



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Bellforge Arts Center awarded \$1,475,000 in grants from
The Barr Foundation, Mass Cultural Council, and MassDevelopment**

Medfield, MA November 18, 2022 - Bellforge Arts Center is pleased to announce that it has been awarded three grants from **The Barr Foundation, Mass Cultural Council, and MassDevelopment**. The grants, totalling \$1,475,000, will directly support Bellforge's bold efforts to recast the core buildings and grounds of the former Medfield State Hospital into a vibrant regional resource alive with intergenerational activity and creative energy.

"Our first full season of programming exceeded our expectations in every way with 10,000 guests attending our events. Clearly there is strong demand in MetroWest for a regional multiarts center! Our supporters, and generous grants like these, will help us raise the funds we need to make Bellforge a reality," explains **Jean Mineo, Executive Director of Bellforge Arts Center**.

In year one of its programming, Bellforge welcomed a diverse creative talent and hosted performances that transformed the grounds and energized a broad community of supporters. These grants will propel Bellforge forward in its plans to renovate the historic Lee Chapel and Infirmary and continue developing innovative outdoor programming on the surrounding grounds.

The MA Cultural Facilities Fund, provided by Mass Cultural Council, provides major improvement grants to nonprofit cultural organizations, in recognition of their profound economic impact on communities across Massachusetts. Bellforge is honored to have been awarded \$200,000 that will directly support the design and construction phase beginning this winter.

Funding of \$600,000 provided through MassDevelopment's Underutilized Properties program will enable critical stabilization and remediation of the historic Lee Chapel in advance of architectural and engineering work, permitting, bidding, construction, inspections, and desired program uses.

Bellforge is committed to the pursuit of artistic excellence in programming. Through The Barr Foundation's Arts and Creativity grant of \$675,000 over three years, Bellforge can fund programming, a new hire to support community engagement and partnerships, and a feasibility study – all of which will elevate the arts, foster deeper community connections, and stimulate creative expression on the Bellforge campus.

Thanks to the support of grants, donors, and the public at large, Bellforge is advancing its ambitious goal of restoring its historic buildings and creating a regional arts treasure. The organization aims to raise approximately \$25 million for the first phase of its development, including the restoration, renovation, and development of the Chapel and Infirmary buildings plus supporting staff and organizational infrastructure.

For more information about Bellforge Arts Center, please contact Jean Mineo at (617) 877-5158 or at jmineo@bellforge.org.

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Bellforge Arts Center is a new multi-arts complex being built on the grounds of the former Medfield State Hospital to support artists, expand cultural opportunities, and nurture the creative community. Bellforge currently offers outdoor concerts, festivals, and community events, along with over 200 miles of nature trails and outdoor recreation space. Once fully renovated, the center will also offer visual and performing arts studios, arts education, a 300-seat performance venue, and more.

The Barr Foundation's mission is to invest in human, natural, and creative potential, serving as thoughtful stewards and catalysts. As stewards, Barr nurtures vital community assets. As catalysts, the Foundation advances breakthrough ideas to shape our collective future. Based in Boston, Barr focuses regionally and selectively engages nationally. They work in partnership with nonprofits, foundations, the public sector, and civic and business leaders to elevate the arts and creative expression, advance solutions for climate change, and connect all students to success in high school and beyond.

Mass Cultural Council is a state agency that promotes excellence, inclusion, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences, fosters a rich cultural life for all Massachusetts residents, and contributes to the vitality of our communities and economy. The Council pursues this mission through a wide range of grants, initiatives, and advocacy for artists, communities, organizations, and schools.

MassDevelopment, the state's development finance agency and land bank, works with businesses, nonprofits, banks, and communities to stimulate economic growth across the Commonwealth. During FY2022, MassDevelopment financed or managed 356 projects generating investment of more than \$1.69 billion in the Massachusetts economy. These projects are estimated to create or support 11,080 jobs and build or preserve 1,778 housing units.