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STATE ANNOUNCES NEARLY \$4 MILLION IN CAPITAL GRANTS FOR ARTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE, AND PUBLIC HISTORIC SITES

(January 11, 2016) The historic Greenwich Odeum theatre in East Greenwich provided the setting for the State's announcement today of the slate of State Cultural Facilities Grant and State Preservation Grant recipients, worth nearly \$4 million, for capital preservation work at 45 museums, cultural art centers, and public historic sites around the state. Together, the projects represent \$70,902,214 worth of construction activity. Representatives of the State Cultural Facilities Grant and State Preservation Grant projects were welcomed to the event by host Kevin Muoio, President of the Odeum Corporation, along with volunteers and members of the Odeum board. Built in 1926 to host vaudeville performances and later converted into a movie house, the Greenwich Odeum now serves as a performing arts venue operated by the non-profit organization. Grants from the R.I. State Council on the Arts (RISCA) and the R.I. Historical Preservation Commission (RIHPHC) to the Greenwich Odeum will support façade restoration, installation of an assistive listening system, and renovation of the restrooms to make them handicapped accessible.

"Rhode Island is recognized nationally as a leader in historic preservation and the arts," said Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director of the R.I. Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission, "These state grants are investments that build on our strengths." He explained that the State Preservation Grants program was established in 2003, after Rhode Island voters supported a bond issue to award \$3 million in competitive preservation grants to museums and cultural arts facilities; an additional \$3 million was approved in 2004. Ten years later, the Creative and Cultural Economy Bond provided \$5 million for State Preservation Grants and \$6.5 million for the R.I. State Council on the Arts to award through its Cultural Facilities Grants

program; it also included \$22 million in support for capital improvements to nine specific Rhode Island arts organizations.



Blackstone River Theatre in Cumberland will receive \$97,000 for capital improvements designed to increase programming at the folk & traditional music performance space - photo courtesy of Blackstone River Theatre

Randall Rosenbaum, Executive Director of RISCA, emphasized that every city and town in Rhode Island has facilities that are open to the public as museums, cultural arts centers, or civic meeting places, and many of these buildings need capital investments. "Our cultural infrastructure is critically important to our state's economy," Rosenbaum said. "These museums, galleries and performance spaces serve Rhode Islanders, attract visitors to our state, and contribute to the local economy in many significant ways."

Governor Gina M. Raimondo applauded the State Arts Council and the Historic Preservation Commission for their work in awarding this first round of grants. "These arts and historic preservation grants will have a significant impact on the Rhode Island economy," said Governor Raimondo. "They will create jobs for contractors and laborers once these capital improvement projects get underway, and our state will benefit from the revenue generated from the increase in programming by each of these recipient organization."

Mayor Charles A. Lombardi of North Providence spoke about the value that the preservation and cultural grants have in local communities. "I appreciate that the State has recognized the need to invest in civic and recreational facilities in our cities and towns. The Town of North Providence is very grateful for the State Preservation Grant that will support the

restoration of the Stone House in Governor Notte Park. I take pride in the Town's efforts to leverage public and private funds to make Notte Park and Camp Meehan a great destination for the people of North Providence and all Rhode Island."



The Herreshoff Marine Museum in Bristol will receive \$150,000 toward repairing/replacing 202 wood sash windows in anticipation of expanding museum exhibits in this space - photo courtesy of Herreshoff Marine Museum

Together, Sanderson and Rosenbaum congratulated the grant recipients on behalf of Governor Gina M. Raimondo. Of the 61 organizations that applied for funds in 2015, 22 organizations were awarded State Cultural Facilities Grants and 25 received State Preservation Grants. Besides the Greenwich Odeum, one other project received grants from both RISCA and RIHPHC. The Southside Cultural Center will receive a total of \$450,000 towards its efforts to restore historic windows, insulate, install a new elevator tower, and improve circulation in the historic Trinity Church Annex (1914-15) in Providence. The list of grant recipients represents 21 Rhode Island communities, from Woonsocket to Westerly, North Providence to Newport.

State Preservation Grant recipients range from local treasures like the Babcock-Smith House (mid-18th century) in Westerly and Central Falls City Hall (ca. 1889) to nationally significant sites like Slater Mill (1790) in Pawtucket and the Chinese Tea House (1914) in Newport. The grants will preserve a historic bank, two lighthouses, two town halls, and a "stone-ender" house built in the 17th century. Small grants will support important community landmarks like the Portsmouth Historical Society's headquarters (1866). Large grants of up to \$150,000 will support high-profile projects like Pomham Rocks Lighthouse in East Providence, the Herreshoff Marine Museum (1863) in Bristol, and the Providence Public Library (1900).

The slate of State Cultural Facilities Grants includes several awards made to improve physical accessibility to a number of cultural sites. Other grants will expand programming spaces for groups like New Urban Arts, who can use funds to convert unused basement space into music studios. Grants will also support building improvements that enable more programming at sites like the Blackstone River Theatre in Cumberland and the Granite Theatre in Westerly.

Interested in applying for a grant? Applications for the 2016 State Cultural Facilities Grant and State Preservation Grant round will be available later this year.

The Rhode Island State Council on the Arts is a state agency supported by appropriations from the Rhode Island General Assembly and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. RISCA provides grants, technical assistance and staff support to arts organizations and artists, schools, community centers, social service organizations and local governments to bring the arts into the lives of Rhode Islanders. Visit www.arts.ri.gov for more information.

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission is the state agency for historical preservation and heritage programs. The Commission operates a statewide historical preservation program that identifies and protects historic buildings, districts, structures, and archaeological sites. The Commission also develops and carries out programs to document and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Rhode Island's people. Visit www.preservation.ri.gov for more information.

STATE CULTURAL FACILITIES GRANTS: AWARDS

<u>Site</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Grant</u>
Barrington Public Library	Barrington	\$10,000
Blackstone River Theatre	Cumberland	\$97,000
The Greenwich Odeum	East Greenwich	\$250,000
East Providence Historical Society Educational Center	East Providence	\$28,000
R.I. Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School	East Providence	\$250,000
Jamestown Arts Center	Jamestown	\$58,000
Dirt Palace	Providence	\$23,500
Educational Center for the Arts & Sciences	Providence	\$3,000
Everett	Providence	\$50,000
Governor Henry Lippitt House Museum	Providence	\$56,000
HeadsUp, Inc. for Mathewson St. Black Box Theatre	Providence	\$50,000
Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design	Providence	\$250,000
New Urban Arts	Providence	\$250,000
ONE Neighborhood Builders for Paragon Performance Space	Providence	\$250,000

Providence Performing Arts Center	Providence	\$50,000
Southside Cultural Center	Providence	\$300,000
The Music Mansion	Providence	\$50,000
The Players	Providence	\$100,000
The Steel Yard	Providence	\$92,650
The Wilbury Theatre Group	Providence	\$25,000
The Contemporary Theater Company	South Kingstown	\$100,000
Granite Theatre	Westerly	\$33,269
		\$2,126,419

STATE PRESERVATION GRANTS: AWARDS

<u>Site</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Grant</u>
Herreshoff Yacht Manufacturing Building	Bristol	\$150,000
Central Falls City Hall	Central Falls	\$150,000
Farmhouse at Franklin Farm	Cumberland	\$150,000
The Greenwich Odeum	East Greenwich	\$28,896
Pomham Rocks Light	East Providence	\$150,000
Clemence-Irons House	Johnston	\$29,780
Block Island Southeast Lighthouse	New Shoreham	\$150,000
Chinese Tea House at Marble House	Newport	\$150,000
Newport Congregational Church	Newport	\$150,000
Vernon House	Newport	\$22,484
Old Town House	North Kingstown	\$43,175
Smith's Castle	North Kingstown	\$56,100
James Hilton Bleachery/Stone House	North Providence	\$65,525
Old Slater Mill	Pawtucket	\$50,000
Portsmouth Historical Society	Portsmouth	\$30,000
Providence Athenaeum	Providence	\$16,843
Providence Public Library	Providence	\$150,000
Southside Cultural Center	Providence	\$150,000
Smithfield Exchange Bank	Smithfield	\$19,866
Smithfield Town Hall	Smithfield	\$18,755
South County Art Association	South Kingstown	\$29,634
Armory Hall	Warren	\$25,373
Babcock-Smith House	Westerly	\$11,734
Westerly Armory	Westerly	\$24,750
Museum of Work and Culture	Woonsocket	\$20,000
		\$1,842,915

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