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**INNER-CITY ARTS NAMES JOSEPH A. COLLINS  
AS NEW PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**FORMER CEO OF THE KANYE WEST FOUNDATION TAPPED TO LEAD  
ONE OF THE NATION'S LEADING ARTS EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS**

(Los Angeles, CA) - Inner-City Arts announced today that its board of directors has appointed Joseph A. Collins as its new President and Chief Executive Officer, effective December 5, 2011.

Most recently the CEO of the Kanye West Foundation, Collins is a veteran in the fields of arts, education and youth development having spent most of his career leading and managing programs in New York, California and Chicago. At the Kanye West Foundation, Collins co-created and executive produced the nationally televised stay-in-school concert series S.H.O.W. (Students Helping Our World), which motivated and rewarded high school students for improved school attendance and grades. He also implemented Loop Dreams™, a year-round education and music program that exposes inner-city children to the arts.

Collins began his career as a Special Education Teacher and Acting Interim Principal with the New York City Department of Education. He transitioned to the University Settlement Society of New York where he oversaw the agency's college advisement and middle school initiatives. He also created and executive produced "*Roots! An Intergenerational Hip Hop Culture Celebration*," an arts and education initiative that paired young people with professional artists in the hip-hop community.

In 2002, he helped lead University Settlement's merger with The Door—A Center of Alternatives, one of New York City's premier youth development agencies. He served as The Door's Director of Education/Arts, where he grew the visual and performing arts programs, launched EPOCH, a national career awareness model for out-of-school youths, shaped academic support programs, led collaborations with the New York City Department of Education, and helped shape the overall direction and mission of the agency as a member of the senior management team. He currently serves as a young benefactor to the VH1 Save The Music Foundation, and is on the nominating committee for the NAACP Image Awards, an advisor to the Hip Hop Education Summit, and sits on

several arts and youth development committees in New York and Los Angeles.

“Joseph brings to Inner-City Arts a wealth of non-profit leadership experience and a passion for helping children and young adults achieve through the arts,” says Inner-City Arts chairman of the board Doug Hinchliffe. “It is with great enthusiasm that we appoint him as our new president and CEO. His experience is a perfect complement to our core programs, and we look forward to working with him to expand our work, and lead Inner-City Arts into an exciting future.”

Collins, who holds a Bachelor of Science in special education and a Master of Arts in speech pathology and audiology, both from New York University, states, “I am grateful to be selected as Inner-City Arts next leader. I truly believe that engagement in the arts, access to safe and creative spaces, meaningful interactions with adult mentors, and high quality resources and facilities are every child’s right. This has been my mission throughout my career, and I am delighted to join Inner-City Arts at this remarkable moment in the organization’s growth and development. I look forward to expanding the possibilities for inner-city youth through the arts, and the campus becoming an incubator for new works of art, a learning lab for like-minded organizations, artists and corporations, and a think tank for individuals who share, and want to support the vision of Inner-City Arts.”

Founded in 1989, Inner-City Arts works in partnership with the Los Angeles Unified School District to bring elementary and middle school students to the campus during the school day for instruction in the visual and performing arts. High school students participate in after-school and Saturday programs. Widely regarded as one of the nation's most effective arts education providers, Inner-City Arts is an oasis of learning, achievement and creativity in the heart of Skid Row, and a vital partner in the work of creating a safer, healthier Los Angeles. Since its inception, Inner-City Arts has served over 150,000 of the city’s most at-risk children at no cost to the students, and supported 2,000 teachers through its professional development programs. For more information, visit [www.inner-cityarts.org](http://www.inner-cityarts.org)

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