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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Venice Arts awarded prestigious, two-year National Endowment for the Arts grant for **Free Art Programs at Mar Vista Gardens Housing Project**

WHAT: The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) announced last week that it has awarded a \$35,000, two-year grant to Venice Arts to support the expansion of its highly regarded photography, writing, and media arts programs for youth living at Mar Vista Gardens, a low-income housing development in the Mar Vista area.

According to Venice Arts' Assistant Director, Alexa Adamo, "This is our third grant-award from the NEA, and our first multi-year grant. It will allow us to significantly deepen our programs for youth at Mar Vista Gardens, which we have been providing for over 8 years. It is always an honor to be recognized by a national organization for the quality and impact of our work."

The public is invited to an exhibit of photography and writing by youth at Mar Vista Gardens on Friday, May 6th, from 5:30 to 7:30pm at the Gardens, 4901 Marionwood Drive, Mar Vista. Called *Shooting Back from Mar Vista Gardens*, it represents the culmination of a five-month project exploring life at the Gardens, and was funded by the City of Los Angeles' Cultural Affairs Department, among others.

WHO: For 12 years, Venice Arts has been providing free multidisciplinary art programs to youth in Venice, Mar Vista and other communities locally, nationally, and internationally, with documentary photography representing one of its core programs. Past projects have included The Girls Project, photographically exploring female identity in four communities across America, and Picturing Race, documentation of the World Conference Against Racism, South Africa (2001) and race and identity in Los Angeles (2002). Venice Arts' documentary program is led by its creative director, Pulitzer Prize nominated photographer, Jim Hubbard.

PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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