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HOUSING MATTERS ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

Abi Mustapha joins the Housing Matters team for a 1-year pilot program supported by the Santa Cruz Arts Council and Central Coast Creative Corps

SANTA CRUZ, CA — October 9, 2023 — Housing Matters announced today the appointment of Abi Mustapha in the role of Artist-In-Residence, a new collaborative program focused on designing, producing and facilitating community-centered projects meant to bring awareness to the issue of homelessness and humanize the people experiencing it

The position was made possible by a \$140,000 grant through the Central Coast Creative Corps for a one-year pilot program focused on community engagement.

Abi Mustapha is widely recognized in Santa Cruz County for her impactful contributions to social justice, particularly her involvement in the creation of the Black Lives Matter mural on Center Street. This mural was a collaborative effort with Santa Cruz Equity Collab and the City of Santa Cruz.

“I’m really honored and excited to get to work with Housing Matters. It’s a rare opportunity to collaborate in this unique way,” Mustapha said. “Our aim is to create projects that bring awareness and humanize community members experiencing homelessness. Let’s shift the paradigm of what we believe is possible to include a future without homelessness.”

Her extensive background as a full-time artist since 2013 in the Bay Area brings a wealth of experience to her craft. She has showcased her work in numerous galleries and museums across the Midwest and the Bay Area, including prominent institutions such as the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, The Richmond Art Center, Garret Museum of Art, Joyce Gordon Gallery and many more.

“With Abi’s artistic vision and talent, we are poised to explore the transformative power of art,” said Mer Stafford, Housing Matters Chief Impact Officer. “This appointment represents a pivotal moment for our organization, made possible through the invaluable support of the Central Coast Creative Corps. Through this collaboration, we aim to use art as a catalyst to humanize public perception of homelessness through new community engagement outreach efforts.”

Housing Matters was one of 23 community partners from six Central Coast counties to receive the grant award. Three other Santa Cruz County organizations are also among the funding recipients. The goal of the Central Coast Creative Corps is to invest in artists to collaborate with community partners and advance civic engagement, public health, social justice and climate resilience across the Central Coast. The program prioritizes communities that demonstrate the highest levels of need as indicated by the California Healthy Places Index (HPI) or populations that have not received equal access to health-supportive resources.

This activity is supported in part by the California Arts Council, a state agency, through the Central Coast Creative Corps Grant Program. Learn more at www.arts.ca.gov and www.centralcoastcreativecorps.org.

About Housing Matters

Housing Matters partners with individuals and families to create pathways out of their homelessness into permanent housing. Housing Matters offers housing support services and case management as well as emergency shelter and direct services — including hot showers, public bathrooms, and a mailroom — to people experiencing homelessness. Our campus shares space with the County-operated healthcare clinic Homeless Persons Health Project and Dientes, a full-service nonprofit dental clinic, making these services easily accessible to Housing Matters' guests and the community. Our case management and housing navigation services help end homelessness for hundreds of individuals and their families every year. Learn more at www.housingmatterssc.org or connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn.