

# Arts Action News

THE NEWSLETTER OF  
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

Vol. III 2015

## Bringing Visibility to Arts Education

This year marks the 5th anniversary of National Arts in Education Week—a national celebration recognizing the importance of dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts to a well-rounded education. Through House Resolution 275, the week following the second Sunday in September is designated to bring attention to this cause among elected officials and educational decision-makers across the country.

Mark your calendars now for September 13–19, 2015, and add your voice to this important cause! There are three ways that advocates can get involved in this important campaign:

- 1 Use the shared branding for National Arts in Education Week.** You can download this unified logo and add it to any posters, websites, or public awareness campaigns. All of these tools are available at: [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEdWeek](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEdWeek).
- 2 Encourage your education and municipal leaders to adopt a local resolution supporting National Arts in Education Week.** Templates are available to customize for your school board, mayor, city council, and state

representatives. Take this opportunity to educate these leaders on the benefits of arts education using the handy facts, figures, and advocacy tips available at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Navigator](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Navigator)



- 3 Raise the visibility of the cause on social media.** Use the #ArtsEdWeek hashtag all week long. Share your story of why arts education matters. Or tell us about an arts educator who has made a difference in your community using the hashtag #TeachTheArts. To get the conversation started, we'll be sharing powerful student stories from our new Encourage Creativity videos, which you can find at: [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/EncourageCreativity](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/EncourageCreativity)

## Improving Schools With the Arts

What if we as advocates could convince school leaders that the arts are actually a tool to help them improve their schools? Turnaround Arts is doing just that. A public-private partnership managed by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, Turnaround Arts is committed to using the power of the arts to improve even the lowest performing schools across the country.

Now entering its third year, the initiative has grown from a small pilot of eight schools to a cohort now of 49 schools across 14 states and the District of Columbia, serving 27,000 students (see map on page 2.) The success of the program is undeniable—the schools show an average improvement of 22.55 percent in math scores and an average improvement of 12.62 percent in reading scores. Attendance has improved and disciplinary actions have dropped.

*Sarah Jessica Parker lends a hand in a classroom at Bethune Elementary, the school she adopted as part of the Turnaround Arts.*



Kids are excited about learning. Artists are bringing a sense of hope to the community. Parents are involved. It helps that the program is backed by the presidential seal and that high caliber artists, such as Sarah Jessica Parker (above), have adopted schools to serve as teaching artists, mentors, and a source of inspiration and positive visibility for schools.

Moreover, the program is also backed by decades of research showing the benefits of arts integration and is designed around eight key strategies that any school can use to build a robust arts program that can achieve larger outcomes for school and student success. Read more about the impact of the program at [www.turnaroundarts.pcah.gov](http://www.turnaroundarts.pcah.gov).

## Message from President & CEO Robert Lynch

Every four years, extraordinary national media and political attention is placed on the top two presidential early primary/caucus states in the country: New Hampshire and Iowa. Both the media and presidential candidates seek to learn more about the policy issues that the residents in these states care about most in order to win their vote. As a result, an opportunity is created for advocates living in these two influential states to have meaningful discussions about the arts, the needs for the future, and the economic opportunities for growth on behalf the entire nation.

Our program, **#ArtsVote2016** is a national campaign dedicated to ensuring that the arts impact national elections by encouraging candidates to take strong positions on the arts and arts education. Our goal is to create opportunities to

empower members and advocates like you, especially in early primary states like Iowa and New Hampshire, to stand up for the arts on behalf of the entire nation and ask presidential candidates their position on the arts. **We especially want you to advocate for our shared long-term goals of a future where the federal government invests at least \$1 per citizen in the nonprofit arts and where local governments invest 5 percent of their local education budgets in arts education.**

**The support from our members will help us** train 200+ arts advocates in each of the early primary states to attend town hall meetings and meet-and-greets with presidential candidates. We will retain a political/media strategist who will open doors to meet candidates in order to discuss how the arts are valued and supported



Robert L. Lynch, CEO and President of the Arts Action Fund, speaks at a convening of Arts Action Fund members in Chicago.

in every state they visit, starting in Iowa and New Hampshire. Customized Questions to Ask will be written for every candidate, as well as develop unique arts profiles for both New Hampshire and Iowa and as well as unique arts profiles and background papers on each candidate. Finally, we have added new ArtsVote2016 content to our website **www.ArtsActionFund.org** so that we can provide you even more robust resources about candidates and their arts positions. Check it out.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bob".

## Turnaround Arts Local and State Program Partners

(continued from Page 1)



**Turnaround Arts currently works in the following states, cities and regions.**

- Bridgeport (4 sites)
- Broward County (3 sites)
- California (10 sites)
- Chicago (4 sites)
- Des Moines (4 sites)
- D.C. (4 sites)
- Hawai'i (3 sites)
- Louisiana (2 sites)
- Minnesota (4 sites)
- New York City (4 sites)
- 8 original Pilot Phase Schools

Visit Turnaround Arts [www.TurnAroundArts.pcah.gov](http://www.TurnAroundArts.pcah.gov) for more information

# Shaping Federal Arts Policy

The Arts Action Fund monitors arts policy at the federal level and helps bring citizens' voices to the table when important arts issues are debated. For detailed legislative updates, please visit [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/news-room/legislative-news](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/news-room/legislative-news).

## Swift Action on Appropriations

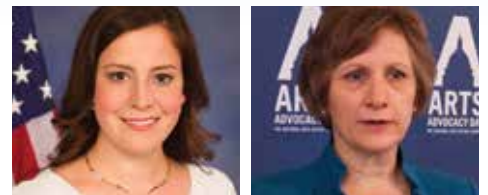
Both the U.S. House and U.S. Senate Appropriations Committees advanced sustained funding (\$146 million each) for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities in summer markups. This was the first time in nearly six years that the Senate held a hearing on its draft legislation. Rep. Steve Israel (D-NY) and Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) also attempted to increase funding by \$2 million to meet the president's funding request. Despite the flurry of activity, renewed gridlock is anticipated on floor activity as Congress approaches the end of the fiscal year this September.

## Good News for Arts Education

Congress is now a step closer to renewing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that officially expired in 2007! In July, the Senate approved its bipartisan bill, Every Child Achieves Act, by a vote of 81-17, and the House voted 218-213 to advance its highly partisan legislation to reauthorize ESEA. The Senate bill includes a number of arts-friendly provisions, including retaining the arts as a core academic subject—a key legislative priority. These floor votes clear the way for the House and Senate to begin work on a final bill that can be signed into law and help advance policy to ensure that every child can receive a complete education that includes the arts.

## STEAM Grows

Freshman member Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY) has joined Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) to serve as co-chair of the Congressional STEAM Caucus. Americans for the Arts helped advise the formation of the STEAM Caucus when it was first established in 2013. It now numbers 75 members! The goal of STEAM is to “change the vocabulary” of education to recognize the benefits of both the arts and sciences—and their intersections—to our country's future economy.



Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY) has joined Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) as Congressional STEAM Caucus Co-Chairs.

# Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

## Major Funding Increase in California

On June 17, **California Governor Jerry Brown** approved an increase of \$8.3 million from the state's general fund to the California Arts Council, which is \$2.1 million more than what he originally proposed for the 2015–2016 budget. With its additional funding revenues—\$1.1 million from the National Endowment for the Arts and \$2.5 million in projected donations from its specialty arts license plate program—the California Arts Council's budget will increase to \$11.9 million, its largest budget since 2004. Even more meaningful, the funding increase has been designated as permanent—meaning, the arts agency's new funding baseline from the state's annual general fund will rise from \$1.1 million to \$8.3 million. To see the press release, visit [www.arts.ca.gov/news](http://www.arts.ca.gov/news).

## Boston Creates

At the local level, cities are investing in establishing citywide cultural plans. Joining the ranks of Chicago, Houston, and Denver—New York City and Boston recently approved creating their own cultural plans. On April 9, **Boston Mayor Marty Walsh** and his Chief of Arts & Culture Julie Burros unveiled Boston's cultural planning initiative: Boston Creates. Over the next 15 months, arts and culture leaders and supporters will be able to weigh in to help craft the vision and priorities for Boston's arts and culture sector. On the same day, the city launched [www.BostonCreates.org](http://www.BostonCreates.org) website where Bostonians can nominate themselves or others to join a volunteer leadership council or participate in 16 community engagement teams.

## New York City Cultural Plan

On May 18, **New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio** signed a plan to conduct New York City's comprehensive cultural plan for the city. The plan will require a strategic planning process to address the city's cultural priorities; research how the city can improve serving the five boroughs; report the current state of each neighborhood's arts community; and plan how to assist artists with rising costs of living, including providing below market live/work studios. The official cultural plan will be finished in July 2017. After the final plan is in place, it can be revised every 10 years, with a required progress report released every two years. Visit [www.nyc.gov/html/dcla](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcla) to learn more.



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1000 VERMONT AVENUE, NW  
SIXTH FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
WWW.ARTSACTIONFUND.ORG

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[ArtsActionFund.org](http://ArtsActionFund.org)

# PAC Update



### Arts Advocates Meet in Chicago

Dozens of Arts Action Fund members gathered in Chicago for a fundraiser to support the Arts Action Fund PAC. With the presidential election coming up, we are vetting many candidates, as well as supporting the re-election bids for several proven incumbent arts leaders looking to return to Congress. So far this election cycle, we have given \$20,000 to 13 candidates and hope to support 80 candidates total this cycle, including the following candidates who we've supported in the past and hope to support this election cycle.

Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC 12)  
Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR 1)  
Rep. Corrine Brown (D-FL 5)  
Rep. Ken Calvert (R-CA 42)  
Rep. Judy Chu (D-CA 32)  
Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI 1)  
Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT 3)  
Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL 21)  
Rep. Donna Edwards (D-MD 4)

Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick (R-PA 8)  
Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD 5)  
Rep. Steve Israel (D-NY 3)  
Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-WA 6)  
Rep. Leonard Lance (R-NJ 7)  
Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI 2)  
Rep. John Lewis (D-GA 5)  
Rep. Ted Lieu (D-CA 33)  
Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY 17)

Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN 4)  
Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY 10)  
Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA 12)  
Rep. Scott Peters (D-CA 52)  
Rep. David Price (D-NC 4)  
Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL 5)  
Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA 28)  
Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA 3)  
Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID 2)

Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY 25)  
Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA 14)  
Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY 21)  
Rep. Pat Tiberi (R-OH 12)  
Rep. Dina Titus (D-NV 1)  
Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY 20)  
Rep. Tim Walz (D-MN 1)  
Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT)

Americans for the Arts Action Fund is the advocacy arm of Americans for the Arts. We engage citizens in ensuring that all Americans have the opportunity to appreciate, value, and participate in the arts. Arts Action Fund members are citizen activists who are committed to helping make certain that arts-friendly public policies are adopted at every level of government and in the private sector. Arts Action News is delivered four times a year to supporters of the Arts Action Fund. Executive Director, Nina Ozlu Tunceli. [www.ArtsActionFund.org](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org).



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