

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Program Coordinator, Nelda Ruiz  
[nruiz33@email.arizona.edu](mailto:nruiz33@email.arizona.edu), 520-621-4046

March 11, 2019

***Grant Awards Available for Master Heritage Artists in Arizona Working to Preserve Cultural Knowledge and Foster Lifelong Learning***

**Tucson, AZ**--The Southwest Folklife Alliance (SFA), an affiliate non-profit organization of the University of Arizona College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and the parent producing agent of the annual Tucson Meet Yourself Folklife Festival, launches a fifth year of its Master-Apprentice Award **program to support Master traditional artists and apprentices**. This year SFA will make 10 awards to pairs of Arizona based artists/tradition bearers: at \$2,500 for the Master along with \$500 to an emerging artist/tradition bearer engaged in learning and transmission of traditional knowledge. The pair should anticipate working together for one year.

Artists are first nominated by peers within their community, cultural institutions, apprentices, or by self-nomination. Applicants include a wide variety of traditional artists, including but not limited to: **artisans:** weavers, basket makers, jewelers, mask makers; **occupational folklife practitioners:** adobe brick makers, leather workers, ironworkers; **oral tradition practitioners:** storytellers, musicians, poets; and **performing arts practitioners:** dancers, traditional garment makers, ritual object makers.

Artists are selected by a panel and awarded for their knowledge, dedication, and commitment to passing on living traditions from our region and beyond. Support for the program comes from the Arizona Commission on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts' State Arts Partnership Grant, the Surdna Foundation, and local donors.

*"These awards recognize the extraordinary contributions traditional artists make in our State through their traditional art and dedication to passing on that tradition to another artist or group of artists within their communities. This kind of transfer of knowledge is critical for many heritage practices and artistic traditions, which are learned informally, one-on-one, person-to-person. We are proud to recognize artists in this way and to contribute to the region's legacy of artistic knowledge and cultural presence,"* said Leia Maahs, managing director of the Southwest Folklife Alliance.

**The deadline to nominate artists is May 1, 2019.** For information on the nomination process, visit <https://www.southwestfolklife.org/master-apprentice-program/>

The Master-Apprentice Award Program is the first award program of its kind in the State of Arizona. SFA joins over 30 Traditional Artist Apprenticeship programs across the nation. The program affirms the organization's commitment to individual heritage based artists, economic development and the transmission of cultural knowledge.

SFA's Master-Apprentice Award program is supported by The Arizona Commission on the Arts, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Surdna Foundation and matched by individual gifts from local donors. **Orientation sessions will be held as requested by communities or individuals. Contact Program Coordinator, Nelda Ruiz at 520-621-4046 for more information.**

*Our Mission: We build more equitable and vibrant communities by celebrating the everyday expressions of culture, heritage and diversity in the Greater Southwest. [www.southwestfolklife.org](http://www.southwestfolklife.org)*