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GROUNDWORKS DANCETHEATER EXCEEDS FUNDRAISING GOAL WITH IT TAKES TWO 2020!

CLEVELAND, OH (May 20, 2020) - Like so many other non-profits and arts organizations, this spring GroundWorks DanceTheater had to accept the reality that their beloved annual gala, **IT TAKES TWO 2020!** was cancelled. Not only had this event generated significant revenue for the last 11 years, it was more than a fundraiser because it brought different areas of the Cleveland community together in support of GroundWorks. So rather than accept the defeat of a cancelled event, the dance company decided to pivot and produce an online campaign that would keep the same spirit of the in-person event but in a way that was safe for patrons, stakeholders and company members. The entire organization, board of directors, artists, and staff rallied together to make sure there could be a fundraising campaign this year that provided the necessary support to the organization.

On April 15, 2020, GroundWorks announced the official launch of IT TAKES TWO 2020! a virtual version of the "Dancing with the Stars" style competition, which would run through April 26. Most of the Celebrity Dancers who had agreed to participate in the live event were happy to work with their GroundWorks partner in a video format so the contest could continue.

Our Class of 2020 Celebrities featured:

- **Jeff Epstein** - Executive Director, *Midtown Cleveland*
- **Suzanne Hamilton** - Vice President, Commercial Real Estate, *ERIEBANK*
- **Connie Hill-Johnson** - Owner/Managing Director, *Visiting Angels Senior Homecare*
- **Charna E. Sherman** - Board President, *Cuyahoga Arts & Culture*
- **Brian M. Zimmerman** - Chief Executive Officer, *Cleveland Metroparks*

Throughout the 10-day campaign, teaser videos and pictures featuring each of our Cleveland Celebrities were released through social media channels and email. Patrons supported the campaign by voting for their favorite celebrity (votes were \$10 each), donating to the campaign, and helping spread the word by sharing our posts and emails. On April 24, the final videos were finally released and they were a big hit, being viewed more than 900 times over the weekend. Voting closed at midnight on April 26 and the overall winner who raised the most money was Charna E. Sherman.



We were ecstatic to announce on May 5 that we completed one of our most successful benefits yet. The total amount raised was \$84,507 which significantly passed our goal of \$75,000. We had 291 donors and over 1,000 people were engaged through our social media channels. The board of directors and our host committee, along with many of our celebrities, made challenge matches for votes and donations

GroundWorks believes in the power of the arts to bring people together. With the uncertainty and isolation that surrounds us, we were able to connect through art to create shared moments of beauty, joy and even levity with our patrons, stakeholders and company members. With the support of our artists, staff, Board of Directors, patrons, Host Committee, and our 2020 Celebrities, we were able to affirm the future of GroundWorks DanceTheater even as we navigate through this difficult time.

To view the campaign website featuring the final videos, visit [here](#).

About GroundWorks DanceTheater

Now in its 21st season, GroundWorks DanceTheater is dedicated to the development and presentation of new choreography and collaborations. The Northeast Ohio-based company performs new works by Executive Artistic Director, David Shimotakahara, as well as commissioned work by nationally & internationally acclaimed choreographers including Eric Michael Handman, Rosie Herrera, Kate Weare, Robert Moses, Ronen Koresh, Dianne McIntyre, Lynne Taylor-Corbett, Jill Sigman, Gina Gibney, David Parker, Brian Brooks, James Gregg, & many others. GroundWorks is committed to presenting unique opportunities for engaging the community through work-in-progress showings, master classes, and educational outreach to school children, college students, and senior adults.

GroundWorks DanceTheater's annual programming is made possible with funding from The National Endowment for the Arts, The Ohio Arts Council, Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, The Cleveland Foundation, The George Gund Foundation, The Toby Devan Lewis Philanthropic Fund, GAR Foundation, Peg's Foundation, The Char & Chuck Fowler Family Foundation, The John P. Murphy Foundation, The Kulas Foundation, Akron Community Foundation, The Demetros Charitable Trust, The Judith Gerson Fund, Sisler McFawn, Individual Contributors & Members of the GroundWorks Board of Directors.

For more information, please visit www.groundworksdance.org or call 216-751-0088.

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