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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Reading, PA (February 7, 2017)* - GoggleWorks Center for the Arts (GoggleWorks) announced today that over \$500,000 in contributions has been raised to support new and continuing artistic and education programs. The fundraising is part of a plan by recently appointed executive director, Levi Landis, to bring new initiatives to the nation's largest, interactive art center as it continues into its second decade.

The Windgate Charitable Foundation granted the largest gift of \$300,000 in matching funds over three years. Other new major donors include Ray and Carole Neag, East Penn Manufacturing, and Chris Kraras, with White Star Tour Lines. Individual donors have given meaningful gifts of support as well, which will help expand donor giving during GoggleWorks' annual appeal over the next few months.

"The GoggleWorks community--our Board, staff, and artists, are honored by these gifts," Landis says. "For the last ten years, we have relied on the continued support of our founders and a small group of donors. We continue to see so many help sustain our mission, but it's especially meaningful to discover new donors coming forward on a regional and national scale toward a fresh vision."

Former Reading Area Community College President Gust Zogas will begin chairing GoggleWorks' Board in 2017. He follows Paul Cohn, who guided the Board during a refocusing effort that led the Board to hire Landis in March of 2016. "It's like changing the tire on a moving car," Landis says of the organization's transition since taking the post. "GoggleWorks serves a quarter of a million people annually through a host of substantive educational programs, but we have many challenges to overcome in order to be more relevant to our immediate community and more sustainable in the future. Luckily, we have an all-star staff and volunteer base that will help GoggleWorks transform lives."



GoggleWorks enters 2017 with a restructured staff and a revamped core curriculum designed to engage audiences in enticing ways, as with its "Handcrafted Home" and "Studio Sampler" workshops that began this winter term. A new monthly event, Spotlight Night, includes opening receptions, demonstrations, participatory art activities and more, with the next scheduled for March 3rd. These new programs are just a hint of what is to come. "I can't give away our surprises," Landis says, "but we have an aggressive plan for 2017 and 2018 to treat GoggleWorks like the country's largest, creative start-up. I'm digging through a list of 12 new initiatives for support from this funding, which I believe will keep GoggleWorks the most compelling art center anyone can experience."

About GoggleWorks Center for the Arts:

Located in the former Willson Goggle Factory building, GoggleWorks is the largest center of its kind in the country. The five-story, 145,000-square-foot complex features six large teaching studios in ceramics, hot and warm glass, metalsmithing, photography, and woodworking; 35 juried studios for artists and makers working in a variety of mediums; and dozens of music, arts, and other cultural organizations. The complex also includes several major exhibition galleries, a 131-seat theatre, a cafe and STORE featuring the work of over 200 artists from GoggleWorks and beyond. GoggleWorks is open daily from 9am-9pm; admission and parking are always free. Plan your visit at [goggleworks.org](http://goggleworks.org).

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