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Liora Sponko of Lane Arts Council named Community Arts Coordinator

Salem, Oregon – Liora Sponko, the executive director of the Lane Arts Council, is the new Community Arts Coordinator for the Oregon Arts Commission. Sponko rose above a highly competitive field of candidates to succeed Brian Wagner in the position, responsible for supporting the statewide arts community in ensuring access to the arts for Oregonians.

“We are extremely proud to have Liora join our team,” said Brian Rogers, executive director of the Arts Commission. “Over the past nine years she has transformed the Lane Arts Council from a small arts services shop into a vibrant and flourishing force for the arts in Lane County. We are excited about the potential she brings to our statewide efforts to build capacity and support for arts organizations, especially during these times as communities plan to reconnect, hopefully in the near future.”

During her tenure at Lane Arts Council, Sponko has tripled the organizational budget, developed inclusive programming (Fiesta Cultural) and increased partnerships with the public and private sectors. Her responsibilities include major donor development and corporate sponsorships, grant oversight, budget management, partnership development, board development and community leadership. Lane Arts Council currently serves thousands of youth and community members through arts education, the First Friday ArtWalk, services for artists and building the arts and creative sector.

“As an arts administrator and grassroots community-builder for over two decades,” said Sponko, “I know the arts are essential to building thriving communities. I am eager to connect with communities throughout Oregon and support your work. The
Community Arts Coordinator position is the exact combination of all of my passions and the perfect way for me to make a difference across the state."

Sponko’s previous experience includes serving as a programs coordinator for the University of Oregon and development work for the nonprofits Community Center for the Performing Arts/WOW Hall and Womenspace. She has a master’s in International Peace and Development from Universitat Jaume I (Castellón, Spain) and a bachelor’s in sociology and Spanish from the University of California at Santa Barbara. She has received multiple certifications and awards, including a 2015 20 under 40 Blue Chip Award from the Eugene Register Guard recognizing young rising stars in the Lane County business community.

As Community Arts Coordinator, Sponko will manage the Arts Build Communities and Small Operating Support grant programs, in addition to providing counsel and technical assistance to arts organizations.

Sponko will join the Arts Commission team on Monday, April 20.

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The Oregon Arts Commission provides leadership, funding and arts programs through its grants, special initiatives and services. Nine commissioners, appointed by the Governor, determine arts needs and establish policies for public support of the arts. The Arts Commission became part of Business Oregon (formerly Oregon Economic and Community Development Department) in 1993, in recognition of the expanding role the arts play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities. In 2003, the Oregon legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission’s expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development.

The Arts Commission is supported with general funds appropriated by the Oregon legislature and with federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust. More information about the Oregon Arts Commission is available online at: www.oregonartscommission.org.