

Southern Dance, Performing Arts to receive \$2,500 grant from State Council on Arts

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SYLACAUGA – Southern Dance and Performing Arts is getting a helping hand from the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

Recently, during its September meeting, the Council awarded 137 grants totaling \$2,290,710 to 113 grantees across the state.

Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement's (SAFE) performing arts program, Southern Dance and Performing Arts, was named as one of the recipients and will receive a grant for \$2,500.

The news was announced in a press release.

This grant will be used to underwrite the production of "Christmas Angels," an original ballet written and choreographed by Southern Dance and Performing Arts' Artistic Director Jeanna Sumners.

The production will take place in November.

Sumners developed the storyline of "Christmas Angels" as a child out of grief for displaced or unwanted children. She uses dance to generate these same emotions in the audience to see and meet the needs of these children.

This original production begins with a festive, whimsical scene of Christmas juxtaposed with the loneliness and brokenness the children without homes experience at the holidays.

Funding for the Council on the Arts is provided by the state Legislature and the National Endowment of the Arts, a federal agency. Chaired by Jim Harrison III, of Tuscaloosa, the Council is comprised of 15 governor-appointed members.

The staff that administers the grants program also provides technical assistance in arts planning and programming, under the leadership of Executive Director Dr. Elliot Knight.

“The Council is pleased to support educational groups, community organizations and arts institutions with these approved grants,” Harrison said, in the release. “Funds awarded through the Council’s granting process provide a better education for students, nourishing imagination and preparing them for the workforce for tomorrow.

“These important grants also strengthen cultural expression and attract new industry to our colorful and vibrant state.”

Southern Dance & Performing Arts, as a program of SAFE, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a solid and focused experience for each student – on and off stage – providing unique performing arts programs.

Classes are offered in ballet, pointe, jazz, tap, lyrical, hip-hop and musical theatre. The goal is to promote a hands-on experience in the arts, to all children, regardless of race, age, income or level of experience.

If you or your child is interested in participating in “Christmas Angels” or registering for classes, please contact Southern Dance and Performing Arts at 256-245-1669 or by email at southerndanceandperformingarts@gmail.com.

Registration information is also available at sdpac.net. This project is made possible by grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.