



GLASSROOTS RENOVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING TO BRING ART, JOBS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO DOWNTOWN NEWARK

Mayor Baraka, Rutgers Chancellor Cantor among Dignitaries Joining the Celebration

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, USA, April 25, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [GlassRoots](#), a Newark-based nonprofit that transforms lives through the art of glass-making, today announced that it will take part in renovating the ground floor of the old St. Michael's Hospital – an abandoned historic building – into a creative hub that will serve youth and adults throughout Newark and New Jersey. The refurbished site will connect community members with arts, sciences and education and drive economic growth toward revitalizing a once blighted neighborhood.

Newark Mayor [Ras Baraka](#), GlassRoots Board President Kathryn Markel, Founding Board Member Dena Lowenbach, and Jan Nicholson and Barbara Nicholson McFadyen, Trustees of [The Nicholson Foundation](#), joined Barbara Heisler, Chief Executive Officer of GlassRoots, at the groundbreaking ceremony today. The original St. Michael's Hospital is a long-vacant building constructed in 1867. Following the renovation, GlassRoots will occupy over 18,000 square feet of the building as an anchor tenant and collaborate with other educational and arts groups to catalyze the development of the entire neighborhood.

"GlassRoots is so much more than the glass arts. Through glass, we introduce math and science in unique ways, help our students create paths for their futures and nourish important life skills in our community," said Barbara Heisler, Chief Executive Officer of GlassRoots. "The move to this larger space will allow us to welcome more people in our community and help lead a resurgence of creativity and economic vibrancy in Newark."

Programs at the new facility will join art, entrepreneurship and STEM education in both practical and creative ways, helping local youth and adults explore their artistic sides while developing knowledge and skills to succeed in their careers.

The estimated total cost of GlassRoots' facilities renovation is \$2.1 million, of which nearly \$1.5 million has been raised to date through GlassRoots' 20/20 Capital Campaign. The Nicholson Foundation, a Newark-based organization, will contribute a transformational gift of one million dollars to the project.

GlassRoots is working side by side with the philanthropic community to cultivate and secure support to not only reach the \$2.1 million goal – but to exceed it, according to Kathryn Markel, Chair of the 20/20 Campaign. "We are tremendously grateful to Jan Nicholson and Barbara Nicholson McFadyen for their confidence in our efforts and their commitment to seeing that GlassRoots remains a vital part of the Newark and New Jersey community," she said.

“My father supported GlassRoots at its inception because of the vision that it could reach, engage and help Newark’s youth,” said Jan Nicholson, President of The Nicholson Foundation. “Today, 17 years later, it is giving young people boundless opportunities for personal and professional development.”

GlassRoots is one of many organizations turning the old hospital into a creative hub, including Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company and Newark Arts. “Newark Arts is thrilled that a new cultural center will be anchored by GlassRoots. For the arts community, University Heights neighborhood, and arts organizations that will share space there, it’s a win-win-win. We’re excited to be among the prospective tenants that will create critical mass for the city’s arts sector,” said Jeremy Johnson, Newark Arts Executive Director.

Other partners in the project include the City of Newark, New Jersey Community Capital, Hanini Group, Hollister Construction and Crawford Street Partners.

The full renovation process is expected to take eight months, and the new spaces are planned to open to the public early in 2019.

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