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**WYOMING ARTS ALLIANCE (WyAA) HIRES ANDREW SCHNEIDER AS NEW DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**

WyAA expands part-time role to full-time commitment as organization grows

**Casper, Wy. December 9, 2021** -- The Wyoming Arts Alliance, a member-supported statewide arts advocacy nonprofit, has hired Andrew Schneider as director of operations, to lead the organization through a period of growth and transformation, the organization announced today.

"I am excited to work with Andrew in his new capacity as the full time staff member of WyAA. WyAA's work in supporting community and organizational development is needed to help drive social and economic development across Wyoming. The Wyoming Arts Council looks forward to working with WyAA in this new chapter of the organization," said Wyoming Arts Council Executive Director, Michael Lange.

The Wyoming Arts Council Board approved a partnership grant for WyAA using ARPA organizational funding from the National Endowment for the Arts — familiar territory for Schneider, who has previously garnered recognition in the nonprofit space for Create Places, an economic and workforce development nonprofit he co-founded. Create Places provided support to increase creative and arts-related

employment in Northern Colorado through initiatives like Techstars Startup Week Fort Collins, Artup Week Fort Collins, Open Streets Fest, North Fort Neighborhood Connections, NoCo/SoWy Mayor's Summit on Entrepreneurship, and others. Schneider is taking over for part-time WyAA Operations Manager Bill Lindstrom, who will be concentrating on southeast Wyoming art and culture initiatives through Arts Cheyenne.

"I am fortunate to support the work of a fabulous, dedicated governance board at WyAA and I'm thrilled to join them full time in this contract capacity. Bill has been an amazing advocate and will continue to serve Wyoming's arts communities in wonderful ways as he steps back from day-to-day operations at WyAA. I had the pleasure of partnering with Bill when WyAA brought their More Arts Program to Casper, and I look forward to the next chapter in our relationship—as WyAA's star continues ascending," Schneider said.

"The Alliance looks back with gratitude for so many contributors to our journey,—and we are excited for our future. Our momentum and growth as an organization has positioned us to set bold new goals for the coming years. Andrew is uniquely gifted to help the organization discern the best path forward. We retain our vision of vibrant communities where art is valued, artists are empowered, and creativity is sparked," said WyAA Board Chair Wendy Bredehoft.

After 14 years away building a career in Missouri, Georgia, California and elsewhere, Schneider moved back to the Mountain West in 2008 to escape the saturated creative market of Los Angeles. In the last decade, he has transitioned from a creative entrepreneur and artist with a passion for community development to a full time organizer and evangelist for the power of arts, culture, and creativity to serve the community's interests. His work has earned him distinction as one of BizWest's 40 Under Forty rising regional leaders (2016), as well as the attention of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade—earning him a coveted seat at the Colorado Change Leader Institute.

Schneider returned to his first home of Casper, Wyoming, in early 2020. Since then he has quickly become a vibrant member of Wyoming's growing network of leaders using creativity to change their communities for the better. Immediately prior to accepting his operations role with WyAA, the state's alliance of arts advocates, Schneider worked as a community organizer and advocate for the statewide Healthy Wyoming Coalition. His current volunteer contributions include serving as vice-chair of the board of directors of The Nicolaysen Art Museum. He also serves on the board of the Casper Mountain Fire Protection District, where he lives off-grid atop Casper Mountain, a mile past the last power pole and end of plowed roads.

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#### ABOUT WYOMING ARTS ALLIANCE (WyAA)

WyAA's mission is to advance a creative and culturally vibrant state. This drives the alliance's purpose and vision to provide resources and advocate for vibrant, thriving communities that value artists and the contributions they make to community decision-making processes that improve quality of life for all

Wyoming people. To accomplish its goal of strengthening cultural development in Wyoming, WyAA engages in the following activities: provides statewide education and leadership in advocating for arts and culture to enhance Wyoming's quality of life; coordinates the work of a legislative lobbyist to advocate for the interests of Wyoming's art & culture community; informs Wyoming citizens of state and federal arts initiatives, issues and trends; and synchronizes arts advocacy efforts by communities, constituents and supporters. Find more information at <http://wyomingarts.org>.