



NEWS RELEASE

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THE MONSANTO FUND AWARDS \$25,000 TO COCA FOR NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PRE-PROFESSIONAL DIVISION

*Grant Supports Youth Development by Making Advanced
Arts Training Readily Available to Youth in Need*

(ST. LOUIS, MO) – COCA-Center of Creative Arts announced today the award of a \$25,000 grant from the Monsanto Fund to support its Pre-Professional Division. This nationally recognized program develops career and college-oriented young artists by providing them with highly-customized and rigorous training plans, public performance opportunities, and comprehensive support-services.

“The Monsanto Fund is proud to continue our existing partnership with COCA,” said Al Mitchell, president of the Monsanto Fund. “I have seen some of the students in this program perform, and I can attest to the quality of training they’re receiving and the positive impact that participating in the COCA Pre-Professional Division is having on their lives and our community. It’s an enriching experience that nurtures the critical artistic and leadership competencies that are so important to students having successful professional careers.”

Approximately 70 percent of COCA’s Pre-Professional students require some level of financial assistance. Based on need, they can receive up to 100 percent tuition assistance for classes, transportation to and from COCA, dancewear, one-on-one career counseling, and tutoring to ensure equal access to artistic opportunity and personal achievement. All students in the Division also have the opportunity to participate in one of COCA’s ballet, hip hop and modern dance companies.

“Since the program’s inception, 100 percent of COCA’s Pre-Professional seniors have graduated with post-secondary plans for college or professional training, many of them representing the first in their families to attend college,” said Kelly Pollock, COCA Executive Director. “This generous support from the Monsanto Fund helps us to put even more young people on this life-changing path.”

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About The Monsanto Fund

The Monsanto Fund is the philanthropic arm of the Monsanto Company. It is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the communities where farm families and Monsanto Company employees live and work. Visit the Monsanto Fund at www.monsantofund.org to learn more.

About COCA

Founded in 1986, COCA is the fourth largest multidisciplinary community arts center in the country and a national leader in innovative arts education. With a mission to enrich lives and build community through the arts, COCA serves 50,000 people of all ages and skill levels, from enthusiastic amateurs to emerging professionals — all taught by a faculty of distinguished arts educators. We provide meaningful arts experiences in our own studios, gallery and theatres as well as in schools, community centers and corporate settings in order to build a vibrant St. Louis that is creative, connected and inclusive. To ensure diversity and inclusion in all of our programs we are committed to eliminating economic and social barriers to participation in the arts.