

# Arts Action News

THE NEWSLETTER OF  
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

Vol. III 2011

## Making an Impact in Arts Education

Students in the Mt. Lebanon School District near Pittsburgh, PA, have made it their mission to strengthen arts education not only in their own school district, but for students nationwide. These students know the powerful impact that a robust arts education program can make, and decided to raise money for the Americans for the Arts Action Fund to support advocacy of similar programs in other states.

Under District Superintendent Dr. Timothy Steinhauer's leadership, the school district received the 2010 Roy A. Hunt Foundation Award for Commitment to Education in the Arts and Humanities and was named one of the Best Communities for Music Education in 2011 by NAMM, the National Association of Music Merchants. Mt. Lebanon School District is a perfect example of how a few individuals can make a lasting impact on a community. Through its leadership, thousands of children have access to the performing arts, new media, and more.

We salute the accomplishments of the students and faculty of Mt. Lebanon School District and thank them for their

support of the Arts Action Fund. We will continue to work tirelessly on behalf of all of our members to ensure the prevalence of arts and arts education throughout the country.



*Mt. Lebanon Concert Choir performed at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City as part of its Distinguished Visiting Choir Series.*

## White House Recognizes Arts Educators as Champions of Change

During the week of July 25, 2011, the White House recognized a select group of "Champions of Change"—leaders in arts education from across the country. Americans for the Arts was proud to serve as one of the organizations that assisted the White House and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities in nominating some of the champions that were selected. Champions nominated by Americans for the Arts include Amy Rasmussen of Chicago for her work as executive director of the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education and Gigi Antoni,



president and CEO of Big Thought in Dallas. In 2009, Americans for the Arts awarded Big Thought with its Arts Education Award.

Each week, the White House presents ordinary Americans "doing extraordinary things in their communities to out-innovate, out-educate, and out-build the rest of the world." This group of arts education leaders, along with Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert Lynch, attended a roundtable discussion with senior administration officials to discuss ways to strengthen arts education.

To find a discussion of arts education, along with profiles of each of the champions, visit [www.whitehouse.gov/Champions](http://www.whitehouse.gov/Champions).

## Message from the President

Every week, there is news of more economic setbacks in the United States. I want to take this opportunity and stress to you, our supporters, that investment in the arts is a smart investment for cities and towns nationwide. Even a quick glance at our economic impact research at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Research](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Research) can show you just how big a difference a small investment can make.

In tough economic times such as these, we cannot afford to neglect the arts and arts education. When our local, state, and federal governments decrease support for the arts and arts education, there is no way that private foundations, businesses, and individual donors alone can fill the huge gap, illustrated on page 3.

There are pockets of the nation where dance, music, theater, and art programs for children will end because of a lack of public funding. I don't want that to happen, and I know you don't either.

Acclaimed actor and Arts Action Fund Artist Committee member Alec Baldwin doesn't want that to happen, either. For more than two decades, he has been a friend and ally to Americans for the Arts. Recently, Alec has taken his commitment as a champion for arts advocacy even further by creating a platform through Capital One for you to make a charitable tax-deductible contribution to our affiliated organization, Americans for the Arts. Capital One will also be matching all donations through Capital One credit cards and



Americans for the Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch and actor Alec Baldwin discuss National Endowment for the Arts funding with congressional leaders.

No Hassle Rewards points up to \$50,000. Help the arts today at [www.capitalone.com/give](http://www.capitalone.com/give).

We appreciate Capital One's partnership with our friend Alec Baldwin to advance the arts and know that you are committed to doing what you can to help ensure that the arts and arts education thrive in the United States.

## New Arts Education Resources

Here are some great resources to share at your next school board or PTA meeting to start off the school year right!

### What School Leaders Can Do To Increase Arts Education

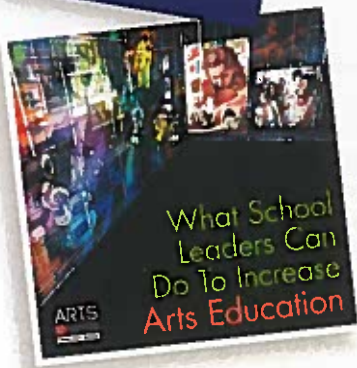
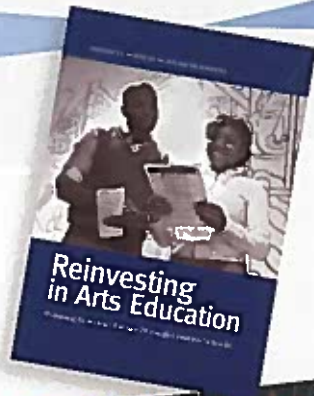
In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to keep the arts strong in their schools? This 2011 guide produced by the Arts Education Partnership offers three concrete actions school principals can take, supported with several low-cost or no-cost strategies. Download the guide: [www.aep-arts.org](http://www.aep-arts.org)

### Reinvesting in Arts Education

The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities issued this May 2011 report that reviews the current condition of arts education, analyzes challenges and opportunities, and offers recommendations on how to reinvest in arts education. Download this guide: [www.pcah.gov](http://www.pcah.gov)

### The Role of the Arts in Educating America for Great Leadership and Economic Strength

Recommendations from the Americans for the Arts National Arts Policy Roundtable suggest ways for improving public and private sector cooperation and action to create policies and practices that increase arts learning in our schools. Download the recommendations: [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/go/NAPR](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/go/NAPR)



# 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/LegislativeNews](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LegislativeNews).

## House Turns Back Additional National Endowment for the Arts Cuts

This summer, Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI) proposed a drastic cut of \$10.6 million to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). If enacted, this amendment to the Interior Appropriations bill would have brought the NEA to 2006 funding levels. Luckily, thanks to the work of thousands of advocates like you, 55 Republicans joined 185 Democrats to stave off these further reductions to the NEA. The legislation already contained a reduction of NEA funds to \$135 million. In the previous year's budget, \$155 million was allocated for the NEA. This decrease would be the steepest reduction to the agency in nearly 16 years, and is part of across-the-board deficit reduction cuts many federal agencies are facing. The Senate will take up their appropriations measure in the fall after its August recess. Contact your members of Congress today via our E-Advocacy Center at [www.capwiz.com/artsusa](http://www.capwiz.com/artsusa).

## Federal Arts in Education Faces Elimination

As part of the larger push for education reform, arts education might get pushed aside. Proposed legislation, HR 1891, seeks to eliminate 43 existing federal education programs, including Arts in Education (AIE) as part of the rewrite of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, popularly known as "No Child Left Behind." On May 25, the House Education & Workforce Committee approved HR 1891 by a party-line vote of 23 Republicans to 16 Democrats. During committee debate, Reps. Rush Holt (D-NJ), Susan Davis (D-CA), and Lynn Woolsey (D-CA) offered an amendment that would have restored some program activities including arts education, but it was defeated.

## Turning STEM to STEAM on Capitol Hill

Arts advocates are hoping to add an additional letter to the nation's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) approach to education. By adding art to the equation, STEM turns to STEAM. Recently, Americans for the Arts

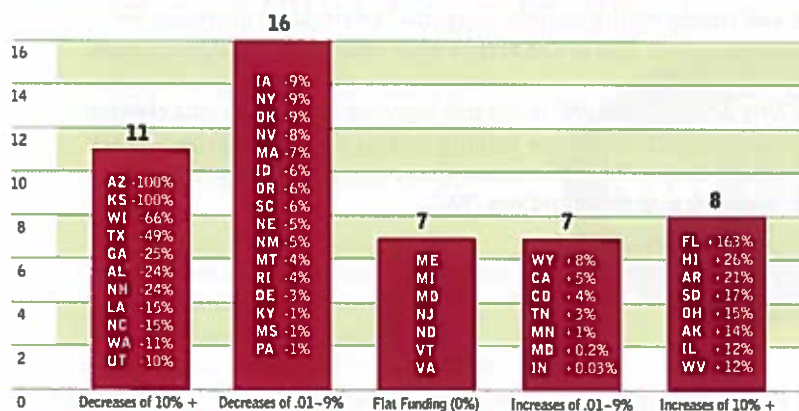
participated in an event on Capitol Hill, hosted by the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in cooperation with Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI), highlighting arts education as an essential component to enhancing innovation. Americans for the Arts Vice President of Research and Policy Randy Cohen was part of a panel that included RISD President John Maeda, Rep. Langevin, and others.



Students from the Rhode Island School of Design came to Capitol Hill to advocate for arts education by turning STEM into STEAM.

# Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

How did your state arts agency fare in the 2012 budget process?



Connecticut has not yet finalized a budget for its Arts Division at press time.

## Changes in State Arts Agency Funding For FY 2012

This chart shows changes in state legislative appropriations from FY 2011-FY 2012. The percentages only take into account general fund appropriations to the state arts agency for administration and grantmaking—*not* specific pass through arts line items, dedicated revenues, or federal funding. For a more detailed breakdown of each state's FY 2012 funding, visit [www.bit.ly/SAANmap](http://www.bit.ly/SAANmap).



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## Your Quarterly Arts Action Fund Newsletter

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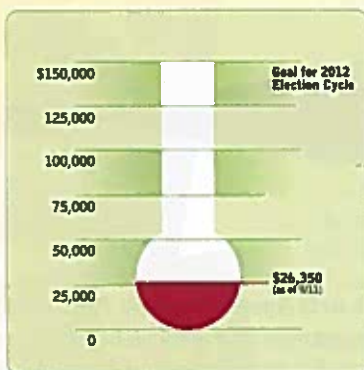
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ArtsVote2012 Campaign Kicks Off \$150,000 Fundraising Goal

## PAC Update



ArtsVote2012 Campaign Fundraising Goal

The Arts Action Fund PAC remains the only federal PAC in the country dedicated to supporting candidates who support the arts. We made 103 bipartisan campaign contributions totaling \$66,250 during the last election cycle, and we are pleased to say that we had a 90 percent success rate in backing the winning candidate.

This election cycle, we're here to help you make informed decisions at the ballot box. Visit the **ArtsVote2012** section of our website at [www.ArtsActionFund.org/pages/arts-vote-2012](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org/pages/arts-vote-2012). You'll find the latest legislative news impacting the arts, comprehensive and timely voting records, suggested arts-related questions for candidates, economic impact data of the arts in your community, and much more.

The goal of the Arts Action Fund PAC is to raise \$150,000 during the 2012 election cycle to educate and support candidates seeking federal office across the country who demonstrate that they value and support the arts and arts education. Donate today at [www.ArtsActionFund.org/PAC](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org/PAC).

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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