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Contact: GVM Communications
Brenda Loughery
(brenda@gvmcommsinc.com)
Alicia Brown
(alicia@gvmcommsinc.com)

Waymakers Collective’s 2023 “Radical Rest” Program Awards 105 Grants, \$182,000 to Appalachian Artists

KNOXVILLE (TN), (NOVEMBER 21, 2023) – Waymakers Collective—the radical grantmakers and disruptive philanthropists in the heart of Appalachia that has so far granted more than \$1 million to underfunded artists and organizations—is pleased to announce the final update of its 2023 Radical Rest Grants, one of its largest and most successful cash-distribution programs to date.

In total, 105 Radical Rest Grants were made to communities and members, totalling \$182,000. Prioritizing racial equity and underrepresentation in grantmaking in the region, 40% of grants made went to BIPOC artists and/or BIPOC-led arts organizations.

“Over the past several years, our Appalachian communities and members have been greatly impacted by a global pandemic, regional natural disasters, and more,” says Joe Tolbert Jr., who oversaw the Radical Rest Grants as Program Director before becoming Waymaker’s first-ever Executive Director in August 2023. “Our members needed time to process and integrate what happened, and what we learned. The Radical Rest Grants gave the opportunity to pause and reflect.”

Under the program, Waymakers’ AppalCore members identified “rest” as one of the first steps towards integration. The program offered all Waymakers Collective voting members a Radical Rest Grant which – without any competitive application process or formal reporting – gave an automatic payment of \$2,000 per member. Members were then given the option to keep the grant monies – or re-grant some, or all, to someone else they nominated.

About Waymakers Collective (<https://www.waymakerscollective.org>):

The Waymakers Collective are radical grantmakers dedicated to supporting community arts and organizations in the heart of Appalachia that are historically underfunded: those led by BIPOC (Black, indigenous, and people of color), youth, LGBTQIA+, and non-English speakers/immigrants. Founded in 2022, Waymakers seeks to disrupt the traditional model of philanthropy through the direct distribution of monetary gifts towards "Appalachian Futurism," an inclusive path rooted in equitable justice, creative cooperation, and sustainable stewardship. This approach to giving challenges traditional power dynamics between foundations and grantees, and answers the urgent call to remove barriers for creatives and their communities to receive the resources they need and deserve. As of Nov 2023, Waymakers has been able to redistribute more than \$1 million— mostly to individual artists and organizations that had never received funding before. Follow Waymakers Collective on [Facebook](#) [[@WaymakersCollective](#)] and [Instagram](#) [[@waymakersco](#)].

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