

**Media Contact:**

Rosa Johnson

612-710-0601

Rosa.Johnson@padillaco.com

## **The Minneapolis Institute of Art Partners with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota to Create Public Art Exhibition**

### ***Local high school students and professional community artists collaborate to create thought-provoking artwork***

Minneapolis, Minn. (October, 26 2021) – The Learning and Engagement Departments of the [Minneapolis Institute of Art](#) (Mia) have partnered with [Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota](#) to launch a multi-generational project that will address racism through conversation and the power of art. The collaborative program began at the end of September and will use art to visualize the concept of 'Racism as a Public Health Crisis.' In November, Mia will display the works in an onsite exhibition.

The two organizations will partner with local high schools and professional artists in the community, including [Kprecia Ambers](#), [Juan Lucero](#), [Nancy Ariza](#), and Akiko Ostlund. High school students from North High School, Como High School and Minnesota Transitions Charter School will participate in professional artist-led virtual workshops focusing on idea generation, materials and technique, individual artmaking, and group collaboration. Together, the group will co-vision, co-develop and co-create a print poster campaign and public art exhibition of racial and health equity-themed artworks.

“Mia is excited to partner with the Blue Cross and collaborate with local artists and teens to share their perspectives on racism as a public health crisis,” said Mia representatives Sheila McGuire, head of student and teacher learning, and Angela Olson, studio programs associate. “Art is a powerful means of communication, and this project couldn’t be more timely. Through this partnership and exhibition, we will learn alongside the artists and students and engage in important conversations about the impacts of systemic racism inside and outside of Mia.”

At the conclusion of the program, Mia will show the works in an onsite exhibition in its Community Commons Gallery in November, with an in-person reception in January.

“We’re truly excited and deeply grateful for this collaboration with Mia that will give local school students a powerful voice through the medium of art. Art has the power to look at life through a new lens, start discussion, stimulate engagement translating experiences across space and time,” said Bukata Hayes, vice president of racial and health equity at Blue Cross. “We will not succeed in eliminating systemic racism without elevating the voices and stories from our community members who have historically been silenced. Through this project we hope to bring people together and inspire reflection – a starting point we must all embrace to identify our biases and dismantle structural racism.”

#### **About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota ([bluecrossmn.com](#)), with headquarters in the St. Paul suburb of Eagan, was chartered in 1933 as Minnesota’s first health plan and continues to carry out its charter

mission today as a health company: to promote a wider, more economical and timely availability of health services for the people of Minnesota. Blue Cross is a not-for-profit, taxable organization. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, headquartered in Chicago.

**About the Minneapolis Institute of Art**

Home to more than 90,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) inspires wonder, spurs creativity, and nourishes the imagination. With extraordinary exhibitions and one of the finest art collections in the country—from all corners of the globe, and from ancient to contemporary—Mia links the past to the present, enables global conversations, and offers an exceptional setting for inspiration. General admission to Mia is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee.

###