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Vermillion Arts Orgs Featured in New David J. Sencer CDC Museum Exhibition about the Power of the Arts in Public Health Outreach

“Trusted Messengers” exhibition showcases diverse and innovative works of art created to promote confidence in COVID-19 vaccines

Vermillion, S.D. — Through a unique partnership between public health and the arts, the Vermillion Cultural Association (VCA) together with Creative Care, LLC were among 30 arts and culture organizations that received support from the CDC [Foundation](#) and the National Endowment for the Arts to develop works of art to educate the public and inspire confidence in COVID-19 vaccines. The participating organizations used their chosen art forms to translate public health information about the safety and importance of immunizations into an accessible, memorable and diverse body of work. An exhibition at the David J. Sencer CDC Museum in Atlanta, GA, titled *Trusted Messengers: Building Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccines Through Art*, is now showcasing original pieces from six of these organizations, including VCA and Creative Care’s The Barn Quilt Project: South Dakota Strong.

“The Vermillion Cultural Association is now doubly honored to have been a support to such a worthy community Arts & Health project,” said VCA board president Susan Heggstad.

On display at the CDC Museum are colorful paper quilt squares arranged on wires to mimic the design of a fabric quilt in the Barn Quilt Project installation. Artists from Creative Care drew on a long, cross-cultural tradition of quilting in the region by traveling throughout nine communities across the state in 2022, including rural areas and tribal reservations, to help South Dakotans craft these geometric designs. At local events, participants were invited to share their own pandemic experiences, and their personal stories of resilience can be found on the back of each paper quilt square.

“To have South Dakotans’ work showcased in the CDC exhibition is a strong validation of the effort and heart we put into every mile we drove, every conversation we had, and every nine-square quilt made,” said project leader and Creative Care owner Ariadne Albright. She continued, “The strength of this hands-on art project seems to be the beauty of the fine art papers, the challenge of the quilt design patterns, and the sense of community built among people who came out to work with us.”

“Our talented partner organizations have created meaningful, innovative projects that engaged and informed community members,” said Catherine Zilber, MSc, vice president

for infectious disease programs at the CDC Foundation. “This new exhibition features impressive art and uplifting messaging that demonstrates the crucial role the arts can play in communicating about important public health issues.”

Trusted Messengers: Building Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccines Through Art exhibition will run through spring 2023 and features work from Studio Two Three in Richmond, VA; Saint Louis Story Stitchers Artists Collective in St. Louis, MO; West Michigan Center for Arts + Technology in Grand Rapids, MI; Community Music School of Springfield and the Springfield Cultural Partnership in Springfield, MA; and the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, AL.

For more information about the exhibition or the David J. Sencer CDC Museum, please visit its [website](#).

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Instagram and Facebook @barnquiltprojectSD

About the Vermillion Cultural Association

The Vermillion Cultural Association is a community-based nonprofit dedicated to making Vermillion the creative center of the region by developing and supporting cultural opportunities for the community. The VCA independently owns and operates the region’s only first-run movie theater, the Coyote Twin, and regularly features local artists in the First Dakota Coyote Gallery, Vermillion’s premiere rotating art space. For more information and to preview upcoming events, please visit vermculture.org.

About Ariadne Albright and Creative Care, LLC

Ariadne Albright, MFA, owner of Creative Care, LLC. She is Arts Program Coordinator at Sanford Vermillion Medical Center, initiated the arts in health curriculum within the College of Fine Arts at USD, served as a founding board member and chair of the Professionalization Committee of the National Organization of Arts in Health (NOAH), and is an active roster artist with the South Dakota Arts Council’s Artists in the Schools and Communities Program. The 2020 publication of her first book, *Creative Care: An Artist in Healthcare*, records her experiences and best practices. For more information, please visit creativecarellc.com.