



Contact: Vanessa Silberman
Senior Director of Communications &
Strategic Initiatives
213.201.6106
vanessa@levitt.org

For Immediate Release

Winners Announced for the 2018 Levitt AMP [Your City] Grant Awards

*\$25K matching grants will bring free outdoor concerts to
15 small- to mid-sized towns and cities across America*

January 2, 2018—Today, the Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation awarded \$375,000 in matching grants to 15 nonprofits serving small- to mid-sized towns and cities across America to produce free outdoor concerts as part of the fourth annual **Levitt AMP [Your City] Grant Awards**. Reflecting the Levitt Foundation's commitment to creative placemaking projects generating community support, the Levitt Foundation once again opened the Levitt AMP selection process to the public to choose the top 25 finalists.



In June, the Levitt Foundation invited nonprofits to submit proposals that would reflect the three goals of the Levitt AMP awards: **Amplify** community pride and the city's unique character; enrich lives through the power of free, live **Music**; and illustrate the importance of vibrant public **Places**. Nonprofits that received a Levitt AMP grant in previous years were eligible to reapply.

The public voted on the submitted proposals over a three-week period in November, selecting their favorite projects online at <http://levittamp.org>.

"We are thrilled to announce the 2018 Levitt AMP Grant Awards winners, and are thankful to everyone who voted during the online competition to choose the finalists," says Sharon Yazowski, Executive Director of the Levitt Foundation. "Each of the winners makes a compelling case for how the Levitt AMP Music Series will create vibrancy in a public space while strengthening the social and economic fibers of their communities."

The 15 Levitt AMP winners hail from rural towns with populations of less than 10,000 like Whitesburg, Ky.; Galva, Ill.; St. Johnsbury, Vt.; and Middlesboro, Ky.; to mid-sized cities like Berea, Ky.; Carson City, Nev.; Ocala, Fla.; Sheboygan, Wis.; Stevens Point, Wis.; Utica, N.Y.; and Woonsocket, R.I.; to larger cities spanning the country including Escondido, Calif.; Chattanooga, Tenn.; Santa Fe, N.M.; and Trenton, N.J. Each winner will present 10 free concerts featuring

a diverse lineup of high-caliber entertainment as part of the Levitt AMP Music Series, for a total of 150 free Levitt AMP concerts across the U.S. in 2018.

Below is the full list of this year's Levitt AMP [Your City] Grant Awards winners (in alphabetical order):

** Previous Levitt AMP winner*

Berea, Kentucky* (population: 15,147)

The Berea Arts Council will continue to infuse vibrancy into the city's Old Town Artisan Village—a historic cultural district recovering from years of economic hardship and vacancy—through multi-layered and inclusive arts experiences at the second Levitt AMP Berea Music Series. The 2018 series will help to spark further investment in the area, positioning Old Town to be a hub for art, food, and community gatherings.

Carson City, Nevada* (population: 54,742)

The Levitt AMP Carson City Music Series presented by the Brewery Arts Center will return for the third year, energizing the Minnesota Street Stage through free live music and further transforming an abandoned corridor into a thriving community hub and point of pride. The upcoming series will deepen and expand activation of downtown Carson City's Historic District, helping the Brewery Arts Center realize its potential as an epicenter for the arts.

Chattanooga, Tennessee* (population: 177,571)

Jazzanooga will bring the second Levitt AMP Chattanooga Music Series to life on the lawn of the historic Martin Luther King District's Bessie Smith Cultural Center, further activating the area once considered a famed live music hub and center for African American community life. The 2018 series will bring momentum to a larger community-wide effort to celebrate the area's renowned musical heritage while reestablishing it as a thriving cultural destination.

Escondido, California (population: 151,613)

The California Center for the Arts, Escondido will present California's first Levitt AMP Music Series at Grape Day Park, an underused historic green space in need of activation. Levitt AMP Escondido will bring new life to this central and accessible park, highlighting its potential while drawing together the city's diverse communities to enjoy family-friendly entertainment alongside one another.

Galva, Illinois (population: 2,502)

The Galva Arts Council will enliven Wiley Park through the Levitt AMP Galva Music Series, transforming this large underused green space into a vibrant community hub for people to come together and enjoy a broad range of music genres. The series aims to have positive impact on the lives of those who live and work in Galva and its surrounding areas, creating a favorite gathering place and point of local pride.

Middlesboro, Kentucky* (population: 9,626)

Through the Levitt AMP Middlesboro Music Series, fourth-year grantee Discover Downtown Middlesboro has transformed a gravel lot into the Levitt AMP Pop Up Park—a vibrant gathering space complete with a volunteer-installed lawn and donated permanent stage. The 2018 series will build upon this momentum, augmenting the community-driven revitalization of its downtown and positioning the series for a wider impact.

Ocala, Florida* (population: 59,253)

Marion Cultural Alliance will present the second Levitt AMP Ocala Music Series in Webb Field, a three-acre green space in the once-thriving West Ocala neighborhood. The 2018 series will further demonstrate the value of this underused space, bringing the entire community together to feel the power of shared cultural experiences and see the vast potential for community engagement in this central green space.

Santa Fe, New Mexico* (population: 83,875)

The nonprofit AMP Concerts will present the second Levitt AMP Santa Fe Music Series at The Santa Fe Railyard in the heart of the city in conjunction with the iconic outdoor space's 10th anniversary. The 2018 series will continue to elevate the mix of talent presented, expanding its reach and providing a vibrant point of pride for Santa Fe residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Sheboygan, Wisconsin* (population: 48,686)

Levitt AMP Sheboygan has flourished over the past three years, sparking significant investment in the area and bringing people together downtown. The John Michael Kohler Arts Center will present the fourth Levitt AMP Sheboygan Music Series in the city's new City Green—once the site of a vacant large retail store, soon-to-be a vibrant green space in the heart of the city's newly created Arts, Culture and Food District—celebrating this multi-year placemaking milestone.

St. Johnsbury, Vermont* (population: 7,535)

Catamount Arts will present the second Levitt AMP St. Johnsbury Music Series on Dog Mountain, a bucolic, dog-friendly spot in the center of a former industrial area that is ripe for revitalization. The 2018 series will continue to provide cultural access, drive economic activity, bring the community together and elevate community pride.

Stevens Point, Wisconsin* (population: 26,423)

CREATE Portage County will present the second Levitt AMP Stevens Point Music Series in Piffner Park along the Wisconsin River, building upon their efforts to create a thriving city center that provides urban amenities and a lively cultural scene for the community. The 2018 series will continue to illustrate the social and economic impact of creative placemaking initiatives to the local community and beyond.

Trenton, New Jersey* (population: 84,056)

Now in its fourth year, the Levitt AMP Trenton Music Series presented by the Trenton Downtown Association will build upon its progress, spurring additional economic activity and community participation in the central and accessible Mill Hill Park. The upcoming series will further transform this underused space, giving people of all backgrounds a place to connect and enliven their community through free, live music.

Utica, New York* (population: 60,652)

Utica Monday Nite will present the third Levitt AMP Utica Music Series in Kopernik Park to fuel the social, physical and financial resurgence of Oneida Square, bringing the refugee-dense neighborhood closer to realizing its potential as a hub for culture and community engagement. The 2018 series will continue to illustrate the value of this underused green space as it inspires people of all backgrounds to come together to create a stronger, more unified community.

Whitesburg, Kentucky (population: 1,974)

The Cowan Community Center will bring the Levitt AMP Whitesburg Music Series to life on the Mountain Heritage Festival Stage, enlivening the center of this small rural community—which ten years ago was home to a closed school and vacant storefronts. The series aims to bring momentum to the town's revitalization, encouraging residents to celebrate and participate in the renewal efforts together, recognizing the value of inclusive cultural experiences in the process.

Woonsocket, Rhode Island (population: 41,406)

NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley will present the Levitt AMP Woonsocket Music Series in River Island Art Park, a scenic underused park situated at the heart of the city. The series aims to serve as a cultural, community, and economic catalyst for the city—drawing neighbors back into the once bustling public square to enjoy free and accessible art, support economic growth and strengthen community ties.

About the Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation

The Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation is a private foundation that exists to strengthen the social fabric of America. Through its support of creative placemaking, the Levitt Foundation empowers communities to transform underused public spaces into welcoming destinations where the power of free, live music brings people together and invigorates community life. The Foundation's primary funding areas include permanent Levitt venues and the Levitt AMP [Your City] Grant Awards, an annual grants competition. During the past decade, the Foundation has awarded more than \$20 million in grants to support access to free, high-caliber live music experiences while bringing new life to public spaces.

The Levitt network of permanent outdoor music venues and AMP concert sites collectively serves more than half a million people annually through 450+ free, family-friendly concerts in 23 towns and cities. As an example of the high-caliber talent presented across the Levitt network, the 2018 GRAMMY nominees include 15 artists who have performed on Levitt stages in recent years.

Permanent Levitt venues are located in cities as diverse as Los Angeles; Denver; Westport, Conn.; Bethlehem, Pa.; Memphis, Tenn.; and Arlington, Texas. Each permanent Levitt venue presents 50 free concerts every year and is programmed, managed and supported by its own 501(c)(3) Friends of Levitt nonprofit organization, with Levitt Pavilion Los Angeles run by the Foundation. Due to accelerating interest from cities and engaged citizens, the permanent Levitt venue program is growing. Developing Levitt locations across the country include Dayton (opening 2018), Sioux Falls (opening 2019), and Houston (opening 2020), amongst other cities.

Learn more at <http://www.levitt.org>.