

Arts Action News

THE NEWSLETTER OF
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

Vol. IV 2011

ArtsVote2012 Launches Amid Tense GOP Campaigning

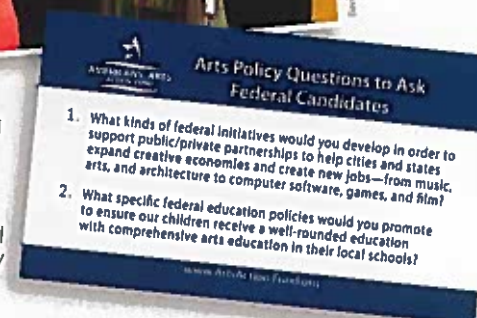
With the 2012 presidential and federal elections on the horizon, the Arts Action Fund is launching its ArtsVote2012 initiative. ArtsVote aims to educate voters about candidates' views on the arts and to educate candidates about the positive impact of the arts for communities and the nation as a whole, influencing them to take strong positions on supporting arts funding. By keeping citizens and arts advocates informed and engaged about their choices at the ballot box, federal candidates will be held accountable to a dedicated group of arts voters.

So far, the declared GOP candidates have largely ignored the arts, and the few positions they've taken are cause for some concern for National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) funding. In FY 2011, the NEA granted more than \$136 million to thousands of artists and organizations, undeniably enriching communities nationwide. Find out what a few candidates have to say about investing in the arts on the following page.

ArtsVote2012, continued on p.2



(L-R) Musician John Rich, Rep. Todd Tiahrt (R-KS), President and CEO Robert L. Lynch, musician Cowboy Troy, actress Debbie Allen, and Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt at an ArtsVote2008 event at the 2008 Republican National Convention. Planning is currently underway for ArtsVote2012 events during the Republican National Convention and the Democratic National Convention.



Arts Educators Visit White House in Support of Jobs Bill



Music teachers Jason Chuong and Brian Stacey from Pennsylvania and Ron Frezzo from Maryland attended a special event in the Rose Garden on Monday, September 12, 2011, where Obama urged Congress to pass the American Jobs Act, which would “put our teachers back in the classroom where they belong” by providing \$30 billion to school districts across the country.

Jason Chuong, pictured here, spends his time traveling between seven public schools in Philadelphia to teach music. Chuong hopes the jobs bill will provide a way for school administrators to preserve arts education.

The next day, the president mentioned Jason Chuong: “I met this young man yesterday—he’s a music teacher in Philly and his total budget is \$100 for teaching music in a whole bunch of schools. So they’re using buckets to do drums because they can’t afford actual musical instruments.” The president hopes that the jobs bill will ease the current fiscal crisis in schools. “Budget cuts are forcing superintendents...to make layoffs they don’t want to make. It is unfair to our kids, it undermines our future, and it has to stop.”

Message from the President

The Arts Action Fund has seen a dramatic increase in its membership this year as arts advocates across the nation embrace our goal to recruit one million members by Election Day 2012.

A series of Arts Action Fund awareness and cultivation programs have been planned to further our goal of identifying, educating, training, and mobilizing citizen activists as members of the Arts Action Fund. This is of paramount importance in order to build the political clout to ensure arts-friendly public policies are adopted throughout the United States.

In September, I had the opportunity to speak in Salt Lake City at an event sponsored by Glenda Bradley at her 15th Street Gallery. The gathering, presented by the Arts Action Fund, Salt Lake City Arts Council, and Salt

Lake County, also featured Salt Lake County Council Member Jim Bradley—a longtime arts supporter. It was an intimate gathering, drawing supporters and public officials from the Utah arts community.

It is through personal meetings like these where we make inroads for our ArtsVote2012 initiative, geared toward having the arts impact federal elections by encouraging federal candidates to take stronger positions on the arts. Our intent is to raise the public dialogue about the arts and arts education in an effort to secure bold new policy proposals in support of the arts and arts education in America from candidates during the 2012 campaign cycle.

Arts Action Fund programs have taken place this fall in West Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, Salt Lake City,



President and CEO Robert L. Lynch meets with Salt Lake County Councilman Jim Bradley. Bradley was a 2010 winner of the Public Leadership in the Arts Award, presented by Americans for the Arts and the National Association of Counties.

Chicago, Louisville, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, and Iowa City. It has been an honor to visit arts communities across the country and a privilege to speak with such enthusiastic supporters. I hope that these events and connections will inspire the grassroots action we need to make the arts and arts education a true commitment for years to come.

ArtsVote2012, continued from p.1

Gov. Rick Perry (TX)	Singled out NEA for total elimination; as governor of Texas, he proposed "suspending" the Texas Arts Commission (0.2 percent of the overall budget) until the economy recovers.
Former Gov. Mitt Romney (MA)	Introduced a debt-reduction plan with deep reductions in the subsidies for the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2009, he argued against stimulus funding for the arts, calling them an unsuitable target for government investment.
Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-MN)	Proposed her own budget as a presidential candidate which would entirely eliminate the NEA. Has also co-sponsored a bill in the House to end funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.
Ambassador Jon Huntsman	As governor of Utah, cut the arts budget and ended the autonomy of the Utah Commission on the Arts, consolidating it into the Department of Community.
Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX)	Dismissed the NEA's role in fostering community in his 2009 book, <i>The Revolution: A Manifesto</i> .
Former Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA)	Was one of the leading crusaders in the 1990s to eliminate the NEA, yet since leaving government has engaged with arts advocates on some issues.
Former Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA)	Defended NEA funding in 1997, saying, "The arts foster a strong sense of community and bring new ideas."
Herman Cain	During a CNN interview with Elliott Spitzer, when the subject of programmatic cuts was broached, would not say that he would eliminate the National Endowment for 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. For detailed legislative updates, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LegislativeNews.

Congressional Activity on Deficit, Jobs, and Taxes Leaves Arts Funding Picture Unclear

Congress and the Obama administration continue to grapple with an array of issues surrounding cutting the federal budget deficit while simultaneously trying to promote divergent ideas on employment growth. The normal congressional appropriations process continues in fits and starts and the future of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (as with many federal agencies) remains unclear as the "supercommittee" ends its work with no agreement to guide long-term debt concerns. The Interior Appropriations legislation, which contains funding for the NEA and other federally funded cultural programs, survived an amendment earlier this spring sponsored by Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI) which would have cut an additional \$10 million from the agency's budget.

In response to continued high unemployment rates, President Obama recently released the American Jobs Act that

attempts to address sagging job growth with a combination of tax and spending policies aimed at encouraging hiring. While there is much in the bill that would be beneficial to the nonprofit arts community, the administration recommended capping itemized deductions, like the charitable tax deduction, at a 28 percent rate for the highest earners as one of the ways to pay for these proposals. The estimated potential drop in charitable contributions could be as high as 10 percent in some studies. Also, some of the hiring incentives exemptions and deductions have less value for nonprofits than their for-profit counterparts.

As of this writing, the deduction cap has been removed from the Jobs Act as a revenue raiser and the legislation itself is being broken into different pieces with little chance of passage. The Senate held a hearing affirming support for the deduction as currently configured and expressed vocal support for the role nonprofit arts play in the charitable sector.

Arts Advocacy Day 2012

Washington, DC

April 16-17, 2012

www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AAD

Join arts advocates from across the country in Washington, DC for the 25th annual Arts Advocacy Day! Learn the latest research and talking points to effectively make the case for the arts and arts education with your congressional legislators. For more information, and to reserve your two free tickets to the Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy at the John F. Kennedy Center featuring Alec Baldwin, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AAD.

ARTS ADVOCACY DAY
THE 2012 NATIONAL ARTS ACTION SUMMIT

Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

Mayors Can Change Local Arts Landscape

Mayors can be champions of change for the arts in cities nationwide. Many mayoral elections took place this fall, and to the arts advocate, since local government provides the majority of public support for the arts, those new officials can be great allies. The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) Election Center lists approximately 500 mayoral elections that occurred in 36 states this fall.

With ever-changing economic dynamics at work in this country, more and more

cities are going to have to rely on themselves for solvency and not expect the same level of financial support from the state and federal levels. When cities have more leverage over their own economies, arts advocates need to be at the table to help shape the course of policy.

The USCM recently hosted a forum, "Creating Jobs in America's Cities," which was moderated by Don Graves, the executive director of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness. At this event, Graves noted that the council

is focusing on several jobs-related initiatives including Choice Neighborhoods, Promise Neighborhoods, and the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative. By effectively engaging with your mayor on arts issues and communicating how the arts can generate a huge financial return on investment, cities will become fiscally and culturally stronger and can serve to exemplify just how positively transformative the arts can be. Visit www.ArtsActionFund.org/news for an in-depth 2011 Post-Election Impact on the Arts report.



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

Your Quarterly Arts Action Fund Newsletter

In This Issue:

Page 1

ArtsVote2012 Launches Amid Tense GOP Campaigning

Page 2

Message from the President

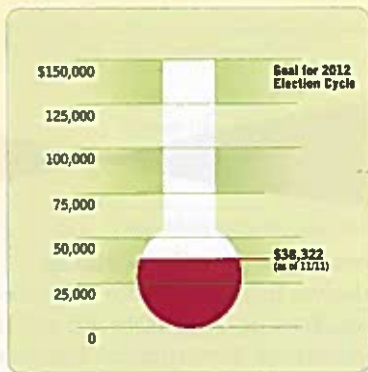
Page 3

Congressional Activity on the Deficit, Jobs, and Taxes Leaves Arts Funding Picture Unclear

Page 4

PAC Update

PAC Update



ArtsVote2012 Campaign Fundraising

The Americans for the Arts Action Fund PAC is the only bipartisan political action committee dedicated to advancing support for arts education and nonprofit arts organizations. Its mission is to ensure that pro-arts candidates are able to get elected or maintain their offices. As the 2012 election cycle approaches, the Action Fund PAC's goal is to raise \$150,000 to support pro-arts candidates for federal office. This will build political clout for the arts during early GOP presidential primaries in Iowa, New Hampshire, Florida, California, and elsewhere.

In this current cycle, the PAC had awarded:

Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY)	\$3,000
Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID)	\$2,000
Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL)	\$1,000
Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)	\$1,000
Rep. Norm Dicks (D-WA)	\$1,000
Rep. Jose E. Serrano (D-NY)	\$ 500
Rep. Rush D. Holt (D-NJ)	\$ 500
Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI)	\$ 500

Total: \$9,500

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.



Paper is 30 percent postconsumer waste, and FSC® certified. Printed with soy ink. Please recycle this publication.