



MetLife Foundation

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**NEFA'S NATIONAL DANCE PROJECT ADVANCES
CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

MetLife Foundation's Fifth Year of Funding Continues Program's Impact

(BOSTON – April 6, 2011) New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) announced today that it has received a \$275,000 award from MetLife Foundation. The funding will support the MetLife Community Connections Fund of NEFA's National Dance Project (NDP), which enables communities across the U.S. to experience the work of professional dance artists.

This is the fifth year that NEFA has received support from MetLife Foundation, which to date has provided over \$1.3 million in funding for the program, and supports more than 60 community engagement activities each year, including workshops, master classes, performances, lecture/demonstrations, and collaborations with local schools. "MetLife's support helps us extend avenues of access to some of the most exciting contemporary dance around," said NEFA executive director Rebecca Blunk. Funding has supported the tours in previous years to companies including Philadanco, Doug Varone and Dancers, and Eiko & Koma, among many others.

"Making arts more accessible to diverse communities throughout the country is a cornerstone of MetLife Foundation," said Dennis White, president and CEO of MetLife Foundation. "We are proud of our partnership with NEFA and pleased to continue our support for their community programs, helping to bring dance to new audiences."

Since 1996, NDP has been a primary system of support for the contemporary dance field, supporting the production and touring of new dance works. In a field that has been historically under-funded, NDP is the only national program supporting individual dance artists and companies, whether established, emerging, culturally-specific, or experimental. To date, NDP has supported the creation of over 225 new dance works, partnering directly with more than 300 U.S. presenters to connect with audiences in all 50 states. Each year, 25 to 30 different dance projects are featured in engagements in an average of 250 communities across the country. Additional funds for NDP are provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Boeing Company Charitable Trust.

About the MetLife Foundation

MetLife Foundation was established by MetLife to carry on its longstanding tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. Grants are made to support health, educational, civic and cultural organizations and programs throughout the country. MetLife Foundation contributes to arts and culture organizations, with an emphasis on increasing opportunities for young people, reaching broader audiences through inclusive programming and making arts more accessible for all people. For more information about the Foundation, please visit its web site at www.metlife.org.

About New England Foundation for the Arts

NEFA creatively supports the movement of people, ideas, and resources in the arts within New England and beyond, makes vital connections between artists and communities, and builds the strength, knowledge, and leadership of the region's creative sector. NEFA is a nonprofit that operates with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New England state arts agencies, and from corporations, foundations and individuals.

NEFA administers grantmaking programs of regional, national, and international scope that support the performing arts, public art, and Native American artists. NEFA also leads projects and initiatives that range from the analysis of the impact of the creative economy to the creation of online tools which link and advance the cultural community. For more information, please visit www.nefa.org or call 617.951.0010.