New Study Demonstrates That the Arts Mean Business

Americans for the Arts' most extensive study to date of the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture, Arts & Economic Prosperity III, revealed a 24 percent growth rate in just five years.

Among the significant national findings:
- The nonprofit arts and culture industry generates $166.2 billion in economic activity annually.
- The arts generate $29.6 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenue.
- Arts organizations generate 5.7 million full-time equivalent jobs.

Americans for the Arts Action Fund presented the results at a special congressional briefing on Capitol Hill on May 22. Several members of the U.S. House of Representatives spoke at the briefing, explaining how the arts have helped revitalize their local economies.

The strength of this economic impact report and the subsequent lobbying we did to educate members of Congress led to the largest ever proposed funding increase to the National Endowment for the Arts' budget. To read more about the study and how we're getting the news out to others, visit our website at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/EconomicImpact.

ArtsVote2008: Arts Advocates Vote Too!

ArtsVote2008 is Americans for the Arts Action Fund's national initiative to bring the arts to the forefront of the 2008 presidential election. Our objective is to identify, educate, train, and mobilize likely arts voters and influence candidates to take strong positions for the arts.

In partnership with New Hampshire Citizens for the Arts, ArtsVote has hit the ground running in the nation's first primary state with office headquarters, staff, volunteers, and programs that are already making a difference.

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Message from the President

Advocacy brings results. That's why we launched Americans for the Arts Action Fund three years ago. As the timeline below demonstrates, it was the right thing to do. Increased arts advocacy by members like you is leading to an upsurge in funding for the arts.

But we're not done yet. We still have a long way to go to ensure that artist-friendly public policies are adopted at all levels of government. That's why it's so important that we engage even more citizens in advocating for the arts through the Arts Action Fund.

To that end, we've made the decision to make membership in the Arts Action Fund a permanent benefit for all professional members of our sister organization, Americans for the Arts. In addition, Theatre Communications Group and Arts Northwest are also making Arts Action Fund membership a standard benefit for their members.

The Arts Action Fund now has more than 32,000 members, but to continue making a positive impact on arts issues we need even more. I urge you to tell everyone you know about the Arts Action Fund. Direct them to our website at www.ArtsActionFund.org. Show them this issue of Arts Action News. And if you know someone who should be with us, consider giving him or her the gift of an Arts Action Fund membership. I've enclosed a special envelope for gift memberships with this newsletter.

Together, we are building a powerful advocacy movement that will truly transform the arts in America. Your membership in Americans for the Arts Action Fund makes it all possible. Thank you for standing with us in this effort.

Robert L. Lynch
President and CEO
Americans for the Arts Action Fund

Shaping Federal Arts Policy

House Approves Largest Increase in History for the NEA

The Arts Action Fund scored a victory for arts organizations across the country when the U.S. House of Representatives approved a $33 million increase to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in June. Three attempts to attach amendments that would have cut funding for the NEA were voted down on the House floor. In the month preceding the vote, Americans for the Arts Action Fund members and other arts advocates sent more than 37,000 messages to their members of Congress calling for support of the increase. Attention now shifts back to the U.S. Senate, whose Interior Appropriations bill offers less support for the NEA, and to President Bush, who has already threatened to veto this spending bill.

Filing Time Extended for Foreign Artist Visas

Arts organizations across the country won a victory when U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) agreed to change the visa processing rules for foreign guest artists. The change allows employers and agents more time (extending the earliest filing date from 6 to 12 months) to file visa requests for foreign guest artists. This issue has been a part of the legislative portfolio that advocates take to the Hill each year on Arts Advocacy Day.

Highlights of the Arts Action Fund’s Legislative Achievements in 2007

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<td>President Bush releases proposed fiscal year 2008 budget.</td>
<td>Americans for the Arts organizes Arts Advocacy Day, when 500 arts advocates visit more than 300 congressional offices.</td>
<td>The U.S. House Interior Appropriations subcommittee asks Americans for the Arts to organize witnesses for the first congressional hearing on federal arts funding in 12 years.</td>
<td>As the only arts group asked to testify at the House Education subcommittee hearing, Americans for the Arts brings attention to the needs of arts education.</td>
<td>Americans for the Arts provides Senate testimony in support of the NEA and Arts Education program.</td>
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From February to June, Americans for the Arts Action Fund advocates sent more than 37,000 messages to members of Congress asking for their support of the arts.
Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

Recognizing Public Leadership in the Arts
For the past 10 years, Americans for the Arts, in partnership with The United States Conference of Mayors, has presented the National Public Leadership in the Arts Awards to recognize those who take a leading role in advancing the arts and arts education.

The 2007 awards were presented at The United States Conference of Mayors’ Summer Meeting in Los Angeles in June.

Mayor Manuel A. Diaz of Miami was awarded the 2007 National Award for Local Arts Leadership for promoting a comprehensive, inclusive, and proactive cultural agenda for the city of Miami.

Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano received the National Award for State Arts Leadership for her strong leadership in helping to save public funding for the arts in Arizona early in her administration, as well as for her lifelong support of the arts.

Other awards were given to The Actors Fund, Grammy Award-winning producer and American Idol judge Randy Jackson, and Emmy and Golden Globe-winner actor and producer Jimmy Smits. Each recipient has played a critical role in advocating on behalf of the arts and arts education.

More States and Cities News
- Former councilman of the 4th Council District of Philadelphia, Michael Nutter, won the democratic primary for Philadelphia mayor in May. Nutter has promised to support arts and culture and weave them into as many areas of civic life as possible. He is running against republican candidate Al Taubenberger.

- Arts4Nevada launched its first advocacy effort as a state affiliate of Americans for the Arts. Using our E-Advocacy Center, Arts4Nevada succeeded in securing an increase of $245,000 for the arts in Nevada.

- Governor of Michigan Jennifer Granholm has lifted a spending moratorium that had frozen grants to the arts and culture sector. State budget cuts, however, reduced the overall amount of arts funding available in the state by $3.6 million.

- The Alene Valkanas State Arts Advocacy Award was created in 2006 to honor the commitment of outstanding activists for the arts at the state level. The award was given in its inaugural year to its namesake, Alene Valkanas, the longtime executive director of the Illinois Arts Alliance and an undisputed expert on arts advocacy. The 2007 award was recently given to another advocacy wizard, Betty Plumb, who has led the South Carolina Arts Alliance for more than a decade.

"Governor Richardson is a small example of what we are trying to do. While in Portsmouth, he was asked about the arts at his first stop by New Hampshire Citizens for the Arts board members and was caught off guard; but by his third stop, the arts issue was part of his speech.”

For information about ArtsVote events, candidate arts policy positions, and the ArtsVote Action Center, visit www.ArtsVote.org.

**ArtsVote2008** continued from p.1

May 22

Americans for the Arts holds a congressional briefing on our study about the economic impact of the arts.

May 23

House subcommittee approves $55 million increase to the NEA budget, bringing total appropriations to $160 million.

June 7

House subcommittee approves funding increase for the Arts in Education program.

June 19

Senate subcommittee approves $5 million increase for the NEA.

June 27

U.S. House of Representatives approves $45 million increase for the NEA — the largest in the history of the agency.
Your Quarterly Arts Action Fund Newsletter

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