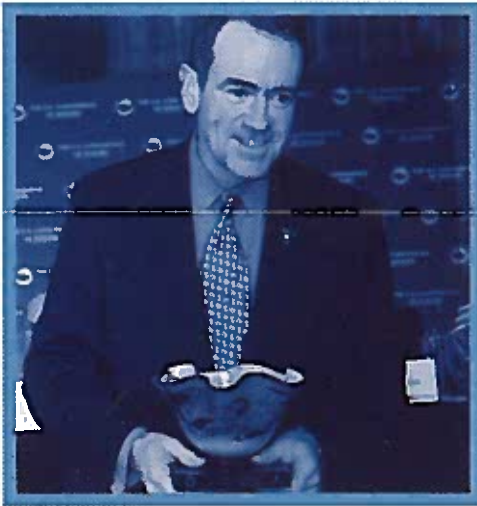


## Standing Up for Arts Education

More imagination. Improved critical thinking. Better problem solving. These are just a few of the proven benefits of participation in the arts. They are also why **Americans for the Arts Action Fund** has made increased access to arts education for all people one of our top priorities.

Thanks to the support of Arts Action Fund members, we played a critical role in a recent **victory for arts education** in Arkansas. When state legislators wanted to cut arts and music education, we worked closely with partners at the state and national level to successfully defend the programs.



Backing the leadership of **Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee**, we helped maintain the state's requirement of a minimum of 40 minutes per week of music and art in grades 1-6. Plus, we helped defeat an effort to eliminate the requirement that art classes be taught by certified arts instructors. As part of the campaign, our Arts Action Fund activists sent more than 300 e-mails to state legislators through our E-Advocacy Center. After the vote, one state Senator said, "Ok we passed it. Now, tell people to stop e-mailing us," proving that our advocacy efforts were effective.

For his efforts to ensure that **every child experiences music and art**, we honored Governor Huckabee with our National Award for State Arts Leadership this year. You can read about the awards ceremony and the other public leadership honorees at [ww3.artsusa.org/sc/press/stateaward/](http://ww3.artsusa.org/sc/press/stateaward/).

"To put it simply," said Governor Huckabee, **"We need to keep the arts in education** because they instill in students the habits of mind that last a lifetime: critical-analysis skills, the ability to deal with ambiguity and to solve problems, perseverance, and a drive for excellence."

Above Left: Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee received the 2005 Americans for the Arts and United States Conference of Mayors National Award for State Arts Leadership at the U.S. Conference of Mayors' winter meeting in January. Right: Artist as well as politician: Mike Huckabee, a member of the band Capital Offense, performed at the King Biscuit Blues Festival in Helena, AR, last year.



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# Giving **VOICE** to the Arts

## 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.



Congressional Representatives Louise Slaughter (D-NY), Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), and Norm Dicks (D-WA) meet with advocates on Arts Advocacy Day in March.

## Arts Advocacy Day 2005

Arts advocates and citizen activists from all over the country came to the nation's capital for Arts Advocacy Day, March 14–15, 2005. More than 300 grassroots advocates from 49 states fanned out across Capitol Hill, meeting with more than 250 Members of Congress. Americans for the Arts' State Arts Advocacy Captains led delegations to House and Senate offices to deliver personal messages about the importance of funding for the arts and arts education. These in-person visits were supplemented with thousands of arts advocates sending e-mail messages through our online E-Advocacy Center to their Congressional delegation on the same day. You can read more about Arts Advocacy Day by visiting [ww3.artsusa.org/sc/press/aad/](http://ww3.artsusa.org/sc/press/aad/).

## 2005 Creative Industries Report Released

Did you know that there are 578,487 arts-related businesses employing more than 2.9 million people in the United States? One in 24 U.S. businesses is an arts-centric business and the arts

industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the U.S. economy. These are some of the findings of Americans for the Arts' *Creative Industries 2005: The Congressional Report*, released in March. Based on Dun & Bradstreet data, the report documents the number of arts-related businesses and jobs in each Congressional district. The data and accompanying maps, customized for each of the 435 Congressional districts and 50 states, have been indispensable to Congressional offices. [ww3.artsusa.org/sc/creativeindustries/](http://ww3.artsusa.org/sc/creativeindustries/).

## Congressional Testimony for Arts Education

Catherine Richmond-Cullen, chair of the Arts Education Council of Americans for the Arts, presented testimony before the House Labor, HHS, and Education Subcommittee on Appropriations on April 28, 2005. Richmond-Cullen asked the subcommittee to increase funding for the Department of Education's Arts in Education program to \$53 million for fiscal year 2006. "The most important reason to support arts education," said Richmond-Cullen, "is simply stated: arts education works for children. Research increasingly confirms its beneficial effects in several areas, including but not limited to academic achievement." You can read the full testimony by visiting [ww3.artsusa.org/sc/press/cullentestimony/](http://ww3.artsusa.org/sc/press/cullentestimony/).



Catherine Richmond-Cullen represented Americans for the Arts on Capitol Hill on April 28.



## Message from the President

Welcome to the first issue of *Arts Action News*, the quarterly newsletter of Americans for the Arts Action Fund. As an Arts Action Fund member, you will receive timely updates and opportunities to get informed and take action on key federal, state, and local arts and arts education policy matters. It's our way of saying, "Thank you" for your support and keeping you up to date on arts policy decisions that impact you and your community.

As a member of the Arts Action Fund, I know you share my dedication to making the arts a regular part of family life, school life, and community life. Unfortunately, funding for the arts is declining, and that means you and I have a lot of work to do.

Over the past decade, the share of private donations dedicated to the arts has declined by over 40 percent; funding for the National Endowment for the Arts has been cut and remains far below levels of 10 years ago; and 40 percent of the funding for state arts councils has been eliminated. We launched the Arts Action Fund to create a groundswell of support to reverse these trends.

Throughout this newsletter, you'll read about how we're putting your contributions to work to advance the arts nationwide. Under the capable leadership of our executive director, Nina Ozlu, and board chair, Ann Sheffer, we're taking action at all levels of government to restore funding for and appreciation of the arts.

I want to thank you for joining and becoming part of our citizen advocacy team. Together, we can ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to appreciate, value, and participate in the arts.

## **Congressional Arts Caucus: A Vital Partner for the Arts**

The Congressional Arts Caucus is one of the largest caucuses in the U.S. House of Representatives—and a vital partner in our bipartisan work to advance the arts in America. Co-chaired by Reps. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and Christopher Shays (R-CT), the House caucus has grown to be a powerful voting block with 184 representatives. Visit [www.ArtsActionFund.org/sc/cacmembers/](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org/sc/cacmembers/) to see if your Representative is a member.

## **Newly Formed Senate Cultural Caucus**

At the urging of Americans for the Arts, four U.S. Senators have sent a "Dear Colleague" letter asking their fellow Senators to join a newly formed bipartisan Senate Cultural Caucus. Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA), Mike Enzi (R-WY), Jim Jeffords (I-VT), and Norm Coleman (R-MN), who co-authored the letter, will serve as co-chairs of the caucus. The letter notes that, "Future generations will learn about our history and ideals through our literature, paintings, dance, and drama. Yet, we often overlook the important role of the arts in our daily lives." Twenty-six Senators have joined to date. We urge you to call or write your Senators and ask them to join the Senate Cultural Caucus. [www.capwiz.com/artsusa/issues/alert/?alertid=7537426&type=TA](http://www.capwiz.com/artsusa/issues/alert/?alertid=7537426&type=TA).

## **SUPPORTING ARTS ADVOCACY IN THE STATES**

Americans for the Arts and its Arts Action Fund work closely with statewide arts advocacy and service organizations to promote and defend arts programs and funding in state legislatures.

### **A Look at Statewide Arts Advocacy and Service Organizations**

As part of our work to increase arts advocacy efforts at the state level, Americans for the Arts commissioned a benchmark survey and report to assess the current reach of statewide arts advocacy organizations. Completed in March, the study helped identify critical needs and will be the starting point for new strategies to better address arts advocacy needs and priorities in every state. [ww3.artsusa.org/pdf/get\\_involved/advocacy/saan/aaa.pdf](http://ww3.artsusa.org/pdf/get_involved/advocacy/saan/aaa.pdf).

### **Monthly Satellite Broadcast Focuses on Arts Education**

Each month, the U.S. Department of Education conducts a satellite broadcast as part of its Education News Parents Can Use series. In March, Lee Ann Powell, Americans for the Arts' Mississippi state advocacy captain and the deputy director of the Mississippi Arts Commission, was a featured participant in the broadcast. In the first satellite broadcast devoted to arts education in many years, Powell

highlighted Mississippi's model arts education program and provided resources and information for parents on how they can advocate for more art and music in their local schools. [registerevent.ed.gov/downlink/event-flyer.asp?intEventID=183](http://registerevent.ed.gov/downlink/event-flyer.asp?intEventID=183).

## **Illinois Arts Funding Increases**

For the first time in many years, Illinois arts advocates convinced the state legislature to increase funding for arts grants awarded throughout the state by the Illinois Arts Council. The state arts agency's funding will increase by \$1 million, bringing its annual budget to \$20.6 million for FY 2006. Additionally, arts advocates succeeded in securing a first-time funding designation of \$2 million for arts education programs administered by the Illinois State Board of Education. The Illinois Arts Alliance attributes this unprecedented increase in great part to the grassroots advocacy efforts conducted through its online action center, which is also directly linked to Americans for the Arts and its national network of state and local arts organizations.

## **LOCAL ACTION FOR THE ARTS**

Most Americans experience the arts at the local level, through art and music festivals, community theaters, and youth education programs. Americans for the Arts Action Fund is committed to providing local groups with the tools they need to advance the arts in their communities.

### **Arts Ballot Initiatives Succeed in 2004 Elections**

Americans for the Arts Action Fund closely tracked 13 local ballot initiatives with a direct impact on the arts in communities nationwide in the November 2004 elections. Of these 13 ballots, 11 passed convincingly, allocating funds for projects ranging from art museum repairs in Baltimore, MD, to increased performing and visual arts programs in Pinellas County, FL. Overwhelmingly, voters showed a willingness to be taxed at a higher rate to support local cultural projects. [www.ArtsActionFund.org/special\\_reports/](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org/special_reports/).

### **PSAs Targeted in Two U.S. Cities**

Crucial tax ballot measures to significantly fund the arts were passed in Miami-Dade, FL, and Denver, CO, thanks in part to public service announcements (PSAs) created in English and Spanish, and funded by Americans for the Arts. [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/public\\_awareness](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/public_awareness).



### **Americans for the Arts Action Fund Launches Political Action Committee**

In conjunction with the Arts Advocacy Day 2005, the Arts Action Fund held a reception in Washington, D.C., to invite attendees to join the Action Fund and for our existing members to support our new political action committee (PAC).

This was the inaugural event for our new Arts Action Fund PAC, whose goal is to provide financial backing to federal candidates whose voting records and leadership positions demonstrate clear support for the arts and arts education. Raising \$10,000 at the event, the Arts Action Fund PAC is off to a great start. Supporting our allies in Congress is just one more way we are working to advance the arts in our communities, schools, and daily lives. Arts Action Fund members interested in making a PAC contribution can contact Joan Evans at [jevans@artsusa.org](mailto:jevans@artsusa.org) or call 202.371.2830.

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Washington DC • 20005



## E-Advocacy Center: Take Action for the Arts

Your voice counts, and when it comes to important federal or state arts legislation, the Arts Action Fund makes it easy to make your voice heard.

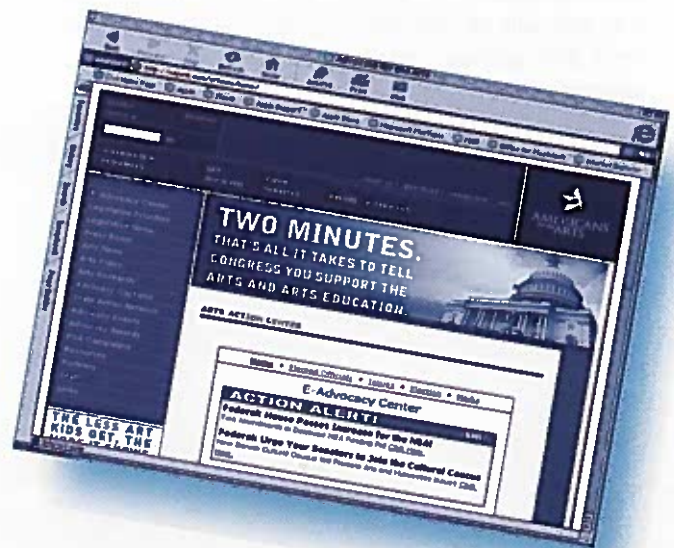
Simply visit our E-Advocacy Center at [www.capwiz.com/artsusa](http://www.capwiz.com/artsusa) to sign up as an online arts activist. On the site, you can choose from a list of current messages to send to your elected officials. After completing your first message, you will automatically be added to our Action E-List and receive regular arts action alerts. More than 46,000 people have already signed up and every additional person makes our voice stronger.

This cutting-edge online system has enabled us to send nearly 36,000 communications to legislators in just the first four months of this year! Where one e-mail has little chance of making a difference, a coordinated effort of thousands of e-mails reaching the right legislators with the right message and at the right time can have an unparalleled impact.

**Join our Action E-List at [www.capwiz.com/artsusa/mlm/signup/](http://www.capwiz.com/artsusa/mlm/signup/).**

## About Us

Americans for the Arts Action Fund is the advocacy arm of Americans for the Arts, engaging 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 exclusively to supporters of the Arts Action Fund.



If you have any comments about this newsletter or any aspect of our work, please e-mail [ArtsActionFund@artsusa.org](mailto:ArtsActionFund@artsusa.org) or call 202.371.2830