

1BERKSHIRE

NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM

For additional information, please contact:

Lindsey Schmid
VP of Tourism and Marketing
lschmid@1berkshire.com
413-499-1600

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1Berkshire Announces #BeKindBerkshires: A Kindness Campaign

September, 13, 2021 - Berkshire County, MA - 1Berkshire, in collaboration with Norman Rockwell Museum (NRM), is embarking on an illustrated public service campaign entitled *Be Kind Berkshires* which kicks off on September 14, 2021. Using art – one of the many cultural assets of the Berkshires – the message may be spread easily and broadly to promote positivity. The campaign features three original illustrations by noted regional illustrators, Leo Quiles, Marc Rosenthal, and Nicole Tadgell. Each commissioned image was created to inspire patrons to take a moment and reflect on how their actions can make the world a better place by extending kindness and empathy to workers who are doing their very best.

Initiated in response to continued changes the region faces with increased population, seasonal visitation, and pressures on the rural infrastructure, including labor and supply shortages, plus the ever-changing COVID conditions – *Be Kind Berkshires* aims to invite empathy from customers who patronize Berkshire businesses, service providers, and attractions. For more information visit <https://1berkshire.com/be-kind-berkshires>. You will also find a helpful *Be Kind Berkshires* toolbox on this page, full of ways that your business can get involved.

The idea for this campaign came about after hearing about challenging working scenarios from several business leaders this summer and the sometimes disgruntled exchanges between patrons and employees. NRM Director/CEO Laurie Norton Moffatt contacted 1Berkshire CEO Jonathan Butler with the idea. “We thought that a ‘kindness campaign’ might help people consider that we are truly all in this together – that a smile or a thoughtful word can change a person’s day for the better.”

"This idea immediately resonated with the team at 1Berkshire. Not only did it seem like a timely and necessary collaboration for the Berkshires but it also felt like a great way for us to use our strong network to speak to residents and visitors alike about the value of kindness during this tough time. We are excited to be partnering with the Norman Rockwell Museum on this important initiative," said Jonathan Butler, CEO and President of 1Berkshire.

For NRM, this is the second initiative under the umbrella of "Unity Campaigns" harnessing the power of illustration art to advance social good. "Much as Norman Rockwell's work was influential in bringing the country together during times of historical challenge, we hope these images can work to do the same and awaken empathy for one another," said Norton Moffatt. To learn more visit <https://unity.nrm.org>.

How to get involved in *Be Kind Berkshires* campaign: Use the hashtag #BeKindBerkshires, share the illustrated posters on your site and social media feeds, link to <https://1berkshire.com/be-kind-berkshires/> in your ecommunications, or simply add a *Be Kind* sticker to your social media posts. Every bit counts and we need the community's support to ensure the kindness message is spread to locals and visitors alike. Also, on November 13, 2021, the group will celebrate *World Kindness Day* by encouraging all Berkshire businesses to share images of kindness on social media. The *Be Kind Berkshires* campaign will run through the end of 2021, so let's work as a community to spread kindness in as many ways as possible.

About 1Berkshire:

1Berkshire is a county-wide organization focused on economic development and promotion of the region as a preferred place to visit, live, and grow a business. It provides programs that connect businesses with each other and with potential customers, it works to develop future leaders and support burgeoning entrepreneurs. For more information, visit 1Berkshire.com or to learn more about visiting the Berkshires visit berkshires.org

About the Norman Rockwell Museum:

The Norman Rockwell Museum illuminates the power of American illustration art to reflect and shape society, and advances the enduring values of kindness, respect, and social equity portrayed by Norman Rockwell. The Museum holds the world's largest and most significant collection of art and archival materials relating to Rockwell's life and work, while also preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting a growing collection of art by other American illustrators throughout history. The Museum engages diverse audiences through onsite and traveling exhibitions, as well as publications, arts and humanities programs, including the Rockwell Center for American Visual Studies, and comprehensive online resources. Visit the Museum online at www.nrm.org.

About the Illustrators:

Marc Rosenthal is the *New York Times* bestselling illustrator of many books for children, including *Small Walt* by Elizabeth Verdick; the Bobo series by Eileen Rosenthal; *The Straight Line Wonder* by Mem Fox; *All You Need is Love* by Paul McCartney, and *Phooey!* and *Archie and the Pirates*, which he wrote. Marc's illustrations are seen regularly in *The New Yorker*, *Time*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *The Atlantic*,

The New York Times, *The Boston Globe*, *The Washington Post*, and others. He was the sole illustrator for *National Geographic's* Smithsonian traveling exhibition, *Where On Earth*.

An educator as well, Mark has taught illustration at The Rhode Island School of Design, including a course called *The Designed Image*, which focused on conceptual illustration, as well as packaging, narrative art, and sequential art, masterful and essential aspects of his practice. *Flotsam and Jetsam*, *Ants in Your Pants in France*, *What's Dat?* and *Convergence* are among his humorous illustrated comics. Marc has also lectured and offered workshops at Norman Rockwell Museum, The Rhode Island School of Design, Maryland Institute College of Art, Savannah College of Art and Design, and Design Madison in Madison Wisconsin. In addition, he has received numerous awards for his work from *Print*, *Communication Arts*, The Society of Illustrators, The Parent's Choice Award, and The Art Directors Club.

Nicole Tadgell is an award-winning illustrator and graphic designer who appears in more than thirty picture books for children. The creator of whimsical characters and scenes, she is the recipient of many commendations, including the Kansas Notable Book Award, Christopher Award, Children's Africana Book Award, Américas Award, Arkansas Diamond Primary Book Award, and Growing Good Kids Award. Her books have been featured by Bank Street College of Education, Smithsonian Notable Books for Children, Cooperative Children's Book Center, and the New York Public Library, among others. Her books include *A Fist for Joe Louis and Me*, *Friends for Freedom*, *Astronaut Annie*, *In the Garden with Dr. Carver*, and many others.

Born in Detroit, Michigan, art has always been both an escape and a labor of love for Nicole. Frequent moves challenged her natural shyness, especially in new schools where she was the only Black child in class. "I always had pencils and paper nearby. It helped me make sense of the world around me or create imaginary worlds to live in for a while," she says. Today, Nicole continues to bring stories to life while advocating for diversity in children's literature. In addition to her artwork, she finds beauty, strength and solace in the practice of tai chi, which has led her through trauma and recovery, and into spiritual awakening.

Leonardo Quiles is an author, illustrator, and animator. He received a Masters of Fine Arts in Illustration from the University of Hartford's Hartford Art School, studied Illustration at Parsons School of Design, and received a Bachelor in Arts from the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. Leo divides his time between being part-time faculty at his alma mater MCLA and writing and illustrating books, comics, and a middle-grade graphic novel.

His abilities as a visual storyteller have evolved throughout his twenty years of experience as an animator and artist working in the visual effects industry, and he has worked in a variety of media, from stop-motion animation to computer-generated visualization. Leo has taught at Bennington College in Vermont, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's iEAR program, as well as the Graduate School of Architecture at Washington University at St Louis. He lives in the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts with his wife, their two children and their puppy Roxy.