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2019 Arts Award Winners

*Artist in Residence* & *the Nancy Coumoundouros Distinguished Service to the Arts Awards*

The Farmington Area Arts Commission has announced the recipients of the 2019 Artist in Residence Award and the Nancy Coumoundouros Distinguished Service to the Arts Award. The recipients will be honored at the Festival of the Arts Reception and Awards Ceremony on Friday, April 12 at the Costick Center at 28600 W. Eleven Mile Road in Farmington Hills. The reception starts at 6 p.m. with the ceremony following at 7 p.m.

The event marks the 43rd year of recognizing excellence in the arts in the Farmington community. The Artist in Residence Award is given each year to a resident of Farmington or Farmington Hills who displays exceptional talent and artistic accomplishments. The Nancy Coumoundouros Distinguished Service to the Arts Award recognizes outstanding service to the community in the creative arts by a group or individual.

The 2019 Artist in Residence will be awarded to Farmington resident Pamela Alexander, a talented visual artist who works primarily with acrylic paint on canvas. Alexander studied art at Oakland Community College, Art History at U of M Dearborn, and received her Bachelor of Arts from Madonna University. "My natural inclinations as a child were to draw, color, and paint. I was nurtured by my artist parents," said Alexander. "I am so grateful for this honor and will do everything I am able to serve the arts and artists in this community in the year to come." Artwork by Pamela Alexander is currently on display through 2020 in the Farmington Hills Public Art Program at City Hall.

The 2019 Nancy Coumoundouros Distinguished Service to the Arts Award will be presented to two recipients this year - Brenda Gold-Sloan, Middle School Music Teacher for Farmington Public Schools, and the Farmington Community Library.

Brenda Gold-Sloan is the Director of Choirs at Warner Middle School and has been a public school educator for over 32 years. She has served students and families in the Olivet, Flint, Detroit, and Southfield School Districts. In 1995, Mrs. Gold-Sloan joined the FPS Family. Prior to Warner, she taught General and Choral Music at Gill Elementary, Flanders Elementary, and Dunckel Middle School. Mrs. Gold-Sloan’s professional activities also include serving as a choral clinician, private voice and piano instructor, church music director, conducting the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra in joint concert with the Christian Tabernacle Church Choir, and mentoring student teachers. She has received recognition for completing the Michigan Galileo Leadership Academy, and was a recipient of WNIC’s Women Who Make Magic Award. Her students have enjoyed First Division and Excellent ratings at Solo, Ensemble, and Choral District Festivals sponsored by the Michigan School Vocal Music Association.
Mrs. Gold-Sloan holds a Bachelor of Arts in Vocal Music Education from Olivet College, and a Master of Arts in Vocal Music Education from Eastern Michigan University, including a thesis entitled “A Study of the Similarities Between Two Types of Black Music: The Spiritual and Gospel.”

“Music can stimulate creativity, imagination, and even shape the character of a person,” said Gold-Sloan. “There is no greater joy for me than when I witness my students reveal their passion, sensitivity, and love through the music-making experience.”

The Farmington Community Library is a proud supporter of the Arts and provides a platform for artists of all disciplines to share their work with the community. The FCL has become known as a great place to experience music with their monthly Sunday Concert series showcasing a variety of music styles. The Community Sings series, led by 2016 Farmington Area Artist in Residence Matt Watroba, provides people of all ages and abilities the opportunity to connect through song. The FCL also provides a venue for the visual arts, hosts a twice yearly International Film series, and is home to the monthly Fiber Fans and Quilting groups.

“As a library and cultural institution, we are strongly committed to encouraging the appreciation and creation of literature. Each year, in collaboration with other area libraries, we participate in the Everyone's Reading program, bringing the community together through the shared experience of reading a selected book and attending a visit by the author,” said FCL Director Elyse Streit. “Our monthly Writers' Group and annual involvement in National Novel Writing Month encourages the development of local community writers.”

The public is invited to celebrate the 2019 Award Winners at the Festival of the Arts Awards Ceremony. The event is open to all ages, with delicious appetizers, a cash bar (21+), and music. Tickets are only $10 per person when purchased by April 5 or $15 per person beginning April 6. Purchase tickets at https://recreg.fhgov.com or at the Costick Center. For more information, call 248-473-1848.

The Festival of the Arts is produced annually by the Farmington Hills Special Services Department/Cultural Arts Division, the Farmington Community Arts Council, Farmington Public Schools, and the Farmington Area Arts Commission. The 2019 Festival of the Arts is made possible in part by the generous support of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Education Foundation. For more information, visit www.farmingtonarts.org.

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