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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Artists for a Cause invites public to donate food and watch professional dance through St. Louis' inaugural *Dance for Food* event series

St. Louis, MO – Did you know that one in every six individuals lives in poverty and struggles with hunger in the greater St. Louis region, including more than 172,000 children? In fact, more than 85 percent of children enrolled in St. Louis Public Schools rely on free or reduced-cost meal programs. Many of these kids return to a home after school where there is little or no food. Hunger impacts both families and individuals, including seniors, children, and people with disabilities. It affects the homeless as well as working families who were once stable but now need help to survive. Artists for a Cause (A4AC), a not-for-profit that supports artists who serve community needs, is doing its part to help fight hunger in a unique way. After eight years of success with the ***Dance for Food*** program in Florida, in January, St. Louis will discover how many of the area's best dancers can fight hunger.

Dance for Food is a program designed to unite the dance community, rallying audiences to collect food for the hungry. Artistically directed by Linda Green, the ***Dance for Food*** program has hired many of Missouri's finest dancers to showcase their talents to an audience **whose only admission fee is a bag of unexpired, nonperishable goods**. In just a one-hour performance, each "food raiser" will include a range of moving choreography from five participating companies.

"We are thrilled to introduce this tested program to the St. Louis region. ***Dance for Food*** is the best of cultural opportunities for the community, and a chance to bring the dance community together to help those in need. We are proud to partner with Operation Food Source and Food

Outreach, two great organizations that will be the recipients of the food collected. They have thanked us for this innovative source of awareness and resources for their cause. We know they will get the donated food to those who need it most.

Whether you come because you want to see amazing dance, or because you want to stop hunger...Come, be entertained, and do your part.”

In a past triumph, ***Dance for Food*** raised more than 6,000 meals for families in a single performance, while offering an accessible cultural opportunity. The 2016 Florida series collected more than 5,000 pounds of food, which was distributed to those in need through charity food bank partners. To date, ***Dance for Food*** has raised more than 30,000 pounds of food.

“Those involved with Artists for a Cause are proud of the two-for-one impact all of our programs have. We can support culture and meet social need at the same time,” added Barber. “This performance serves many special purposes. Among them are providing an accessible cultural experience, providing educational, professional, and collaborative opportunities for dancers, and gathering food for those in need.”

The “Rising Star Series” takes place on Thursday, January 26, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. at A4AC St. Louis Office and The .Zack Arts Incubator, 3224 Locust Ave, St Louis. The “Star Series” will be on Sunday, January 29, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. at the Sun Theater, 3625 Grandel Sq., St Louis. Each show will offer preshow entertainment a half hour before the event from gifted young artists in the A4AC network. For those who would like to sponsor the event, there is still time. Call A4AC at 772.419.8778, visit our website at a4ac.org, or email Terry@a4ac.org for more information.

Participating dance companies have completed a free registration to be part of the Artists for a Cause network. They include many of the most engaging, gifted dancers in the region. Included in the “Rising Star Series” are Metro Dance Company; Midwest Ballet Theatre; Convergence; Grand Center Arts Academy; and The Big Muddy Dance Company. The “Star Series” includes Ashleyliane Dance Company; MADCO (Modern American Dance Company); The Big Muddy

Dance Company; Webster University Dance Ensemble; and Washington University Dance Collective.

About Artists for a Cause

Founded in 2009 by internationally acclaimed countertenor Terry Barber, Artists for a Cause supports artists who serve community needs. No program is merely about art for arts' sake – Artists for a Cause is about the arts as a solution. A sampling of programs include: **Therapeutic Arts** which sends the healing power of the arts to children and the elderly; **Dance for Food**, 1-hour professional dance showcases, where the price of admission is a bag of food to help the hungry; **A4AC School Clubs** which activate community responsible students who use their talent to strengthen communities; and **Support for Charities** which manages the collaboration between artists and the charities they wish to support. The organization, founded in FL, now has a second location in St. Louis, MO. For more information visit A4AC.org, like us on [Facebook](#), or call [772-419-8778](tel:772-419-8778).

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Suggested photo captions:

Photo one: The Big Muddy Dance Company will perform in both series

Photo two: From the Florida Series: Artistic Director Anna Preston, Artists for a Cause Founder and Executive Director and Stacy Malinowski stand before food collected during an event.