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**Bill Aguado Steps Down as Executive Director
after 30 Years at the Bronx Council on the Arts**

(Bronx – May 8, 2009) After 30 successful years at the Bronx Council on the Arts, Bill Aguado is stepping down as BCA's Executive Director, passing the torch to long-time board member Deirdre Scott. A cultural success story in her own right, Ms. Scott has over 20 years of experience in cultural and organizational development, technology and new media development. She is leaving her position as Director of Technology at The Studio Museum in Harlem to assume her new post at BCA.

The official changing of the guard will be June 1st, Ms. Scott's official first day as BCA's Managing Director, working as part of a management team with Ed Friedman and Aguado, who is stepping away from BCA's day-to-day activities, but will remain active in a part-time presidential position.

Of the change, Aguado said, *"I feel strong, but it is time to bring in a younger generation as to not get dated and get old in business. It is important to know what the next generation's issues are and how they interpret things. We will take that and use our services and programs to support the younger people."*

Ms. Scott's plan is *"to continue all the programs and services that BCA is currently offering and together strategize a plan to grow in the Bronx, especially given the economic challenges right now."* Looking forward to the exciting possibilities for the borough that lie ahead, Deirdre added, *"I am so grateful for the experience I have had and look forward to my time at BCA. I think the Bronx will continue to be a tremendous resource within the artistic community."*

In retrospect of his success with the Bronx Council on the Arts, Aguado shared, *"This wasn't supposed to have happened in the Bronx, or anywhere else for that matter. Poverty, crime, drugs – those are expected, but to pick up a paint brush, raise a voice in song, fill a page with words or lift a foot to dance and say, 'I am a Bronx artist,' seemed absurd. There was a time when even the name Bronx Council on the Arts could have been a punch line to a joke. Things have changed, a lot. And the Bronx Council on the Arts is proud to have a whole host of world class artists living and working in the Bronx and to have been a part of supporting artists to achieve the impossible – making the Bronx a viable home for artists and achieving great success in the process."*

Riverdale resident Bill Aguado has been Executive Director of the Bronx Council on the Arts since 1981 – three years after he was appointed to a "one-year" position as BCA's Grants Administrator. His accomplishments were many over the years as the influential force behind many of BCA's more successful and noteworthy programs. **The Longwood Art Gallery** is one of New York City's oldest and longest running alternative spaces providing opportunities for artists of color as well as focusing on themes and issues of concern to The Bronx and other urban communities. **BRIO** (Bronx Recognizes Its Own) is a twenty year independent artist fellowship program offering 25 fellowships at \$3,000 per Bronx artist. **The Culture Venture Fund** earned income training and grants program based on cultural assets. **The Bronx Culture Trolley** now in its sixth year it was declared as the "Best Trolley in New York City" and largely responsible for making The South Bronx / Mott Haven area a tourist destination; **The Urban Artist Initiative**, of which Aguado is a co-founder, is a city-wide grants program for artists-of color in all disciplines (\$225,000 awarded to 140 artists in two rounds). **The Arthandlers Training Program** is a job training and placement program for underemployed and unemployed residents and artists of the Bronx and NYC. It has successfully trained over 250 arthandlers and placed them in many cultural institutions, fine art storage facilities, auction houses, etc. **The Artisans Initiative** was designed to nurture and cultivate, and



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Photo by Marisol Diaz

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promote the work of local Bronx native, immigrant and Diaspora artisans, helping to create a sustainable source of income as well as developing a new audience for their craft. **The Bronx Cultural Card** offers cardholders discounts and promotions at selected Bronx arts & cultural activities, businesses, and dining establishments. **The Creative Bronx! Black Book** is a free directory of creative business resources in the Bronx that showcases businesses specializing in services for art collectors, galleries, museums and arts professionals.

As for his personal accomplishments and affiliations, Bill received his undergraduate degree at Hunter College and his M.A. from Fordham University. His current board affiliations include: The Eugenio Maria de Hostos Community College Foundation, Phipps Development Corporation, Citizens Advice Bureau, and the Non-Profit Coordinating Committee. In 2000 he was the recipient of the Governor's Arts Award. He is also the recipient of the Mayor's Arts Award in 2006 and was named to NYS Governor Eliot Spitzer's Arts, Culture and Revitalization Policy Transition Team. He was a juror for the inaugural Jane Jacobs Award. He was appointed to the Bronx Borough President's 2002 Transition Team and facilitated the design of the Arts and Culture Priorities Report. In April 2008, he was honored by his Alma Mater by being inducted in the Hunter Hall of Fame by Hunter College's Alumni Association, and most recently he received the Governors Award for Outstanding Service to Artists at the 38th annual Skowhegan Awards Dinner in April 2009.

Deirdre Scott is a dedicated cultural professional with over 20 years of experience in cultural and organizational development, technology and new media development. She leaves her 7-year post as Director of Technology at The Studio Museum in Harlem to join The Bronx Council on the Arts. Deirdre has held positions with cultural institutions as diverse as The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, and Cooper-Hewitt - The Smithsonian Institution's National Design Museum. She has worked as a curator, exhibition and multimedia designer, has held a faculty position the New School University and was the Curator/Director of the Aquamarine Sculpture Park, NY.

Since 1997 she has also lead her own cultural technology enterprise, DesignPolice specializing in digital media, concept and organizational development. She has spearheaded independent projects such as the African Burial Ground Interpretive Center, a federal commission and the VR research and design center for college students now in development in the virtual world for Second Life. She's also been an Executive Trustee for ArtTrust International (Berlin) and TempleFlower (Hamburg and NY).

Deirdre's work in the virtual realm includes the creation of the animated super hero, Mint Powers. Mint was created while Ms. Scott participated in the beta design of the well-known virtual world, Second Life. Ms. Scott makes presentations around the country about the challenges and adventure of new media and web technologies. She serves on numerous boards of directors and advisory councils including the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corp – BOEDC, The Workforce Investment Board – WIB, Juxtopia Informatics' Virtual Instructors Pilot Research Group – VIPRG, and the Bronx Initiative for Energy and the Environment - BIEE.

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