

**COUNTY OF TAOS  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO**

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**TAOS COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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**PRESS RELEASE:**

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**Taos County Invests \$400,000 in Transformative Youth Work-Based Learning Program  
in the Arts and Creative Economy**

Taos, NM – Taos County, with the support of the Taos Community Foundation, proudly finalized and awarded the Taos Center for the Arts (TCA) with a historic investment of \$400,000 in American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funds. This partnership will support building renovations of 132 Paseo del Pueblo Norte to serve as a hub for TCA's Inter-Arts internship program and an arts enrichment and education space. The space will support work-based learning opportunities that connect youth and young adults to career pathways throughout the creative economy.

In considering how to invest its remaining ARPA funds, Taos County sought to design a connected strategy that creates a launchpad for long-term impact related to economic resiliency and that focuses on local residents and businesses first. That strategy centered on providing youth-to-adult workforce development and business services, while investing in sustainable, and existing programs. The TCA Inter-Arts Internship Program was identified as a leading entity in the County that has a successful track record of providing equitable access to a variety of skill-building opportunities, while also creating a human-centered, culturally relevant and caring environment.

The Inter-Arts Internship Program engages youth and young adults in paid work-based learning opportunities. Arts and culture organizations across Taos County facilitate the program. Experiences focus on digital literacy, technical production, professional development and administration. The renovation of 132 Paseo will create a multi-use arts enrichment and education space, serving as a hub for the Inter-Arts Internship Program and community-led endeavors. With the investment of ARPA funds, TCA will be able to serve up

to 50 youth each year from across Taos County, and partner with up to 30 arts, cultural and educational entities for work-learning placements and experiences.

“This is both exciting, and important, as education becomes central to TCA’s community engagement. For decades, TCA has rented 132 Paseo to restaurateurs. With this investment from Taos County, TCA is able to expand on our ability to serve Taos, and in particular, connect to youth. The building will become another part of TCA's campus that connects arts to the community. We are humbled by this support and look forward to the work ahead,” said Chelsea Reidy, Executive Director of the TCA.

“Taos County is proud to partner with the Taos Center for the Arts, and grateful to the Taos Community Foundation for facilitating this investment. The TCA Inter-Arts Internship Program is working to change the narrative that our youth don’t have opportunities to stay and/or return home and have viable career paths; especially in the creative economy, which is a vital economic and community driver. We believe that the TCA is showing genuine commitment to partner broadly and inclusively, and we are grateful for their hard work to strengthen the social and economic fabric across Taos County” said Jessica Stern, Taos County Economic Development Director.

As part of its cohesive workforce-related strategy, Taos County also made ARPA investments to Friends of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument for a similar youth work-based learning program in the outdoor recreation sector; created a grant opportunity for workforce/work-based learning opportunities through TCF; and for the renovation and development of a one-stop business resources center at 115 Civic Plaza Drive.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law by President Joseph R. Biden on March 11, 2021. It was designed to enable all Americans to respond to and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Taos County obligated all remaining ARPA funds by the December 31, 2024 deadline.

### **About Taos Center for the Arts**

The Taos Center for the Arts (TCA) draws on its history as a dynamic leader for arts collaboration and partnership. Originally established by a group of working artists in 1953 and situated in the heart of Taos, the TCA serves and engages Northern New Mexico communities. With a 275-seat theater and two galleries, the TCA curates culturally relevant films, art exhibitions, and live performances as well as provides local, regional and internationally renowned artists, thinkers and performers the space to inspire creativity and foster a thriving love for the arts. Inter-Arts Internship Program engages youth and young adults in paid work-based learning opportunities. Experiences focus on digital literacy, technical production, professional development & administration.

### **About Taos Community Foundation**

Taos Community Foundation (TCF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting local nonprofits, addressing community needs and promoting positive changes to nurture

a strong and vibrant community in Taos New Mexico, and throughout the surrounding areas. Through grantmaking programs, TCF invests in vitally important areas of our community, including basic needs, education, healthcare, arts and culture, environmental sustainability, and community advocacy. Taos Community Foundation serves as a trusted intermediary that bridges the gap between generous donors and local nonprofits that require resources and support. TCF is your community's trusted philanthropic partner, committed to nurturing philanthropy, fostering solidarity, and pursuing initiatives to improve the well-being of Taos and western Colfax Counties.

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