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14-10 (60)

14-11 (76)

14-12 (70)

15-01 (51)

15-02 (18)

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE: DUKE ENERGY AWARDS GANTT CENTER \$100,000 GRANT - Center Surpasses Annual 1974 Membership Goal in Six Months

Sharon Holm [sharon@ganttcenter.org]

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Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 1:42 PM

To: Sharon Holm [sharon@ganttcenter.org]

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DUKE ENERGY AWARDS GANTT CENTER \$100,000 GRANT - Center Surpasses Annual 1974 Membership Goal in Six Months

(Charlotte, NC - February 11, 2015) - The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts+Culture has announced that the organization has been awarded a \$100,000 Challenge Grant from Duke Energy. The award to the Gantt Center reflects the ongoing commitment of Duke Energy to support the institution as well as the arts and community in North Carolina.

"We are grateful to Duke Energy for their continuous support of the Center," said David Taylor, Gantt Center President & CEO. "We believe this grant was instrumental in driving the community to get involved and helping us to succeed in achieving our membership goal. The fact that we have been able to exceed the goal speaks volumes about the desire of the community to have a space dedicated to the arts, history and culture of African-Americans. The award will strengthen our capacity to offer stellar programs and outreach events."

The Duke Energy Challenge Grant will serve to bolster the Gantt Center's 2015 and 2016 membership drives and encourage support from additional foundations and organizations. Ultimately, the grant will help support the Center's mission of providing ongoing programming and education initiatives including signature programs such as Family First and Open Easels and community outreach activities.

"Nearly tripling membership is not only a considerable feat, but an achievement we should all recognize," said Stick Williams, President, Duke Energy Foundation. "Duke Energy is proud to invest in this challenge, helping the Gantt Center become more sustainable through increasing its membership, which ultimately helps strengthen its mission of connecting communities by preserving and celebrating African-American arts and culture."

As part of its 40th Anniversary celebration which commenced on July 1, 2014, the Center kicked off the 1974 Membership Challenge, a challenge to the Charlotte community to remember and support the mission of the Gantt Center through membership. The public was invited to join the Gantt Center from July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015 to move the institution closer to an unprecedented goal of 1974 active members. 1974 was chosen as the goal because the Gantt Center - then known as the Afro-American Cultural & Service Center was founded in 1974.

Duke Energy offered to award the Gantt Center the \$100,000 challenge grant when the Center reached 1,974 members. The Center is pleased to announce that on December 31, 2014 membership surpassed the 1974 membership goal - 6 months after the membership drive began.

The Center continues to encourage the community to join. Membership, which starts at \$35, provides such privileges as unlimited free admission, private exhibition previews, and discounts on Museum Shop purchases. Supporting the Gantt Center as a member also provides important funding for outreach programs that enrich the lives of residents in Charlotte and across the region.

When patrons become Gantt Center members they are contributing to a much larger goal of increasing the Gantt Center's community involvement through public programming and education initiatives.

About Harvey B. Gantt Center for African American Arts + Culture

Founded in 1974, Charlotte's Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture (formerly the Afro-American Cultural & Service Center) exists to present, preserve and celebrate the art, history and culture of African-Americans and people of African descent through dance, music, visual and literary arts, film, educational programs, theatre productions and community outreach. Named for Harvey B. Gantt, the prominent Charlotte architect and community leader and former Mayor of Charlotte, the Center is housed in an inspired and distinguished award-winning structure and is home to the nationally celebrated John and Vivian Hewitt Collection of African-American Art, which was generously donated by Bank of America.

For more information on the Gantt Center, please visit www.ganttcenter.org and join us on Facebook and on Twitter: @hbganttcenter. Follow news from our fortieth year via the hashtags #Remember, #1974Challenge and #Gantt40.

About The Duke Energy Foundation

The Duke Energy Foundation actively works to improve the quality of life in its communities, lending expertise in the form of leadership and philanthropic support to charitable organizations.

Duke Energy has long been committed to building and supporting the communities in which its customers and employees live and work.

Sharon Holm
Marketing Specialist

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