.