



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor Wolf Announces Funding to House the Erie Center for Arts and Technology in the Old Wayne School Building

The renovated structure will provide job training, health services and more

Harrisburg, PA – Governor Tom Wolf today announced that Commonwealth Cornerstone Group has completed a New Markets Tax Credit transaction of \$9.5 million with the Erie Center for Arts and Technology (ECAT) to transform the mostly vacant Wayne School building into a new resource for the community. The renovated building will become a community hub for job training, health care, social services and the arts through a mixed tenant base.

One of the anchor tenants will be the Wayne Primary Care Clinic operated by Primary Health Network (PHN), which offers medical treatment with payment on a sliding scale for low-income patients in Erie County. The clinic will be expanding its footprint in the building from 4,200 to 17,000 square feet. This will allow the addition of expanded primary health care services, specialty medical offices and a pharmacy.

Another 17,000 square feet will be used by ECAT to provide expanded high school classes in photography and digital arts, as well as adult job training programs. ECAT will be the second anchor tenant in the building.

A 2,500 square foot gymnasium and gallery space will host community events and art exhibits, and it will be available for rent. The remaining 17,000 square feet will be available for commercial lease to social service providers offering services requested by the local residents. United Way of Erie County has already committed to having offices in the building.

“The Erie Center for Arts and Technology is proposing an exciting and innovative plan for taking a vastly underused space and transforming it into a community resource of real value,” said Gov. Wolf. “The programs and services that will be offered there will greatly benefit people by offering much-needed education, job training and health care.”

ECAT works to provide visual arts programming for high school students and job training to adults living in the city who are unemployed or under-employed. ECAT’s training and development classes will be offered at no cost and be selected based on local job needs identified through discussions with local employers in industries including advanced manufacturing, healthcare and business. ECAT will leverage

existing relationships with employers to assist with job placement and job retention for its students.

“There is a tremendous need for job training in Erie, and this renovated building will provide an ideal location for getting that done,” said PHFA Executive Director and CEO Robin Wiessmann. “By dividing the space in the building among various tenants providing different services, the Erie Center for Arts and Technology makes the project more financially feasible while smartly meeting local needs.”

This project is expected to create 32 temporary, full-time construction jobs. Following construction, the various employers in the building are expected to create 29 jobs and retain 38 jobs paying between \$20.75 and \$23 an hour. The MIT living wage for Erie County is \$12.15 an hour. According to economic estimates, the project’s construction costs will support eight indirect jobs, and employers in the renovated building will support seven indirect jobs.

“ECAT is excited to launch this extensive renovation of a landmark building on Erie’s eastside, and we look forward to working closely with neighbors and residents of the area to meet their needs,” said Daria Devlin, executive director of the Erie Center for Arts and Technology. “We are extremely grateful to PHFA, CCG and all of our lending partners for making this project possible.”

About the Erie Center for Arts and Technology

ECAT is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community-based educational arts and career training facility. It is an affiliate of the National Center for the Arts and Technology. ECAT presents two platforms for engagement with Erie’s at-risk youth and adults. First, visual arts-based education offered during out-of-school time for high school students who are most at risk of dropping out. This includes photography, ceramics, digital and design arts intended to grow 21st Century skills. Second, industry-driven workforce training in middle skills, middle wage jobs for unemployed and under-employed adults in Erie County.

About Commonwealth Cornerstone Group

The goal of CCG, through its administration of New Markets Tax Credits, is to fund projects in key areas of communities that have historic or cultural value and offer opportunities to spark economic revitalization. CCG utilizes NMTCs to provide loans and equity investments for business expansion, mixed-use development, and community facilities across Pennsylvania. Examples of past developments that have benefited from CCG’s investment of tax credits include Mill 19 at Almona in Pittsburgh, the Susquehanna Health Innovation Center in Williamsport and Eastern Tower in Philadelphia. Learn more at: www.commonwealthcornerstone.org/.

About the New Markets Tax Credit Program

The New Markets Tax Credit Program was established by Congress in 2000 to spur new or increased investments in operating businesses and real estate projects located in low-income communities. The NMTC Program attracts investment capital to low-

income communities by permitting individual and corporate investors to receive a tax credit against their federal income tax return in exchange for making equity investments in specialized financial institutions called community development entities, such as Commonwealth Cornerstone Group. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

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