**Inaugural Wills for the Arts Clinic Benefits Local Arts Employees**

**For Immediate Release**

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**Norfolk, VA –** **Mar. 1, 2019 - The Business Consortium for Arts Support (BCAS) will host its inaugural pro-bono estate planning clinic to benefit local arts employees. The** **March 6, 2019 event will be held at the Robin Hixon Theatre from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.**

Volunteer attorneys from Williams Mullen, Kaufman & Canoles, and Willcox Savage will lend their expertise to help prepare wills, durable general powers of attorney and advance medical directives. Law students from the College of William & Mary and Regent University will assist with preparation of the documents at the event.

The goal of this service is to create new ways to support the arts in the region with more one-on-one opportunities from donors.  “The BCAS’ members are constantly working to find ways to support our local arts organizations other than in just dollars and cents.  We think that tapping into the BCAS members’ skills to provide services like this to the arts organizations’ artists and employees is a terrific way to accomplish that goal,” said Shane Smith of Williams Mullen and the BCAS’ Board of Directors.

Clinic participants will include employees from Virginia Arts Festival, Virginia Stage Company, The Chrysler Museum, The Generic Theater and Young Audiences of Virginia.

“The Festival’s varied sponsors and supporters help us in so many ways, but this innovative opportunity and in-kind donation is so beneficial to our employees,” said Robert W. Cross, Virginia Arts Festival Executive Director. “Having attorneys willing to offer their estate planning services to our hard-working staff is a great reward, and we are grateful to be able to participate.”

The BCAS hopes to host the clinic annually as many arts organizations in the area have a high turnover rate.  “Most of these hardworking employees are in the arts because of their love of the craft and not for the typically modest paychecks.  It’s nice to provide this important service to people who need it,” said Lisa Doud, Executive Director of the BCAS.

**About the Business Consortium for Arts Support:**
Through annual grants, the BCAS helps arts and cultural groups meet the costs of running their organizations. One of the greatest strengths of a vibrant arts community is its ability to attract new business. The South Hampton Roads area of Virginia is proud to have an active and growing cultural community.  The arts in this area reach audiences of more than 1 million people annually.

The Business Consortium for Arts Support has contributed nearly $24 million in unrestricted operating support to 65 arts and cultural organizations since its establishment in 1987.  This investment has guaranteed that arts programs continue to inspire our children with hands-on education, keep our theatres, stages and museums filled with extraordinary art and performances, and make our region attractive to business and industry needed to grow and prosper. Funds for the grants are provided by area businesses and foundations that generously contribute to the BCAS. For more information, visit www.bcartsupport.org, or follow the BCAS on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/bcartsupport) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/BCAS30).

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