



**EMBARGOED UNTIL JULY 10**

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**CHICAGO HUMAN RHYTHM PROJECT LEADS AMERICAN RHYTHM CENTER  
New Arts Facility and Collaborative Business Model Located at Chicago's Fine Arts Building**

CHICAGO—The [Chicago Human Rhythm Project](#) (CHRP) announces the establishment of the **American Rhythm Center** (ARC), a new initiative to provide a shared, affordable and sustainable education, rehearsal and administrative facility for several leading Chicago arts organizations. This new institution will be located in renovated spaces at Chicago's historic Fine Arts Building, 410 S. Michigan Avenue.

CHRP will develop ARC, a collaborative effort to foster community growth through rhythmic expression, in several phases. The aim is to offer diverse, high-quality dance and movement classes to the general public while centralizing the education programs, rehearsal space and administrative offices of several core groups, as well as additional emerging companies and independent artists.

The idea for ARC grew from a CHRP strategic planning process followed by intensive, collaborative planning with participating community partners, including:

- [Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre](#)
- [Chicago Chinese Cultural Institute](#)
- [Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras](#) (already in residence at the Fine Arts Building)
- [Giordano Dance Chicago](#)
- [Kalapriya, Center for Indian Performing Arts](#)
- [Luna Negra Dance Theater](#)
- [Ping Pong Productions](#), which facilitates collaborations between Chinese and international artists
- [River North Dance Chicago](#) (studio space to expand educational programs)

In the first phase of development, CHRP is updating space occupied for three decades by the Boitsov Ballet, which will feature three professional, flexible-use studios ranging from 750 to 1,500 square feet, as well as a remodeled lobby, dressing rooms and a separate floor of administrative offices. In the second and third phases, CHRP will add supplemental program space, a black box theater and updated administrative facilities. Limited operations will begin at the end of July in conjunction with CHRP's 22nd annual [Rhythm World Festival](#); a grand opening with all the partners will take place in early September.

CHRP's ARC will provide a long-term platform for stability and growth in several key areas by:

- addressing the near-universal need among small and mid-sized dance and other arts organizations for professional administrative, rehearsal and education spaces as well as a desire to unify as many organizational functions as possible in a single location
- creating a venue that will allow arts organizations to develop and maximize earned income from tuition-based education programs while lessening reliance on subsidies
- enabling longer-term program planning as well as enhancing the potential scope and impact of tuition-based education programs
- attracting thousands of students from Chicago, the U.S. and around the world to study dance in Chicago's emerging dance corridor, furthering Mayor Rahm Emanuel's vision for Chicago as a center for dance

- education and performance
- managing the facility, mitigating many users' current space management burdens

“We are proposing to alter the traditional business model by offering arts groups the opportunity to shift their reliance on contributed income and dwindling revenue from ticket sales to self-sustaining revenue via educational programming,” commented CHRP Founder and Director Lane Alexander, who had the original vision for ARC. “The value proposition for most people has changed, and making art has become more nourishing than watching others make art. CHRP’s ARC will serve a two-fold purpose: to offer world-class dance instruction for the public and provide a stable platform for small and medium-sized nonprofit companies in Chicago’s emerging dance corridor.”

According to new CHRP Executive Director Frank Sonntag, who recently led the opening of the Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts in Minneapolis, “Lane’s vision is all about creating a collaborative environment with shared resources, which will provide the partnering organizations with a creative hub and educational platform greater than the sum of its parts. I think such efforts will become more commonplace and integral to capacity-building efforts throughout the arts and culture field in the future.”

### **Funding**

CHRP’s ARC has raised more than \$1 million to date as part of a multi-phased \$2.5 million capital start-up campaign. Jenner & Block LLP has provided pro bono legal support. Major funding for capital and start-up operations has been provided by Elaine Cohen and Arlen Rubin, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, The Joyce Foundation and The Boeing Company, with additional support from Pamela Crutchfield, The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, The MacArthur Fund for the Arts and Culture at Prince, Arts Work Fund for Organizational Development, the James. S. Kemper Foundation, the Illinois Arts Council, matching funds from the Polk Bros. Foundation through IFF, Jenner & Block LLP and many generous individuals.

CHRP Board President and ARC lead donor Elaine Cohen said, “It is very exciting for us to think of how much vitality ARC will add to Chicago—providing myriad opportunities not only to CHRP but to a host of ARC resident companies as well as tourists and the public looking to participate in an amazing variety of dance class offerings taught by professionals.”

### **About Chicago Human Rhythm Project**

Founded in 1990, [Chicago Human Rhythm Project](#) (CHRP) builds community by presenting American tap dance and contemporary percussive arts in world-class and innovative performance, education and community outreach programs. During the last 22 years, CHRP has produced multiple community-based collaborations involving shared revenue programs, concerts and touring opportunities, including:

- annual National Tap Dance Day concerts, featuring an array of tap and percussive dance artists
- a shared revenue program designed to assist Chicago’s budding tap community to build capacity through audience development, created in 2001
- Thanks 4 Giving, another innovative shared revenue program launched in 2005 as part of its annual Global Rhythms concerts at the Harris Theater, through which CHRP has partnered with more than 100 Chicago-based nonprofits to raise funds for a wide variety of service agencies
- participation in the 5th Anniversary Beijing International Dance Festival, assembling 70 artists to represent the United States

CHRP’s vision is to establish the first global center for American tap and percussive arts, which will create a complete ecosystem of education, performance, creation and community in a state-of-the-art facility uniting generations of diverse artists and the general public.

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