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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 11, 2020
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CAPE FEAR REGIONAL THEATRE PUTS ARTS COUNCIL GRANT TO GOOD USE

[Fayetteville, NC] — Cape Fear Regional Theatre (CFRT) announces the receipt of a \$225,000 Community Organization Resource (CORE) grant from the Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County, Inc. for the 2020-2021 Season. "In the midst of the incredible uncertainty and challenge of the past year, the continued support of the Arts Council supports our work creating safe and innovative ways to serve our community. From virtual and in person Education Initiatives to outdoor live performances, this support keeps prices for all our programming affordable and inclusive of everyone in the community, no matter their financial circumstances," says CFRT Artistic Director Mary Catherine Burke. "We are proud of the work we've done throughout the last year to continue to provide the award winning productions and nationally recognized education initiatives, and we could not have this impact without the tireless advocacy and support of the Arts Council."

After closing their doors to audience members back in March, CFRT has spent the last 6 months innovating and leading the way for regional theatres during the pandemic. One of the first to create daily online programming for kids, CFRT launched virtual Edutainment classes that offered daily lessons for students in grades K-5. After 9 weeks of online classes, CFRT opened their doors for 15 sessions of summer camps between June and August, following CDC guidelines for in-person camps and ultimately reaching almost 200 campers. CFRT is thrilled to announce their return to in-person productions with *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*. *Lady Day* will be performed outside, right down the block from CFRT behind Haymount Auto Repair between October 8 and 25. Extensive safety procedures will be in place for these performances: audiences will be limited to fewer than 50 people in line with phase 2.5 guidelines, seating will be in six-foot distanced pods of two or four, masks will be required of all audience members, and temperatures will be checked at the entrance. Robust sanitation will take place between performances and the show will be as low contact as possible with digital programs and no paper tickets. The rest of the 2020-2021 season featuring *The Wizard of Oz*, *Clue: On Stage*, *Buddy*: and *The Color Purple* will be performed in the spring. Dates for those shows will be announced later in the year.

Ticket sales account for less than 40% of CFRT's funding. "We are so honored to receive this grant from the Arts Council. This funding will allow us to continue producing high quality productions and serving parents and children adapting to this new paradigm. We know how essential art is to healing and processing, and we look forward to another year of creatively engaging with our community," says Ella Wrenn, CFRT's Managing Director.

"Cultural Organization Resource Grants (C.O.R.E.) support the backbone art organizations of Cumberland County," says Bob Pinson, Interim President and CEO of the Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County. "The Arts Council is proud to partner with CFRT as a C.O.R.E. Grantee. We value all that these organizations contribute to the arts in Cumberland County."

The Arts Council's Community Organization Resource Grants (CORE) may be awarded to local arts agencies in Cumberland County whose programs are vital to the cultural life of the community and whose organizations have reached a size and maturity that assure their long-term viability. The purpose of CORE Grants is to strengthen and stabilize major arts institutions and help them to deliver high quality arts services to the citizens of Cumberland County.

CFRT is committed to presenting an annual series of plays, performances, and special events that, in addition to entertaining, will enlighten, inspire, and educate performers and audiences. CFRT strives to tell the stories that resonate with all members of this dynamic diverse community and be a place for the entire community to come together to laugh harder, think deeper, share experiences, and grow as a community.

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About the Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County

The Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County serves more than 300,000 residents of Fayetteville and Cumberland County. For more than 40 years, the Arts Council has ensured growth in our children's education, our community's cultural identity and our economic progress. The Arts Council's grants, programs and services are funded in part by contributions from businesses and individuals and through grants from the City of Fayetteville, Cumberland County and the North Carolina Arts Council, with funding from the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural & Cultural Resources.

Cape Fear Regional Theatre believes in the power of storytelling and the visceral impact of live theatre. We strive for the highest standards of excellence in our artistic work, educational offerings, and outreach efforts. We provide the region a place to come together to laugh harder, think deeper, share our experiences, and grow as a community.