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Two Durham Organizations Receive Prestigious ‘Building Bridges Program’ Grants from the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art

Duke Performances and the Museum of Durham History Receive National Awards to Strengthen Understanding Between Muslim and Non-Muslim Communities

May 22, 2017, Durham, NC — The Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, an extension of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, recently announced the 11 recipients nationwide of its annual **Building Bridges Grants Program** awards, two of them based in Durham: **Duke Performances** and the **Museum of Durham History**.

Since 2013, the Building Bridges Program’s annual competition has awarded 36 U.S. nonprofit organizations with over \$6.4 million in grants to support planning and implementation of creative arts- and media-based programs advancing relationships between Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

“Duke Performances and the Museum of Durham History are crafting programs that illustrate how Muslims have enriched — and will continue to enrich — the Durham area,” said Zeyba Rahman, senior program officer for the Building Bridges Program. “We are excited to support both organizations as they celebrate the artistic, cultural, and economic contributions of Muslims in all their breadth and depth. We are confident that, in doing so, they will strengthen relationships and intercultural awareness in Durham and the surrounding region.”

Duke Performances, working in partnership with the Duke Center for Islamic Studies (DISC) and the Duke Middle East Studies Center (DUMESC), will receive **\$125,000** to support a multi-year initiative entitled ***Southern Hospitality: Muslim Arts & Music as Cultural Bridge-Making in the American South***. The project seeks to showcase the richness and diversity of Muslim culture through five weeklong residencies and culminating performances by US-based Muslim artists. In addition to their engagement with the Duke community, participating artists will visit nearby high schools, both in Durham and in rural communities surrounding the city, to share their art and promote awareness of their cultural traditions.

Duke Performances’ Executive Director Aaron Greenwald said of the award: “The project allows Duke Performances to engage audiences on campus and in Durham, as well as in nearby rural areas, bringing these communities into contact with world-class artists and fostering greater understanding of Muslim culture. It also aligns with the aims of our partners, supporting DISC’s mission to engage in interdisciplinary teaching and learning about Muslims as well as DUMESC’s goals of promoting teaching and research about Middle Eastern societies among American audiences.”

The Museum of Durham History received an award of **\$25,000** to collaborate with current and former members of Ar-Razzaq Islamic Center to develop **an educational exhibition** on one of the oldest Muslim communities in North Carolina. Over the course of a year, this project will explore **the history of Ar-Razzaq and its economic,**

political, and cultural impact on Durham and the state of North Carolina. It will culminate in an exhibition slated for early 2018.

Ar-Razzaq (formerly Muhammad's Mosque #34) was founded in Durham in the 1950s under the local leadership of Imam Kenneth Muhammad. Members of Ar-Razzaq established or strengthened other Muslim communities across the state, including those in Raleigh, Fayetteville, Wilmington, and the Kinston/Greenville area.

Interim Director Patrick Mucklow says this project puts the museum's mission and values into action: "We believe that history is relevant to understanding Durham today. Our task is particularly timely in light of the divisions in our country. We are honored to partner with Ar-Razzaq and DDFIA to do this project."

For a complete listing of projects awarded Building Bridges Program grant support, please visit the Foundation's website at www.ddcf.org/what-we-fund/building-bridges/.

Duke Performances presents willfully eclectic, forward-thinking programming at a dozen venues on campus and in Durham. Through superb performances, outstanding visiting artist residencies, and the commissioning and development of exciting new work, the organization takes a leading role in the cultural life of the nation and encourages meaningful engagement with the Duke campus and Durham community. Duke Performances offers a robust season of 70-80 presentations spanning classical, new music, jazz, American vernacular music, international music, theater, and dance, while coordinating over 120 residency events, including class visits, workshops, and public conversations with over 75 campus and community partners annually. For more information, please visit: www.dukeperformances.duke.edu

The Museum of Durham History is a 21st-century museum that uses stories about people, places and things to foster curiosity, encourage further inquiry, and promote an understanding of diverse perspectives about the Durham community and its history. The museum is located at 500 W. Main St. and is open Tuesday-Saturday, 10am – 5pm, and Sunday, 1 – 5pm. There is no admission charge. For more information, please visit: www.modh.org

The Building Bridges Program is the grant-making arm of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art (DDFIA), which is an extension of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF). Based in New York, the program supports national efforts to advance relationships, increase understanding, and reduce bias between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. For more information, please visit www.ddcf.org/what-we-fund/building-bridges/