

Arts Action News

THE NEWSLETTER OF
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

Vol. II 2012

Acclaimed Artists Share Their Stories with Congress during Arts Advocacy Day

Acclaimed artists Alec Baldwin, Pierre Dulaine, Nigel Lythgoe, Hill Harper, Melina Kanakaredes, Ben Folds, Clay Walker, Tiffani Thiessen, Omar Benson Miller, and Johnathon Schaech joined 500 arts advocates from across the country on Capitol Hill for Arts Advocacy Day, April 16–17, 2012, to advocate for federal support of the arts and arts education.

With generous support from Ovation, the day began with the Congressional Arts Kick-Off where several members of Congress joined artists in speaking to grassroots advocates and congressional staff about the importance of arts funding. Ranking Member of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee Jim Moran (D-VA) said, "The arts are truly the embodiment of who we are and what we value. Without federal funding, the diffusion of this understanding and insight and empathy with the others among us will suffer."

As producer of *American Idol* and *So You Think You Can Dance*, most of the young people Nigel Lythgoe meets are highly talented, he said, but ignorant of their country's performing

Arts traditions. "We need to fight for that," he said.

Acclaimed artists at the Congressional Arts Kick-Off included (L-R) Pierre Dulaine, Ovation Chairman Ken Solomon, Melina Kanakaredes, Americans for the Arts President Robert L. Lynch, Omar Benson Miller, Tiffani Thiessen, Alec Baldwin, Johnathon Schaech, Nigel Lythgoe, and Hill Harper.



Also, Americans for the Arts and the U.S. Conference of Mayors presented the 2012 Congressional Arts Leadership Award to Rep. Todd Platts (R-PA) for his outstanding leadership in securing and advocating for federal funding for arts and arts education.

For more information, photos, and video from Arts Advocacy Day, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AAD.

Actor and Activist Alec Baldwin Delivers Nancy Hanks Lecture

"Art is like water. It's essential. And I am honored to be here with all of you to carry the water on behalf of the arts again in 2012," said acclaimed actor and activist Alec Baldwin at the 25th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts & Public Policy, which is presented by Americans for the Arts and sponsored by Ovation. Alec Baldwin delivered his remarks on the eve of Arts Advocacy Day in front of a sold-out audience of more than 2,300 at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Alec Baldwin delivers the Americans for the Arts 25th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts & Public Policy at The John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts.

In his speech, Alec Baldwin highlighted the significance of the arts in everyday life—pointing to the theme song for *Captain Kangaroo* and the architecture in Union Station while waiting for a train as some of the first exposures to arts that made a lasting impact on his life. "My love of the arts and for artists is no different than yours, and I want as many people as possible to experience that—regardless of income, where you live, or whether or not your elected representatives get it," said Baldwin.

To watch the full lecture, along with introduction by Maureen Dowd and a performance by Ben Folds, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AAD.



Message from the President

Thank you to the thousands of Arts Action Fund members from across the country who participated in the 2012 Annual Arts Policy Vote. Because of your input, our horizon for the next 10–15 years will center around candidates before they become elected. We're setting our goals high: we all want to see the federal government invest at least \$1 per citizen in the nonprofit arts and local governments invest 5 percent of their local education budgets in arts education.

Based on the overwhelming response from our members for the immediate future, we have adopted the policy positions to support a budget of

\$155 million for the National Endowment for the Arts' FY 2013 budget and to strengthen arts education opportunities within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Because of your vote, we brought national attention to these policy platforms. On March 22, Academy Award-nominated actor Stanley Tucci joined me in testifying before the House Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations in favor of these policy platforms. Then on April 17, thousands of our grassroots arts advocates joined high-profile artists such as Alec Baldwin, Hill Harper, Brian Stokes Mitchell, and Ben Folds at Arts Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill.



(L-R) House Minority Whip Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) with Americans for the Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch during Arts Advisory Day.

Arts advocacy is a year-round effort and this is only the beginning. I know that we can make a difference in 2012 and beyond, but your continued support is critical.

ArtsVote on the Road

As part of our continuing effort to infuse the arts and arts education into the dialogue during the 2012 election cycle through our ArtsVote2012 campaign, the Arts Action Fund is hosting a number of cultivation and awareness activities across the country. We have held programs in key early primary states including Iowa (Iowa City and Des Moines) and Florida (West Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, and Miami). Programs have also been held in Salt Lake City, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

This summer we will host our culminating ArtsVote2012 programmatic events, Arts Speak and Arts Jam, during the Republican National Convention in Tampa, FL and the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, NC. For information about specific artists and political leaders confirmed to participate, visit:

Republican National Convention

www.ArtsActionFund.org/ArtsSpeakRNC

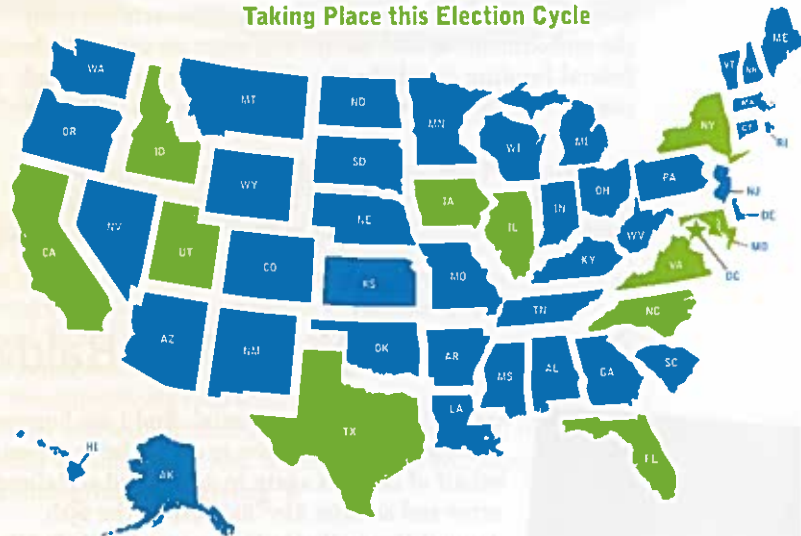
www.ArtsActionFund.org/ArtsJamRNC

Democratic National Convention

www.ArtsActionFund.org/ArtsSpeakDNC

www.ArtsActionFund.org/ArtsJamDNC

ArtsVote2012 Programmatic Events Taking Place this Election Cycle



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.

Award-Winning Actor Stanley Tucci Stumps for the Arts on Capitol Hill

Actor Stanley Tucci, of the mega-hit movie *The Hunger Games*, took time to make the case for the nonprofit arts in Congress. During a whirlwind two days, Mr. Tucci, along with Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch, met with House Appropriations Interior Subcommittee Chairman Mike Simpson (R-ID), Ranking Member Jim Moran (D-VA), and Congressional Arts Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) to talk about the importance of the federal role in nurturing culture and to ask

for their continued support of the National Endowment for the Arts. The next morning, both Tucci and Lynch appeared before Reps. Simpson and Moran to provide official public witness testimony before the Interior Subcommittee. Reps. Tom Cole (R-OK) and Betty McCollum (D-MN) were also in attendance at the hearing. Tucci stated in his testimony, "As history shows us, the arts not only help define who we are as a people, but they are one of the deciding factors that clarify the distinction between a society and a great nation."



Actor Stanley Tucci with Rep. John Yarmouth (D-KY) during his visit to Capitol Hill to testify on behalf of federal investment in the arts and arts education with Americans for the Arts.

Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

Arts Funding Restored in Kansas

A year after Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback completely defunded the Kansas Arts Commission, advocates and arts leaders throughout the state have cause to celebrate as the state legislature just approved new funding for the commission, reversing Kansas's status as the only state in the nation without an arts agency.

Immediately following last summer's funding veto, Kansas Citizens for the Arts (KCA) rallied students, community leaders, and arts advocates throughout the state and delivered an outpouring of protest aimed at the governor's decision. Not only did Brownback's veto remove state support,

it removed the state's eligibility for federal arts money (such as from the National Endowment for the Arts) and left little time to develop a cogent plan for sustained private support.

Faced with under-performing private support and a persistent blowback from the arts community, Brownback publicly admitted that a private-only funding option "had not worked as well as hoped," creating speculation about his plans for the arts in the state's FY 2013 budget. In the end, Brownback proposed \$200,000 for a new Kansas Creative Industries Commission, which would house both the Arts and Film Commissions.

Knowing this allocation would not be adequate, KCA fervently lobbied the legislature for a higher appropriation that would at least equal FY 2011's mark of \$689,000. The legislature ultimately agreed with KCA and arts advocates, deciding to appropriate \$700,000 in general funds, thus ensuring that the arts will receive additional federal money and place the state on a path to cultural and economic prosperity. For more information on this amazing triumph, visit www.kansasarts.org.

Your Quarterly Arts Action Fund Newsletter

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Arts Advocacy Day Co-Chair Hill Harper Headlines Action Fund Fundraiser

The Arts Action Fund PAC hosted a fundraiser in conjunction with Arts Advocacy Day on Monday, April 16. Arts Advocacy Day Co-Chair, political activist, author, and actor Hill Harper (known for his portrayal of Dr. Sheldon Hakes on CBS's CSI: NY) joined more than 100 Arts Action Fund members to speak on the importance of arts advocacy: "I believe that we have too many arts advocates that are what I call interested observers, and what we really need are fanatics. We need people who are willing to be squeaky. Because the squeaky wheel, in our political system, gets the grease." As we draw closer to the 2012 elections, your engagement is more critical than ever. Want to provide a stable flow of support to the PAC? Join the Arts PAC Monthly Giving Club with a recurring contribution of \$20.12. This option offers great flexibility; if later you wish to modify or suspend your gifts, simply contact the Arts Action Fund, and we will gladly accommodate you. To join the Arts PAC Monthly Giving Club today, visit www.ArtsActionFund.org/monthly-giving.

Actor Hill Harper spoke to Arts Action Fund Members during a fundraiser in conjunction with Arts Advocacy Day.

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.

