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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **TOArts raises over \$580,000 at *CURTAIN UP!* event to fuel local arts programs, Announces Richardson as incoming Executive Director**

*1:1 match by TOLD Foundation boosts fundraising success*



*Niki Chopra Richardson is announced as next Executive Director of Thousand Oaks Arts.*

(Thousand Oaks, CA) — Celebrating three decades of arts and culture at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, TOArts held its quinquennial *CURTAIN UP!* fundraising event on October 25, marking the 30th Anniversary of this iconic venue. The event raised an impressive \$583,600, with \$291,700 in donations matched 1:1 by TOLD Foundation. With a total match challenge of \$350,000, TOLD Foundation has pledged to match an additional \$58,300 raised.

Rod Gilbert, President of TOLD Foundation expressed his support, saying, “TOLD Foundation is honored to support TOArts in their mission to make

the arts accessible and transformative for all in our community. We are thrilled to play a role in helping TOArts reach new heights with their Sparking Joy! campaign.”

Funds from *CURTAIN UP!* contribute to several key initiatives in TOArts’ \$5 million *Sparking Joy!* campaign which aims at raising \$5 million:

- **Sparking Joy Youth Fund - \$2,061,500:** Supports arts education through a \$2 million endowment for school programs, teacher training, career exposure, and scholarships, along with \$61,500 dedicated to making the arts a core part of STE(A)M education.
- **TOArts Access Fund - \$1,598,500:** Ensures accessibility to the arts for all by funding programs like Olson Grants and Arts Odyssey, aiding local nonprofits and Title I elementary students. This also includes a new **Arts Invention Fund** which provides flexible funding allowing TOArts to be nimble to the community’s needs and ideas.
- **TOArts Presents Expansion - \$1,340,000:** Allows TOArts to present a diverse array of artists and genres, aiming to foster dialogue and inspire change within the community.

In addition to the successful fundraiser, TOArts announced the planned transition to Niki Chopra Richardson as the next Executive Director later this fiscal year, signaling a new era of leadership and growth for the organization.

“Niki has demonstrated her dedication to the artistic future of our community; she is a tireless advocate and a visionary leader who will be a remarkable force to guide TOArts into the future,” said Jonathan Serret, Cultural and Community Service Director for the City of Thousand Oaks and current Executive Director of TOArts. “My affiliation with TOArts and the work we do for the community is deeply important to me. I look forward to collaborating with the TOArts Board and Niki on a strategic leadership transition later this year and am committed to growing the reach of our programs throughout our community.”

David Mead, TOArts Board Chair, shared his enthusiasm for the planned transition this fiscal year to Richardson as the new Executive Director: “Niki’s current leadership as Associate Director as well as her passion, strategic insight, and vision for our community’s future make her the ideal person to become the next Executive Director of TOArts. We look forward to

Niki at the helm so that TOArts and its array of programs will continue to evolve, bringing our community together through the arts.”

The funds raised and leadership transition underscore TOArts’ commitment to enriching lives through the arts and fostering a vibrant, inclusive cultural landscape in Ventura County. To join the journey, visit [www.toarts.org](http://www.toarts.org).

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### **About TOArts**

TOArts is the nonprofit fundraising and presenting partner of the Bank of America Performing Arts Center, Thousand Oaks with a vision to make our community a place *Where the Arts Thrive for All*. TOArts delivers high-quality arts exposure and education to youth and world-class performances to the region, and provides vital support for local artists and nonprofit performing arts groups. For more information, please visit [www.toarts.org](http://www.toarts.org), and follow TOArts on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).