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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EASTERN KENTUCKY THEATER INSTITUTE DESIGNED TO INCREASE COMMUNITIES’ CAPACITY TO TELL THEIR OWN STORY

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CUMBERLAND, KENTUCKY: Higher Ground and Cowan Creek Community Theater Group, in collaboration with Clearfork Creative, will host the first Hurricane Gap Community Theater Institute (HGCTI) July 19-24 at Pine Mountain Settlement School in Harlan County, Kentucky. The Hurricane Gap Community Theater Institute will include four days of workshops for all interested in improving their community’s capacity to present theater based on local stories and incorporating local music. Workshops will be led by theater professionals from across the country. Scheduled workshops include workshops in lighting design led by Peter Kallok, directing led by Richard Geer, acting led by Robert Martin, story collecting and script writing led by Anne Shelby, community music led by Paula Larke, and choreography led by Kevin Iega Jeff. The Kentucky Arts Council will also lead a day long workshop on cultural assets mapping on Friday July 22nd.

The Institute will include performances by five community story play practitioners. On Friday July 22nd, The Cowan Creek Community Theater Group from Letcher County, Monkey Dumplings from Clay County, Kentucky, and Harlan County’s Higher Ground will perform. On Saturday, July 23rd, Homesongs from Owsley County, Kentucky, as well as Divine Urban eXpressions from Knoxville, Tennessee will perform. Performances will take place at Cowan Community Center in Letcher County, Kentucky, and at the Godbey Appalachian Center in Cumberland, Kentucky.

Higher Ground, a community arts program in Harlan County, Kentucky, is the primary organizer of HGCTI and is based at the Appalachian Program at Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College. Higher Ground, in collaboration with theater artists from around the country, has created five original plays over the past ten years incorporating local stories, music, and actors.

The Hurricane Gap Community Theater Institute is open to all interested individuals and groups. Conference registrations are $175 per person, and include food, lodging, and admission to all workshops and events. Scholarships are available, as is a day rate of $50 per day. Enrollment is limited. For more information on the Hurricane Gap Community Theater Institute, contact Robert Gipe at 606-589-3130 or [robert.gipe@kctcs.edu](mailto:robert.gipe@kctcs.edu). Hurricane Gap Community Theater Institute is funded in part by the Kentucky Arts Council, Berea College Partners in Education, and the Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College Appalachian Program.