

Lakewood-West Colfax Group and Colorado Creative Industries Announce Collaboration on Creativity Lab of Colorado

*Public-Private Partnership Brings Creative Business Incubator to West Colfax with
a Focus on Empowering the Art of Entrepreneurship*

LAKEWOOD, CO—September 1, 2016—The Lakewood-West Colfax Business Improvement District (BID), in association with 40 West Arts, Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design (RMCAD), and Colorado Creative Industries (CCI), announced today a collaboration to further develop the Creativity Lab of Colorado on RMCAD’s historic campus. The Creativity Lab is designed to nurture creative industry start-ups, cultivate new jobs, educate entrepreneurs, support existing creative enterprises, and foster the development of the next generation of creative leaders.

“With all that’s happening here, the west side needs an entity focused on creative ventures, and that’s the core purpose of the Creativity Lab of Colorado,” said Bill Marino, Lab co-founder who also heads up the local business improvement district. “With Colorado Creative Industries focusing energy on the economic impact of creative districts and RMCAD’s new Business of Creative Industries degree program, teaming up is a natural fit. Together, with our community partners, we believe we can have a significant impact on new creative start-ups and existing creative enterprises, too.”

The Creativity Lab of Colorado (the Lab) is a collection of collaborative capabilities, centered around creativity, innovation, and the entrepreneurial spirit. A public-private nonprofit formed in the district and supported by the BID, CCI, RMCAD and other community partners, the Lab serves students and start-ups, emerging entrepreneurs and existing businesses, creatives and community leaders through three focus areas—each in its own way aimed at empowering the art of entrepreneurship. The Lab’s three distinct focus areas are:

- **The Creative Business Incubator** provides guidance for individuals with new business or product concepts and early-stage start-ups through a structured process that includes business development resources, business education, group coaching, mentorship programs, “pitch” sessions, and, in selected cases, launch support and seed funding through its partners.
- **The Community Design Studio**, serving both private enterprises and public entities, provides a structured visioning, designing, and modeling process for those seeking a tangible next step to bring abstract concepts to life—from branding and packaging to space planning and community redevelopment.
- **The Institute for Creative Community Leadership** couples collaborative community development with creative organizational dynamics—and a healthy dose of entrepreneurial vigor and community service. Born out of the practical application of its 10 Community Readiness Principles™, The Institute offers policymakers and civic leaders tools and tactics for community transformation.

The Creativity Lab tapped several key players in the local creative community to propel it forward. Joining Marino in this collaboration are Kevin Yoshida, a Colorado-based architect and urban designer; Dr. Ruth Holden, the Department Chair for RMCAD’s new Business of Creative Industries degree program; and Margaret Hunt, director of Colorado Creative Industries and Space to Create, Colorado.

“All the Lab partners share a common focus on creativity and innovation,” added Margaret Hunt, Director of Colorado Creative Industries. “Our goal here is to help students, entrepreneurs, and communities throughout the state move forward in today’s creative economy.”

The first workshops and events associated with the Creativity Lab will be announced in October. Follow West Colfax and RMCAD’s social media feeds or visit the Lab’s website at: www.CreativityLabColorado.org.