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Watters Creek Honored for Art Partnership

by Lisa Beach

With a tagline of uniting commerce and culture, the Business Council for the Arts gives the Obelisk Awards each year to recognize companies as well as business and arts leaders for invaluable contributions supporting arts and culture in North Texas. Each year, only a handful of honorees win this highly respected award, showcasing the incredible, community-enhancing alliance between businesses and the arts. This year, thanks to a long-standing partnership with The Allen Arts Alliance, Watters Creek earned a 2016 Obelisk Arts Partnership Award.

"Now in its 28th year, The Obelisk Awards reflect a pantheon of businesses large and small that have made this region one of the nation's most creatively vibrant," said Dotti Reeder, co-chair of the 2016 Obelisk Awards. More than 200 honorees have received this coveted award over the years, including Texas Instruments, American Airlines, Mary Kay, Inc., Target, and Gardere.

At a November 7 awards ceremony held at the Belo Mansion in the Dallas Arts District, Watters Creek, along with nine other honorees, received the prestigious Obelisk Award, a hand-blown glass sculpture designed by noted Dallas artist Jim Bowman of Bowman Glass Studios.

The ceremony's keynote speaker, Ryan Anthony, Principal Trumpet of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, notes, "I am grateful to the businesses that recognize and support the importance of arts in our community. They are the reason the symphony, the museums, and the entire Arts District are able to exist and make Dallas such a wonderful place to live and work."

Kathy Litinas of the Allen Philharmonic Orchestra & Symphony Chorus agrees.

"We wouldn't be where we are today without that partnership," says Litinas, who serves as chairperson of The Allen Arts Alliance, the umbrella organization for nearly a dozen cultural groups that include ballet, theater, orchestra, chorus, performing and visual arts, friends of the library, heritage guild, and more.

"When we became a 501(c)3 we wondered how we were going to define our place in the community," explains Litinas. "As a new nonprofit, the Alliance was just getting started. We saw that Trademark (the property management company) had successful arts programs at their other centers, and we loved the ambience of their Watters Creek property, which created a real gathering place for the community."

Watters Creek immediately jumped on board, seeing the potential and embracing the partnership from the very beginning.

"The Alliance needed a space to get more exposure for its various groups," says Debra Martinez, Watters Creek Marketing Director. "So we provided a space, called Blue House Too, that gives them a venue for many inspiring and diverse community events."

Blue House Too functions primarily as a vibrant art gallery, hosting exhibits by local artists and art students. However, the venue also allows the Alliance to host art classes and events such as poetry slams, music nights, movie viewings, and facilitates its work with the school district.

Litinas often sees first-hand how the Alliance impacts young artists.

"At one of our events called Artropolis, a father brought his son to the gallery. They had just moved from Chicago, and the boy was very shy and feeling new to the community," recalls Litinas. "Well, the boy's artwork was selected as part of Artropolis, and his grandparents were visiting from out of town, and got to visit the exhibit. That little boy was so proud as he walked in with his grandparents that weekend, into a gallery setting. It really made him feel part of the community."

And that is just one of many reasons why Watters Creek proudly partners with The Allen Arts Alliance.

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-Kathy Litinas, Chair, Allen Arts Alliance



ON THE COVER

'Tis the season to shop, dine and celebrate the season!

Models (left to right) Beilul and Daria share some laughs while shopping at Watters Creek.

Beilul is wearing the Creme Thermal Long Sleeve Top, Olive Green Suede Skirt and Tan Tassel Necklace from Altar'd State.

Daria is wearing the Maroon Long Sleeve Dress, Sleeveless Kimono in White, Gold Dream Catcher Necklace and Nude Floppy Hat also from Altar'd State.

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