



PRESS RELEASE

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Howard County Executive Calvin Ball Unveils County's First Permanent Public Art Program - Arts for All

This Program will be one of the first in the region of its kind for permanent iconic public art

ELLCOTT CITY, MD – Howard County Executive Calvin Ball today announced Howard County's first Public Art program in partnership with the Howard County Arts Council. This program, called [Arts for All](#), will enhance the county's cultural landscape by commissioning permanent iconic public art installations, strategically placed at county facilities and community spaces, reflecting the creative talent and vision of the Howard County community. The brand-new initiative underscores the role of public art in placemaking, providing spaces for inspiration, reflection, and interaction. Pictures from the event can be found [here](#). Video can be found [here](#).

"Howard County is home to an unparalleled community of artists and local arts organizations that help shape the creative fabric of our county. Our commitment to the arts is a recognition that a vibrant community is defined by how our residents imagine, create, and inspire others," said Ball. "Through a partnership with the Howard County Arts Council, the Arts for All program will commission iconic, permanent public art installations from a nationwide network of visual artists. These installations will serve as places to inspire, reflect, interact, and encourage purpose."

Through the Arts for All program, County Executive Ball and the Arts Council have launched a [public survey](#) to engage residents in selecting themes, types, and locations for the public art displays. This survey will be open throughout summer 2024, while the Howard County Arts Council prepares to issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from prospective artists. In his FY25 Operating Budget, Ball made an investment \$1.5 million to fund up public art installations at various locations over the next several years.

"Today, with the announcement of Arts for All, we are taking public art in Howard County one step further," said Coleen West, Executive Director of the Howard County Arts Council. "Public art brings cultural and social value to public parks and places by adding meaning and character to our public spaces. Each location is unique and has a story to tell -- and public art can tell that story by creating spaces that are inspiring, have a pulse or feeling, and reflect the sites' history, aspirations, and values."

Through an existing partnership with the Howard County Arts Council, Howard County currently participates in the annual ARTsites program, which places temporary public art installations at locations throughout the county. This new Arts for All program will advance public art in Howard County one step further by commissioning iconic, permanent public art installations from a nationwide network of visual artists. Located at public facilities and on county land, these public

art installations will captivate, inspire, and draw people from far and wide to experience their beauty.

“Public art plays an incredibly important role in communities across the nation. It beautifies our public spaces and drives tourism, supporting our local economy. Public art also tells stories about our shared history to wider audiences and helps shape the identity of our community,” said Adam Stull, President of the Board of Directors of the Howard County Arts Council. “We look forward to bringing Arts for All to a neighborhood near you!”

“Public art evolves at the intersection of all fields of inquiry and branches of knowledge and can provide a sense of social cohesion, cultural identity, and historical understanding,” shared Oletha DeVane, a Howard County-based multidisciplinary artist and winner of the 2023 Baker Award for Interdisciplinary Arts.

For more information contact Stephanie Schuster at development@hocoarts.org.

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The Howard County Arts Council is a non-profit organization whose mission is to serve the citizens of Howard County by fostering the arts, artists and arts organizations. The Howard County Arts Council receives major grants from the Howard County Government and the Maryland State Arts Council and sustaining annual support from corporate, foundation and individual sponsors. Howard County Arts Council offices are located at the Howard County Center for the Arts, 8510 High Ridge Road, Ellicott City, MD 21043. The Howard County Center for the Arts is an accessible facility encouraging the full participation of individuals with disabilities. For information, call (410) 313-2787 or email info@hocoarts.org. TDD: 711

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