

2019 AMOCAT Arts Awards

The AMOCAT Arts Awards recognize the people and organizations that positively impact the community with their passion, innovation, and commitment to the arts. AMOCAT Arts Award recipients are nominated by the public and selected by the Tacoma Arts Commission.

There are three categories for recognition: Arts Patron, Community Outreach by an Organization, and Community Outreach by an Individual.

2019 Arts Patron

Tacoma Creates Campaign

www.cityoftacoma.org/tacomacreates

This award goes to the volunteer community members who led the **Tacoma Creates Campaign** for their multi-year planning and advocacy work to pass the first cultural access program in Washington State.

Tacoma Creates is designed to make Tacoma's neighborhoods and communities more vibrant and interesting places, create outlets and opportunities for youth to open their minds, open more doors, and make arts and culture more sustainably accessible to the broader public. Through investing in arts, culture, science and heritage programs that advance the principles of equity and access, Tacoma will also generate greater economic activity.

The opportunity for establishing Tacoma Creates came in 2015 when the Washington State Legislature passed a bill that recognized the numerous public, educational and economic benefits provided by cultural organizations. This legislation allows communities across the state to invest in arts, culture, science and heritage programs by raising funds through a tax.

With state legislation in place, the Arts & Culture Coalition of Pierce County – a collaborative of non-profit arts, culture and heritage organizations – in partnership with a broad spectrum of Tacoma city leaders, educators, community groups, and businesses, began designing a program that would fit within the state guidelines and meet the unique needs of Tacoma.

In 2017, Tacoma City Council unanimously approved bringing Tacoma Creates to the voters. Community members and non-profits rallied to volunteer and contribute to the Tacoma Creates Campaign, working in every neighborhood of Tacoma. In November 2018, Tacoma voters overwhelmingly approved Tacoma Creates with 67.2% support, passing in all of Tacoma's 104 voting precincts.

2019 Community Outreach by an Organization

Tacoma Urban Performing Arts Center

www.tacomaupac.org

www.facebook.com/tacomaurbanperformingartscenter

(253) 327-1873

This award goes to **Tacoma Urban Performing Arts Center** for helping bridge the gaps in dance education for marginalized communities in Tacoma.

Tacoma Urban Performing Arts Center (T.U.P.A.C.) was the long-planned vision of the late Kabby Mitchell III, who was the first Black soloist dancer with Pacific Northwest Ballet, and co-founder, Klair Ethridge, also a former dancer. Mitchell and Ethridge recognized the inequity of classical ballet education for historically marginalized children and were determined to provide them high quality dance instruction in Tacoma.

With the participation of Pacific Northwest Ballet artists, talented instructors, and dedicated administrators, the ballet instruction at T.U.P.A.C. is on par with that offered in other metropolitan areas. T.U.P.A.C. offers high quality classes for all ages including West African, Flamenco, Contemporary, Tahitian, POSE/Voguing and Hip Hop, which enhance their vigorous ballet program.

Students have performed in T.U.P.A.C. productions of *The Urban Nutcracker* and *Harriet: The Black Swan* as well as monthly Community Contemporary Classes at Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma Mayor's Inaugural Ball, National Black Women's Caucus, Ocean Fest, State of the City Address, Murals through Dance, Ethnic Fest, Hilltop Street Fair, Kaleidoscope, and The Links of Tacoma Gala. T.U.P.A.C. also offers specialized dance workshops in partnership with instructors from Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and Spectrum Dance Theater.

2019 Community Outreach by an Individual

Aya Hashiguchi Clark and Randy Clark

www.dukesbay.org

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This award goes to **Aya Hashiguchi Clark and Randy Clark** for their commitment to changing the local landscape of theater in Tacoma to better represent the complex identities of our community members.

Aya Hashiguchi Clark and Randy Clark founded Dukesbay Productions in 2011 with the goal of producing more culturally and racially diverse theater in Tacoma. Presenting plays that are a mixture of original scripts and established published scripts, Dukesbay casts their productions with a special eye for actors of color. Some plays, such as *Tea*, *Calligraphy*, and *Yohen*, are stories that highlight particular ethnic peoples. Other plays, such as *The Night of the Iguana*, *Agnes of God*, and *Proof*, are stories from the Western theatrical canon that Dukesbay intentionally casts using actors from many ethnic backgrounds.

In 2013, the Clarks built the Dukesbay Theater, a 40-seat venue in the Merlino Arts Center. When Dukesbay Productions is not using the theater space for one of their productions, other small, independent theatre companies from the South Sound use the space. As a result, there is more independent theatre happening in Tacoma, and local actors, directors, and theatrical designers have additional opportunities to practice their craft.

Beyond their work encouraging independent theatre in Tacoma, the Clarks are also strong supporters of community theatre – Randy has served as a board member and Aya is currently serving as a board member for Tacoma Little Theatre.