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California College of the Arts Announces \$4.7 Million in Gifts to Support Diversity, Equity and Innovation in Arts & Design Fields

Gensler and the Gensler family invest in greater diversity and innovation in architecture each donating \$1 million to establish new academic center

Three additional organizations gift \$2.7 million to create more than 20 scholarships for students of diverse backgrounds

SAN FRANCISCO (October 18, 2022) — [California College of the Arts](#) (CCA) announces \$4.7 million in gifts from four organizations to support diversity, equity and innovation in the arts and design fields. CCA has received a \$1 million gift from the Gensler family and a \$1 million gift from [Gensler](#), the award-winning global architecture, design and planning firm, to establish the **M. Arthur Gensler Jr. Center for Design Excellence**. The gifts will extend over ten years with the mission to inspire and support design excellence in architectural education, research and practice while promoting diversity, social justice and environmental sustainability.

California College of the Arts (CCA) also announces three additional scholarship programs that support the enrollment of more than 20 students from diverse backgrounds to pursue degrees in the arts and design. These programs are made possible by recent gifts totaling more than \$2.7 million from Amazon, Z SUPPLY Foundation, and an anonymous donor.

“At California College of the Arts, we know that diverse perspectives and experiences are critical to innovation, and that educating students from diverse backgrounds is essential to realizing the full potential of art and design to positively impact the future of our communities,” said **Stephen Beal**, president of CCA. “These valued organizations share our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in the arts and design, and their investment in CCA’s mission and the potential of our talented students is significant. Together, we are empowering talented students from historically underinvested communities to focus not only on their education but on becoming creative leaders who will make powerful contributions to shape our world.”

CCA invests approximately \$16M annually in scholarships that specifically support enrollment of undergraduate and graduate students from diverse backgrounds. For more than 20 years, CCA has directed substantial institutional resources to this purpose. CCA enrolls students from 41 countries and 43 states and is ranked among the top 25 most diverse colleges in the U.S. Among CCA’s current student

body, 25% are the first in their families to attend college; 34% are eligible for Pell Grants; and 85% of students receive financial aid or scholarships.

M. Arthur Gensler Jr. Center for Design Excellence

The multi-faceted **M. Arthur Gensler Jr. Center for Design Excellence** will support and enrich learning, teaching, and research in CCA's Architecture Division. With a focus on making design education and practice more diverse, equitable, and inclusive, the Center will support the academic and professional success of students from diverse backgrounds through tuition scholarships, mentoring, and career development support. The first cohort of Gensler Center scholarship recipients will receive awards this year.

Curriculum development grants and research fellowships will further CCA's commitment to connecting students directly to [innovative faculty research](#) on the most pressing issues of the day—both social and environmental. The Center also will fund public programs that expose both the students and the wider design community to leading architects, designers, and thinkers. The Center will be led by CCA Dean of Architecture [Keith Krumwiede](#).

“Gensler has a long history of supporting and encouraging a more diverse and innovative community in architecture and design, which originated with our late founder Art Gensler,” said **Robin Klehr Avia**, chair of the Gensler charitable giving fund and a member of Gensler's board of directors. “Both CCA and Gensler believe the future of design depends on cultivating a multiplicity of ideas and influence. We are proud to honor Art's legacy by providing faculty support, scholarships, and mentorships within the community and other educational and professional opportunities for a diverse array of CCA students to help them become the design leaders of the future.”

“Art was passionate about the profession of design and had a lifelong commitment to diversity. His personal involvement with CCA reflected his desire to support the profession and provide opportunity for the next generation of design talent,” said David Gensler, former co-CEO of Gensler. “The Gensler Family is proud to continue our support for CCA and to honor his spirit of giving.”

Art Gensler was a visionary in the architecture and interior design world, believing design should be created from the inside out. Art also believed that architecture not only contributes measurably to the communities and organizations it serves, but also that it has the power to transform everyday life. He served on the board of CCA for 11 years, until his death in 2021.

The new Center arrives at a critical point and represents a significant industry and academic partnership to address architecture's general lack of diversity and to invest in the future of higher education in the arts and design. Nationally, only 7.2% of holders of architecture degrees identified as Black, with Black or African American women making up less than 1% of that, according to [2022 data](#) from the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards.

Amazon CCA Scholarships

The Amazon CCA Scholarships are providing a total of \$100,000 to two CCA students from the Bay Area. One who is studying game arts and another in fashion design will receive \$50,000 each, to be awarded over four years.

“Amazon works to support students from diverse economic backgrounds in fields that inspire innovation and creativity. We believe deeply in the power of investing in communities where we live and work,” said **Sally Kay**, regional head of public policy and external affairs for Amazon. “We chose to create these scholarships at the California College of the Arts to celebrate two Bay Area students and to provide opportunities that otherwise may not have been possible for these talented local scholars. Amazon believes that size and scale bring broad responsibility. As a San Francisco employer, this means we work each day to make things better for our customers, our employees, and our communities. While we know there will always be more that we can do, we strive to leave things better than we found them.”

Z Supply Foundation Scholarship

[Z SUPPLY Foundation](#), the philanthropic arm of the online clothing retailer co-founded by a CCA alum, has pledged \$100,000 to establish an endowed scholarship in perpetuity and direct cash funding for the first two years of the scholarship, starting in the current 2022-23 academic year. The Z SUPPLY Foundation scholarship at CCA will provide funding support to students who bring diverse experiences, ideas, and creative work to the CCA community as they pursue degrees in fashion, art, and design.

“The education I received at CCA was invaluable, giving me the knowledge, skills, and confidence throughout my career in the apparel industry,” said **Greg Garrett**, co-CEO of Z SUPPLY and CCA class of 1975. “As an expression of gratitude for that experience, and in commitment to the community, Z SUPPLY wants to give back by helping support future designers in their pursuit of degrees at CCA.”

Twenty Scholarships from Anonymous Donor

A gift of \$2.5 million from an anonymous donor based in the Bay Area supports full, four-year scholarships to students of low-income backgrounds. These scholarships cover tuition and on-campus housing and will ultimately fund 20 CCA students over the course of eight years.

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About Gensler: [Gensler](#) is a global architecture, design, and planning firm with 52 locations across Asia, Europe, Australia, the Middle East, and the Americas. Founded in 1965, the firm serves over 3,300 active clients in virtually every industry. Guided by determined optimism, Gensler believes the power of design can spark positive change and create a future that promotes equity, resilience, and wellbeing for everyone.

About Amazon: Amazon is guided by four principles: customer obsession rather than competitor focus, passion for invention, commitment to operational excellence, and long-term thinking. Customer reviews, 1-Click shopping, personalized recommendations, Prime, Fulfillment by Amazon, AWS, Kindle Direct Publishing, Kindle, Fire tablets, Fire TV, Amazon Echo, and Alexa are some of the products and services pioneered by Amazon. For more information, visit amazon.com/about and follow @AmazonNews.

About [Z SUPPLY Foundation](#): With the mantra “We’re all in this together,” Z SUPPLY launched its philanthropic arm, the Z SUPPLY Foundation, in 2021. The foundation is committed to supporting social, environmental, and educational qualified tax-exempt 501(c)3 public charities in the United States. Each year the foundation will have a specific focus. In 2021, the foundation focused its efforts on educational opportunities by allocating 100% of Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and Giving Tuesday proceeds to creating specifically tailored Z SUPPLY Foundation scholarships.

About [California College of the Arts](#): Founded in 1907, California College of the Arts (CCA) educates students to shape culture and society through the practice and critical study of art, architecture, design, and writing. Benefitting from its San Francisco Bay Area location, the college prepares students for lifelong creative work by cultivating innovation, community engagement, and social and environmental responsibility.

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