



PRESS RELEASE

Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

777 N Tamiami Trl

Sarasota, FL 34236

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MICHAEL MARTELLA TO BE HONORED FOR EXCEPTIONAL COMMITMENT TO THE ARTS

President of The Boar's Head Provision Company, Inc. Serves as

Chairman of the Van Wezel Foundation's Board of Directors

Sarasota, FL (May 6, 2019) – Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America, announced today that **Michael Martella, President of Boar's Head in Sarasota, FL and Chairman of the Van Wezel Foundation's Board of Directors** will be honored with the Business Committee for the Arts Leadership Award. This award recognizes individuals for their extraordinary vision, leadership and commitment to supporting the arts and for encouraging other businesses to follow their lead.

Under the leadership of **Michael Martella**, the Boar's Head Brand is known for its altruistic support of the arts community. Mr. Martella was appointed to the Board of Directors at the **Van Wezel Foundation, Inc.** in 2007 and quickly rose to the Chairman's position, where he has led fundraising activities that support the programming and long-term sustainability of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall in Sarasota. Through Boar's Head's sponsorship of the Boar's Head Family Series and Family Nights, family-friendly productions were added to the Van Wezel's Main Stage program, making the performing arts accessible to a broader audience. During Family Nights, children can attend free of charge if accompanied by a full-paying adult, allowing hundreds of this community's youth to experience world-class music, Broadway productions and Vegas-style acts each year. They can also attend post-show "Talk Backs" and events, where they can interact with some of the visiting artists. Martella believes that by learning in and through the arts, children gain critical thinking and social skills that prepare them to be the next generation of active members in the community.

"Over the years, Mike has strengthened and expanded the Van Wezel's Family Nights series at the theatre, and it was our honor to nominate him for this award. He has served as a mentor to us as a leader who believes in the value of arts education." –Mary Bensel, Executive Director of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

"Mike is a wonderful choice and well-deserving of this honor. His work helping to lead the Foundation and its mission has been his primary focus during his time as Chairman of the Board, and we look forward to all that he will continue to accomplish in the future. We are proud to share this announcement with the community." –Cheryl Mendelson, Chief Executive Officer of the Van Wezel Foundation

Presented annually, the Arts and Business Partnership Awards—formerly called the BCA 10: Best Businesses Partnering with the Arts in America awards—honor 10 U.S. companies, a business leader and an arts and business partnership for their exceptional

commitment to the arts through grants, local partnerships, volunteer programs, matching gifts, sponsorships and board membership. The awards will be presented by Americans for the Arts on October 3, 2019, at a black-tie gala at the Central Park Boathouse in New York City.

Other honorees include:

- David Machado Restaurants (Portland, OR)
- Doyle Coffin Architecture (Ridgefield, CT)
- Erie Insurance (Erie, PA)
- Grounds for Thought (Bowling Green, OH)
- Jiffy Lube of Indiana (Fort Wayne, IN)
- Northwestern Mutual (Milwaukee, WI)
- Nokia Bell Labs (New Providence, NJ)
- Omaha Steaks International, Inc (Omaha, NE)
- The Marcus Corporation (Milwaukee, WI)
- Warby Parker (New York, NY)

In addition, Gensler and Access Gallery of Denver, Colorado, will receive the David Rockefeller pARTnership Award. This award recognizes a company and arts organization (or artist) for an exceptional project, program, or initiative that represents a true alliance, collaboration, or exchange between the two.

"We are grateful to honor these businesses and individuals for their exceptional involvement in ensuring that the arts thrive in their communities," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "They provide the arts with significant financial and in-kind support, and they incorporate meaningful arts-related programs into their employee, customer, and community relations activities. They enrich the lives of millions of Americans and truly set a standard for other businesses to follow."

For more information about the Arts and Business Partnership Awards, please contact Danielle Iwata at (202) 371-2830 or via e-mail at diwata@artsusa.org.

To learn more about the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall's Educational Outreach programs visit <https://www.vanwezel.org/education/>.

In the past, Wilde Lexus Sarasota was also a recipient of the BCA award for their support of the Van Wezel and other local arts groups.

About Van Wezel Foundation

The mission of the Van Wezel Foundation is to create a world-class performing arts center that enriches the community, supports arts education, and inspires young minds. Please visit our website at vwfoundation.org for more information.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 55 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at AmericansForTheArts.org.

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