

Arts Action News

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AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

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Arts Advocacy Day Draws Hundreds to Capitol Hill

More than 550 arts advocates convened on Capitol Hill for Arts Advocacy Day, April 8–9, 2013 to advocate for federal support of the arts and arts education. After advocates participated in a day of training, 1,500 other attendees joined us at the Kennedy Center for the 26th Annual Americans for the Arts Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts & Public Policy featuring renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma. The next day began with the Congressional Arts Kick Off, where Rock and Roll Hall of Fame drummer Matt Sorum, bagpiper Cristina Pato, and dancer Lil Buck joined Yo-Yo Ma for an amazing performance. Key congressional leaders shared their voices and also joined us in support, including Rep. Leonard Lance (R-NJ), Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY), Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), and Rep. John Lewis (D-GA). Grassroots advocates met with their members of Congress to ask for increased funding for the arts and arts education, to retain the arts as a core academic subject, and to preserve incentives for charitable giving.

Americans for the Arts and the United States Conference of Mayors presented Sen. Harkin with the 2013 Public Leadership in the Arts Award for Congressional Arts Leadership, given annually since 1997. As chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that funds education, Sen. Harkin has championed the U.S. Department of Education's Arts In Education program. He underscored what he has heard from the business community, "That it's not enough for our education system to produce graduates who can read, write, and do math. Employers need workers who can apply creativity, collaboration, and communication in their jobs to solve problems, produce ideas, and make connections."

Sen. Harkin, shown here with Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch (R) and USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran (L), is the 2013 recipient of the Congressional Arts Leadership Award.



Art for Life's Sake: Yo-Yo Ma Delivers Nancy Hanks Lecture

"The arts, culture, and humanities give us perspective and the capacity for empathy and humility. In a world of 7 billion people and more than 200 countries, our problems will not be solved when we have a looming empathy deficit."

The Grammy Award®-winning cellist delivered his remarks at the 26th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts & Public Policy to a sold-out audience at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and thousands of others were able to watch it live from their living rooms on our YouTube channel.

Performances by Yo-Yo, Cristina Pato, Lil Buck, and MusiCorps' wounded warriors were interwoven with the lecture to demonstrate the arts' capacity to intersect and fuse human experience. To view the lecture and performances, along with introduction by Victoria Reggie Kennedy, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AAD.

Drawing on personal experience, Yo-Yo explored arts education from both a scientific perspective and a practical application.

A record number of people viewed Yo-Yo Ma's Nancy Hanks Lecture from the Kennedy Center thanks to a live web broadcast that is available on the Americans for the Arts YouTube channel.



Message from the President

Thank you to the thousands of Arts Action Fund members from across the country who participated in the 2013 Annual Arts Policy Vote. We listened to you and we have set our goals high. Our goals for the long-term are clear: we want the federal government to invest at least \$1 per citizen and local governments to invest 5 percent of their local education budgets in arts education. Our horizon for the next 10–15 years will center on engaging with candidates before they become elected. We brought these goals straight from you to Capitol Hill for Arts Advocacy Day.

We were also able to spread our message about arts education during Arts Advocacy Day this year. Yo-Yo Ma and Matt Sorum joined Aspen Institute Arts Program Director

Damian Woetzel; Lisa Phillips, author of *The Artistic Edge: 7 Skills Children Need to Succeed in an Increasingly Right Brain World*; and CEO of Big Thought in Dallas, TX Gigi Antoni to participate in the Americans for the Arts Google+ Hangout to discuss arts education.

Another way to invigorate arts education is by adding arts to the popular STEM model (science, technology, engineering, and math), turning it into STEAM.

Yo-Yo Ma specifically helped promote the launch of a new Congressional STEAM Caucus led by Reps. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) and Aaron Schock (R-IL) on Arts Advocacy Day. The caucus will enlist members of Congress to spread the message that science and art are complementary



Yo-Yo Ma (L) and Matt Sorum (R) sat down with Robert L. Lynch of Americans for the Arts Action Fund in between visits on Capitol Hill for a live Google+ Hangout about arts education. The entire country was invited to watch online and submit questions via Twitter.

in driving innovation and creativity and “aims to change the vocabulary of education to recognize the benefits of both the arts and sciences and how these intersections will benefit our country’s future generations.”

I hope you’ll join me and members of Congress in STEAMing up your local schools! Find more information and helpful tools at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEducation.

HEARD ON THE HILL

Celebrities and advocates alike spoke out during Arts Advocacy Day to not only defend funding for arts and arts education, but to inspire and educate others.



“Music has saved my life so many times and art has saved my life so many times... It is like every moment of your day there is always something artistic that is making your life much more beautiful or much more easy to live with, so if that is the reality, we should support that.”

Musician Cristina Pato, who performed with Yo-Yo Ma at the Kennedy Center.



“This is the coolest thing I’ve done since Madison Square Garden, I’ve got to say. Slash is going to be really jealous.”

Matt Sorum on Capitol Hill for Arts Advocacy Day, as he began a day of lobbying with Yo-Yo Ma to support the arts and arts education.



“Yo-Yo Ma brought out the cello and without a second thought I started moving... we created magic.”

Joakin dancer Lil Buck performed with Yo-Yo Ma at Arts Advocacy Day and describes the first time he met Yo-Yo.



“We have to work in a bipartisan capacity to make sure we support the arts appropriately.”

New Congressional Arts Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Leonard Lance (R-NJ) at Arts Advocacy Day’s Congressional Arts Kick Off.



“Theater has taught me how to think differently. Arts classes always bring out aspects of our personalities that you don’t see in other classes. That’s what makes them so special—they give us a voice we wouldn’t get to use otherwise.”

Maria Halloran, a junior at Indiana’s Bloomington High School North, won the Educational Theatre Association’s annual Democracyworks student essay writing competition.

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.

Federal Budget Update

Both the House and the Senate finally ended the FY 2013 federal budget process when they passed a continuing resolution that incorporated across-the-board cuts, known as the sequester. The compromise averted a government shutdown and will fund federal discretionary programs and agencies through September 30, 2013. These automatic cuts mean that cultural agencies will receive 5 percent less than last year, resulting in a \$7 million cut for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), bringing the budget to \$138.4 million for the year.

Upon completion of FY 2013, the House and Senate quickly passed starkly different FY 2014 budget resolutions. While the proposals are generally nonbinding, they do represent each chamber's majority party budget priorities. The Republican-majority House budget seeks to balance the budget in 10 years and calls for the elimination of the NEA and other cultural agencies. The Democratic-majority Senate budget calls for raising more revenues



Philanthropist Earle Mack testified against a 28% cap on charitable deductions before the House Ways and Means Committee with the assistance of Nina Ozlu Tunceli of Americans for the Arts Action Fund on February 14, 2013.

from taxes to achieve federal deficit reduction and suggests capping the value of itemized deductions, including those to charities.

President Obama released his FY 2014 budget request, which proposes to increase the NEA budget to \$154 million, but again proposed capping itemized deductions to 28 percent (which, if enacted, could lead

to reductions in private giving to nonprofit charities). His budget is intended to give direction to Congress as the separate appropriation subcommittees begin work to pass specific spending plans.

Congress continues to work on tax reform, holding hearings in the House Ways and Means committee to inform possible tax policy changes that could affect gifts to charity. Pro-arts Reps. Dave Reichert (R-WA) and John Lewis (D-GA) were selected to head a working group dedicated to studying policies impacting nonprofits and charities.



In Memoriam

Phil Ramone
1934–2013

Legendary music producer and arts education advocate.

Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

Arts Advocates See Mixed Results in the States

As always, arts advocates are facing a wide range of battles in the states with some big wins and disappointing losses. Arts advocates have successfully fought numerous attacks, including a bill in New Hampshire that would have abolished the Department of Cultural Resources and another bill in Oklahoma that would have eliminated funding to the state arts council. In Kansas, the limited arts funds that were restored last year are now facing cuts in the newly formed Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission. South Carolina's governor, who was successful in shutting the arts commission's doors for eight days last summer, is proposing a merger of government agencies, which would result in a significant loss of services for artists.

Yet, other states are celebrating. Maryland's arts council is celebrating a \$2 million increase. California might be headed toward a major increase this year as well because of the state's fiscal surplus. Other states are also hoping to see positive gains. A bill moving through the North Carolina legislature would require arts education as a graduation requirement and Arkansas' legislature passed a bill that will fund a study through the Arkansas Department of Education on the impact of arts in education. In Rhode Island, Rep. Donna Walsh introduced a bill that would create a statewide sales tax exemption for purchasing art.

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Your Quarterly Arts Action Fund Newsletter

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Drummer Matt Sorum Raises Money for
Arts Action Fund PAC

PAC Update



Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Drummer Joins Forces with Arts Action Fund Members

This year's Arts Action Fund Reception & Fundraiser at Arts Advocacy Day featured guest speaker Hall of Fame drummer **Matt Sorum** of Guns N' Roses, Velvet Revolver, and Camp Freddy. Matt and Abby Berman co-founded **Adopt the Arts Foundation**, a Los Angeles-based organization specifically dedicated to improving the academic performance of public school students through the gift of making art and music. Adopt the Arts brings together well-known artists, policymakers, public figures, and the general public to save the arts in America's public school system.

Matt helped raise money for the Arts Action Fund PAC to support pro-arts candidates. Arts Action Fund members joined Matt for this special event the evening before heading to Capitol Hill for Arts Advocacy Day.



Guest speaker and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame drummer Matt Sorum with (L to R) co-founder Abby Berman of Adopt the Arts and Arts Action Fund members and Arts Advocacy Day attendees Lori Robishaw of Ohio and Margot Knight of California.

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.

