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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Bowl makers and sponsors are needed for
the 4th Annual Empty Bowl Project that fights hunger locally**

OCEAN CITY, MD — Dec. 21, 2016 — Anyone interested in fighting hunger locally is invited to participate in the 4th Annual Empty Bowl Project, a benefit for the Diakonia food pantry and the programs of the Art League of Ocean City.

The Empty Bowl Project is an international grassroots effort to fight hunger and a unique opportunity to use art in a way that helps the community. The project — which begins with bowl-making sessions and culminates in a community soup dinner — is a collaborative effort of the Art League of Ocean City and Diakonia to raise awareness and funds for hunger through creative engagement.

During the past three years, the event has raised more than \$30,000 to benefit the two non-profits. More than 400 people attended the Empty Bowl Soup Dinner in 2016.

The Art League and Diakonia are seeking sponsors for the project, including the bowl-making sessions and the Empty Bowl Soup Dinner on March 31. All activities take place at the Ocean City Center for the Arts, 94th St. bayside.

“First Shore Federal Bank is the title sponsor for the Empty Bowl Project,” said Rina Thaler, executive director of the Ocean City Center for the Arts, “but we are seeking additional monetary donations, event sponsors, and donations of soups and breads. Anyone who can help should call the Arts Center at 410-524-9433 or contact us at www.artleagueofoceancity.org.”

The public can also get involved by hand-making ceramic soup bowls in January and February at the Arts Center. No experience is necessary, and all materials, including instruction, are included. Only 300 bowl-making slots are open to the public for a cost of \$20 per slot, which includes the bowl and admission to the soup dinner.

The one-hour bowl-making sessions begin on Jan. 8 and continue through Feb. 21. Sessions are offered twice a day, and many include both daytime and evening sessions. A complete schedule is available on-line at www.artleagueofoceancity.org. Registration is required by calling the Arts Center at 410-524-9433 or by registering on-line.

Local students from Berlin Intermediate School, Buckingham Elementary School and home schools are already involved with the project, making bowls to be used at the soup dinner. The Stephen Decatur Middle School Builders Club is raising money for the project with a candy drive. And professional potters are also making bowls for the event.

“The Empty Bowl Project has become more than just a one-night event,” Thaler said. “This year, we are ramping up the production of bowls to meet the demand we have had, and also extending the hours and increasing the capacity of the soup dinner itself to better serve everyone who wants to attend.”

The Soup Dinner will be held at the Arts Center on Friday, March 31, and is open to the public.

Continuous seating hours have been extended for 2017 from 4:30 – 8:30 p.m. and an additional dining room has been added. For a \$25 donation at the door, those who attend will receive a handmade bowl filled with a choice of soup donated by local restaurants. There will also be breads, desserts, a cash bar, a soup-to-go station, a silent auction and live music. Guests are asked to keep the bowl as a reminder of all of the empty bowls in the world.

The Ocean City Center for the Arts at 502 94th Street is the home of the Art League of Ocean City, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the visual arts in

the Ocean City area through education, exhibits, scholarships, programs and community art events. The arts center is supported by memberships, corporate and civic funding, donations and sales of art.

More information is available at 410-524-9433 or www.artleagueofoceancity.org.

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EDITORS: TWO PHOTOS ATTACHED

School groups are already hard at work making bowls for the Empty Bowl Project at the Ocean City Center for the Arts on 94th St. Shown here is home schooler Kallee Wharton.

The Empty Bowl Project Committee is coordinating the bowl-making sessions and soup dinner, an annual event at the Ocean City Center for the Arts on 94th St. Left to right: Nancy Fortney, Sandy Glassman, Velda Henry, Carol Rose, Debbi Dean-Colley and Becky Simonds. Not pictured is Beth Rodier.

SCHEDULE OF BOWL-MAKING SESSIONS:

Sunday, Jan. 8 1-2 p.m. or 3-4 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 16 5-6 p.m. or 7-8 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 28 1-2 p.m. or 3-4 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 4 1-2 p.m. or 3-4 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 7 1-2 p.m. or 3-4 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 16 1-2 p.m. or 3-4 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 21 5-6 p.m. or 7-8 p.m.





