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**ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL AGENCY ANNOUNCES ETHNIC AND FOLK ARTS
MASTER/APPRENTICE PROGRAM AWARDS**

Master Artist/Apprentice Relationship Preserves Illinois' Cultural Heritage

The Illinois Arts Council Agency is pleased to announce the recipients of the fiscal year 2015 Ethnic and Folk Arts Master Apprentice Program awards. Ten Master Artists received awards of \$3,000 each to instruct their chosen apprentices in their art form through intensive one-on-one sessions.

The Master Apprentice Program recognizes the need for structured opportunities to pass on traditional and classical ethnic arts as part of the preservation of Illinois' cultural heritage. The program fosters this traditional teaching and learning relationship by providing a \$3,000 award to the master artist.

"Illinois is exceptionally rich in cultural heritage," says Shirley R. Madigan, Chair of the Illinois Arts Council Agency. "Ethnic and Folk Arts Master/Apprentice Grants help to foster this learning arrangement and sustain the diversity of these traditional art forms."

Traditional ethnic and folk arts eligible for support include those artistic practices which have a community or family base, express that community's aesthetic, heritage and tradition, and have endured through several generations. These art forms are expressions of the particular culture of the regional, national, ethnic, tribal, or language group from which they originate.

The Master Apprentice Program generally support art forms found in informal rather than institutional settings. A "Master Artist" is an individual recognized within his or her community as an exemplary practitioner of his or her traditional or classical ethnic art form. An "Apprentice" is an individual with some experience in a traditional, folk, or classical ethnic art form and who is committed to attaining mastery of that art form.

Awards are based on the recommendations of three jurors who are folklorists and cultural specialists: Mark Brown, Kentucky; Lisa S. Higgins, Missouri; and Matthew Meacham, Illinois. Clark "Bucky" Halker and Lisa R. Rathje, of Company of Folk, serve as program consultants to the agency's Ethnic & Folks Arts Program.

Master Artist	City	Apprenticeship	Apprentice	City
Tatsu Aoki	Oak Park	Shamisen Japanese lute playing	Kiku Taura	Chicago
Kathleen Keane	Chicago	Irish Traditional Music Tin whistle	Claudia Anderson	Chicago
Kazuhiro Masuda	Chicago	Nihon Buyou Japanese classical dance	Rika Lin	Chicago
Jovan D. Mihailovic	Chicago	Serbian Folk Music Serbian violin	Sam Hyson	Chicago
Rajeswari Pariti	Naperville	Indian Carnatic Music Veena playing	Divya Pariti	Naperville
Hema Rajagopalan	Oak Brook	Bharatanatyam Indian classical dance	Laxmi Siva	Bolingbrook
Roger W. "Bill" Robinson	St. Charles	Hammered Dulcimer Technique and Performance	Katherine "Katie" Moritz	Yorkville
Sokhna Thiam	Rock Island	Traditional African Clothing Construction and sewing	Tammy Reed	Rock Island
Paul Tyler	Chicago	Old Time Dance Music Fiddle playing	Judy Higgins	Chicago
Vanitha Veeravalli	Naperville	Bharatanatyam Indian classical dance	Nevin Tobias	Elmhurst

For additional information about the IACA's Master/Apprentice Program, contact Susan Dickson, IACA Director of Ethnic and Folk Arts, by email at Susan.Dickson@illinois.gov or by phone at 312/814-6740 or 800/237-6994 (toll free within Illinois). Individuals who are deaf or have hearing or voice impairments can call 312/814-4831 TTY.

About the Illinois Arts Council Agency: The Illinois Arts Council Agency was created by the Illinois General Assembly in 1965 to survey and assess the needs of the arts throughout the state; identify existing legislation, policies, and program which affect the arts and evaluate their effectiveness; stimulate public understanding of the importance of cultural institutions; promote an encouraging atmosphere for creative artists in Illinois; and encourage the use of local resources to develop and support the arts.

Funding for the Illinois Arts Council Agency and its programs is provided by the State of Illinois, and the Governor, through the appropriation of General Revenue Funds, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

