



To: County Arts Network Members

From: Jay Dick, Senior Director of State and Local Government Affairs

Re: Public Partnerships End of Year Update

Date: January 28, 2022

After almost two years, our work with our public partners is starting to get back to “normal.” In person meetings are returning – albeit with onsite rapid covid testing and vaccination cards, social distancing and masks. But, it is a start and I am grateful.

Americans for the Arts’ work with our public partners continued albeit in an augmented form. Our first in person meeting was in July at the National Association of Counties (NACo) conference followed by the National Lt Governors Association (NLGA) in August and then again in December. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) also met in December. Finally, the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) just held their Winter Conference last week here in DC.

Overall, attendance at these conferences is generally down with each group offering some sort of virtual component so members can participate remotely. But, for those who attend, there is a sense of gratitude to be able to be back in person with their colleagues.

In addition to these in person meetings, the various organizations have offered a variety of virtual ways to participate. For example, NLGA offered small “virtual coffee chats” with Lt. Governors. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) stepped up their virtual pod casting with almost weekly events.

Based upon the partners schedules at this point, everyone is anticipating a return to their normal meeting schedules, although with proper safety protocols in place. So, we shall see what 2022 brings.

Americans for the Arts continues to be the only nonprofit arts and cultural organization to partner with these groups of elected officials representing the interests of you, our members. These groups represent all levels of government and Americans for the Arts is pleased to be able to impact their decision-making processes around the arts and culture. Further, we stand out in comparison to the corporate and other major organizations that work with these organizations and even then, we have a larger, more public role than most of these other companies/organizations.

So, as our members, thank you for your support of these activities which not only brings greater visibility to the arts and culture, but more resources.

The United States Conference of Mayors

Nina Ozlu Tunceli, Americans for the Arts Chief Counsel for Government and Public Affairs continues to work with USCM and the various mayors to keep the arts and culture top of mind.

On January 3, 2022, Mayor Francis X. Suarez of Miami was sworn in as USCM's 80th President along with Reno, NV Mayor Hillary Schieve as Vice President. Mayor Schieve is also the current chair of the USCM Tourism, Arts, Parks, Entertainment and Sports (TAPES) Committee. She is a strong supporter of the arts and creative economy, and we have a strong working relationship with her. USCM remains one of our strongest partners and Mayor Suarez continues to demonstrate his commitment to the arts and creative economy.

During the annual Winter Meeting of The United States Conference of Mayors in Washington, DC on January 18-21, 2022, Americans for the Arts and USCM co-presented the 2022 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards at the Annual Mayors Arts Breakfast. This year, we were pleased to honor [Mayor Sylvester Turner](#) of Houston, Texas and [Mayor Gavin Buckley](#) of Annapolis, MD for their work in advancing the arts and creative economy in their cities. In addition to the Local Arts Leadership Awards to these two mayors, we were pleased to honor [Bill Anoatubby](#), Governor of the Chickasaw Nation for his work over the past 40 years in promoting the arts as part of his Nation's culture and history. While Governor Anoatubby was not able to travel to DC to receive the award in person, we will "re-present" the award to the Governor in person at an event in Oklahoma later this year. The Governor is the first leader of an Indigenous Nation to receive a Public Leadership in the Arts Award.



2022 Recipients of the Public Leadership in the Arts Award for Local Arts Leadership.

L-R – Former USCM President and Burnsville, MN Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, Annapolis, MD Mayor Gavin Buckley, recipient of the Local Arts Leadership Award for a city with a population of less than 100,000; Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, recipient of the Local Arts Leadership Award for a city with a population of 100,000 or more; Americans for the Arts Chief Counsel Nina Ozlu Tunceli, and USCM Executive Director and CEO Tom Cochran.

At the USCM meeting, Americans for the Arts is also able to advocate on your behalf at the federal level. As is USCM's tradition, they had an impressive line up of federal officials including President Biden, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy and 12 Cabinet Secretaries. While the President and Congressional leaders don't traditionally take questions, the Cabinet Secretaries are often very accessible.



For example, Isabella Casillas Guzman, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration spoke to the USCM's Small Business and Entrepreneurship Task Force. This was a very small setting (see photo of the Administrator, in the dark red dress) speaking to the group of around 30 mayors and other attendees. Americans for the Arts was able to publicly thank the Administrator for her support of the Shuttered Venues Operating Grants (SVOG) and urge her to continue this program and to expand it if at all possible. She responded positively and Americans for the Arts will continue to work with the Administrator and her staff to keep the creative economy front and center.

For more information, please contact **Nina Ozlu Tunceli**, our Chief Counsel of Government and Public Affairs at ntunceli@artsusa.org.

Coming up: Americans for the Arts will participate in USCM's June 3-6, 2022 Summer meeting in Reno, NV.

National Lt. Governors Association

The National Lt. Governors Association (NLGA) was the only organization to meet twice in person in 2022, although their normal June/July meeting was pushed back to the end of September with their Winter meeting happened in early December.

Their first meeting was in Point Clear, Alabama. Attendance for this event was a little sparse, which is to be expected with only 14 Lt. Governors in attendance. But, three of these Lt. Governors were new to NLGA and thus to AFTA. They were: Georgia Lt. Governor Geoff Duncan, West Virginia Lt. Governor Craig Blair and Washington State Lt. Governor Denny Heck.

As some of you might recall, prior to the meeting, I reached out to each SAAN and SAA of states that had

a Lt. Governor attending inviting them to give me any one pagers on their organization or their state's arts statistics for the welcome packet that I compile for each Lt. Governor. That packet contained a welcome letter which listed their state's SAA and SAAN member. The packet also included: AAF Why the Arts Matter specific state sheet, latest Covid Impact on the Arts one pager, a one pager on AFTA, the photo sheet from 2020 AFTA awards which includes last years Lt. Gov photo, Social Impact pinwheel handout, and five Arts and Social Impact Explorer Fact Sheet which matched the topics of my in-person presentation (more on that later). Those topics were: Workforce Development, Prisons and Rehabilitation, Youth Development and Education, Arts and Military, and Health and Well being. This is addition to any documents the states provided to me.



On the opening night, NLGA had its evening event on a boat touring Mobile Bay. I had the opportunity to formally present our Public Leadership in the Arts Award to [Delaware Lt. Governor Bethany Hall-Long](#). I had a captive audience with all of the Lt. Governors in attendance. My 10-minute remarks focused around arts in health care, the topic that Lt. Governor Hall-Long is heavily involved with.



The next day, I had the opportunity to address the gathering. Given that NLGA hasn't been together in over a year, they gave each of the partners 4 minutes to "introduce" themselves to the Lt. Governors.

While most partners used their four minutes to talk about their organization, I used my time to talk about the "arts and" topics that I knew that specific Lt. Governors were involved with.

I also just didn't stand behind a microphone, but made my time more interesting for the Lt. Governors by engaging them when I talked about a specific "arts and" topic. For example, I know that Illinois Lt. Governor Stratton cares about juvenile justice reform.

Further, to add some fun, I collaborated with Louisiana Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser, a great supporter and NLGA staff to add in some art to my presentation. Basically, at the very end of my talk, I invited Lt. Gov Nungesser to join me in performing an "interpretive dance" for the group. Just as we were getting ready to "start," NLGA staff called "time" and we had to immediately stop – much to the delight of the Lt.

Governors. For the rest of the afternoon, "interpretive dance" was a trending topic.

The tweet was from one of my peers at NLGA who nicely captured my message and my interaction with the Lt. Governors. The photo shows me engaging Iowa Lt. Governor Adam Gregg (in blue jacket).

As with USCM, NLGA attracts a variety of federal officials. I made two great connections to assist AFTA in our other spheres.

-David Burns, Acting Deputy Associate Administrator for Exploration in the Science Mission Directorate at NASA HQ. We are currently in talks with NASA to partner with their Artemis program on how to use the Arts to encourage STEM participation in youth, esp with under-represented groups.

-Justin Maxson, Deputy Under Secretary of Rural Development US Dept of Agriculture. I chatted with him about our work with Western Governors and that I would like to talk to him in more detail about how USDA could support the program.

A few months later, I had the pleasure of attending and participating in the NLGA Winter meeting November 30- Dec 2nd in Cincinnati, OH. We had 17 Lt Governors attending of which five are new – either being recently elected or attending their first NLGA meeting. Those new Lt. governors were:

Oregon Secretary of State Shemia Fagan (they don't have a Lt. Gov), Ohio Lt. Governor Jon Husted, Rhode Island Lt. Governor Sabina Matos, Virgin Islands Lt. Governor Tregenza Roach and Lt. Governor Colorado Dianna Primavera



For new Lt. Governors, had a packet of information for them which also contained information the SAA or SAAN sends me.

I had the chance to visit with each of the

17 Lt. Governors and prior to the meeting, had reached out to the various SAA and SAAN organization to get any specific messages they would like me to convey or ask. I received back five requests from SAA/SAAN members to convey information, which I conveyed and followed up with the SAA/SAAN.

Some interesting threads:

Colorado Lt Gov Primavera states she is a dancer on her official bio. When I asked her, she said that she was a ballroom dancer. The conversation led from there for me to learn that she oversees Colorado Commission for Indian Affairs. Specifically, she is working on a native American nutrition program, which lines up with our Indigenous Arts and Nutrition program that we are partnering with the Western Governors Association.

Rhode Island has a new Lt Governor. Sabina Matos was appointed this year when former Lt. Governor Dan McGee became Governor. When I asked Randy Rosenbaum at the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts if he had any messages. He did one better by writing back CCing me on an email to Lt. Gov Matos introducing her to me. She wrote back saying she looked forward to the meeting and meeting me. When we had dinner together, I found her to be very supportive of the arts and also a warrior for safe and affordable housing. So, another topic to consider for our work.

Ohio Lt. Governor Jon Husted has never attended an NLGA conference. At lunch, we had a great discussion about the future of education with one of the conference speakers, Dr. David Staley, professor at Ohio State University. Of note we talked about how the professor thought we would be seeing new college majors to help prepare students for future jobs (that we don't know what they will be). Those majors are: "Innovation" "Creativity"



As always, the arts show up in NLGA's agenda. In this instance, we had Christmas Carolers sing to us at the closing reception. But, that said, I/AFTA was referred to multiple times in NLGA meetings around the topics of the economy, arts in health care/military and education.

Coming up: Americans for the Arts will attend and participate in the March NLGA DC meeting which will be March 30- April 2.

National Conference of State Legislatures



The National Conference of State Legislature (NCSL) held their biennial Jobs Conference in Las Vegas in December which Americans for the Arts was a sponsor. At this meeting, we presented the Public Leadership in the Arts Award for State Arts Leadership to [Colorado Representative Leslie Herod](#).

I will be traveling to Denver in March to re-present the award to Rep. Herod during the Colorado Arts and Business Council's Annual Awards Luncheon.

With Representative Herod and myself, is Tim Storey, NCSL's Executive Director.

While I reported on this in my last memo, I wanted to make sure that people know about NCSL created their American Rescue Plan (ARPA) [Tracker](#). Just click on the “arts, culture and tourism.”



ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Fund Allocations

State Fiscal Recovery Fund Category ▾

- Select all
- Access to Justice
- Arts, Culture and Tourism
- Broadband
- Economic Relief and Development
- Education
- General Infrastructure
- Housing
- Human Services
- Other
- Public Health Response
- Revenue Replacement
- State Operation and Administration
- Unemployment Trust Fund

States

- Select all
- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii

Authority

- Select all
- Legislative
- Executive

Description Search

Update	Category	State	Authority	Description	Source
7/7/2021	Arts, Culture and Tourism	Alaska	Legislative	\$90 million for grants to tourism and other businesses to offset revenue loss or to respond to COVID-19.	Legislation
7/7/2021	Arts, Culture and Tourism	California	Legislative	\$95 million for the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) for Visit California to promote travel and tourism.	Legislation
7/8/2021	Arts, Culture and Tourism	Connecticut	Legislative	\$100,000 to the Department of Economic and Community Development for the Norwalk Symphony.	Legislation
7/8/2021	Arts, Culture and Tourism	Connecticut	Legislative	\$2 million to the Department of Economic and Community Development for the Working Cities Challenge	Legislation
7/8/2021	Arts, Culture and Tourism	Connecticut	Legislative	\$200,000 to the Department of Economic and Community Development for the Downtown Storefront Business District.	Legislation
7/8/2021	Arts, Culture and Tourism	Connecticut	Legislative	\$200,000 to the Department of Economic and Community Development for the Music Haven.	Legislation
7/8/2021	Arts, Culture and Tourism	Connecticut	Legislative	\$30,000 to the Department of Economic and Community Development for the Playhouse Park.	Legislation
7/8/2021	Arts, Culture and Tourism	Connecticut	Legislative	\$30,000 to the Department of Economic and Community Development for the VFW Rocky Hill.	Legislation

Coming up: Americans for the Arts will participate at NCSL’s Annual Conference in August 1-3 in Denver, CO.

National Association of Counties

The National Association of Counties’ (NACo) was the last conference I attended in person before the pandemic. It was also the first in-person conference to re-start post pandemic with their Annual Conference happening July 9-12 at National Harbor in Prince George’s County just outside of Washington, DC. Their average attendance is around 5,000 folks, but for this meeting they had around 3,000 (but they also planned and advertised it in just over three months). They did do a virtual component, but of the 3,000, only around 10% was virtual. In general, attendees just wanted to be in person and see their colleagues.



While I have previously reported this, AFTA presented the 2021 Public Leadership in the Arts Award to Mercer County, WV [Commissioner Greg Puckett](#) for his continued work in promoting the arts in his county and beyond. This photo is from the award presentation at a NACo general session in front

of their 3,000 attendees. This was done as part of the NACo Achievement awards where they give out certificates of accomplishment in 18 categories. We generally present the award halfway through the list and we are the only “outside” award and our awardee is the only recipient that is allowed to talk. The other just smile and take a photo with their certificate. Of note, one of the 18 award categories is for Arts, Culture and Historic Preservation. This year Leon County, FL was the recipient for their work in partnering with The Village Square, a non-profit public education organization dedicated to building civil discourse and where they developed a new series of events called “Created Equal.”

With Commissioner Puckett and I is NACo President Gary Moore, who is from Boone County, Kentucky (which is just over the Kentucky/Ohio State line from Cincinnati.)

Lastly, various NACo Policy committees approved four arts related resolutions.

- Proposed Resolution Encouraging Congress to Provide the Resources Necessary for Developing and Expanding Arts and Cultural Programming in Counties
- Proposed Resolution Encouraging Congress to Fund Creative Arts Therapies for Treating Veterans
- Proposed Resolution Encouraging Congress to Fund the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Incentive Grants at the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Proposed Resolution Encouraging Congress to Enact the National Heritage Area Act to Establish Uniform Criteria, Oversight, Accountability, and Funding Stability for Congressionally-Designated National Heritage Areas

NACo uses these resolutions to authorize their government affairs department to advocate on these issues at the federal level.

Additionally, Matt Chase, NACo’s Executive Director met with Nolen Bivens to discuss our work together. In addition to our existing work, Americans for the Arts is sponsoring the 2022 NACo calendar which features artwork from elementary and high school students along with information about the arts and creative sector. This calendar was sent to all 15,000 county elected officials in the country. So, the next time you go visit your county commissioner, ask them where their calendar is!

Coming up: NACo will host its 2022 Legislative Conference in Washington, DC in February. We will continue to participate in the monthly Arts and Culture Committee meetings.

Western Governors Association

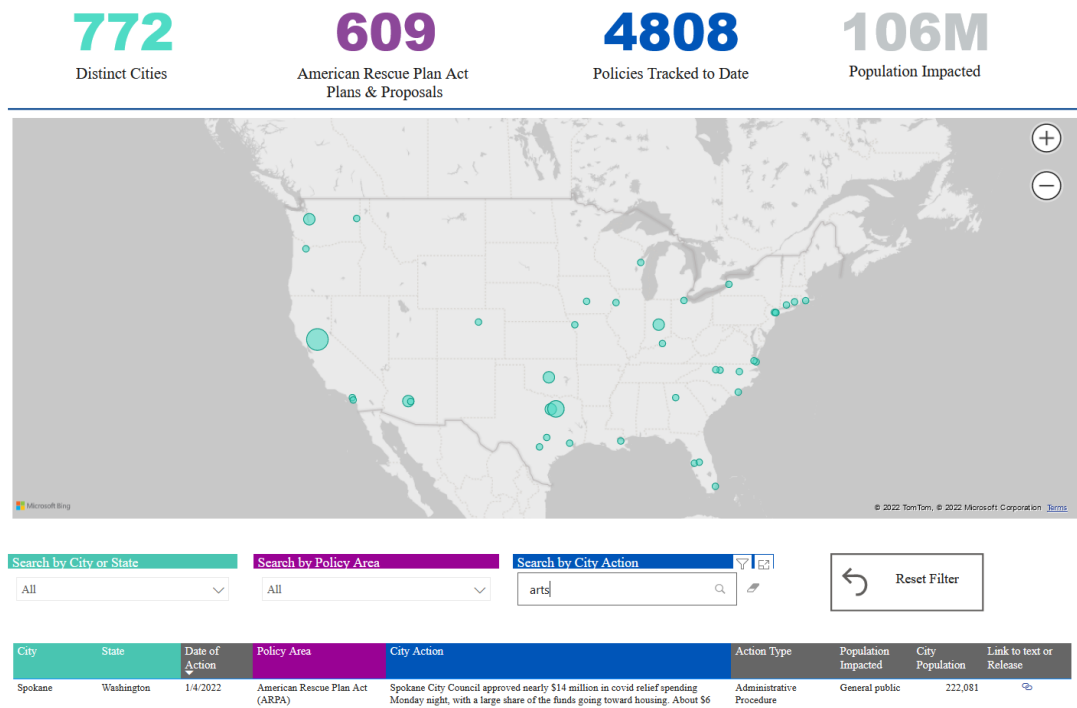
Our work with Western Governors Association (WGA) and the Western Governors Foundation (WGF) continues. As you will recall, in early 2020, we were approached by WGA staff to identify ways to partner around a project to establish their priorities and focus. This topic that the governors and AFTA agreed upon was “Arts and Healthy Living in the West.” The project consists of two parts: the Indigenous Nutrition Education and Culinary Arts Series and Creative Aging. WGF and AFTA are in the last stages of preparing our written and video summaries as part of our knowledge exchange final report.

Americans for the Arts will also be sponsoring WGA’s [Celebrate the West](#) Student Arts Competition.

Coming up: Americans for the Arts will continue to work with WGA and WGF staff on the Arts and Healthy Living Project and attend their summer meeting July 26-28 in Idaho.

National League of Cities

Nolen Bivens and I met with NLC President and CEO Clarence Anthony to discuss ways the two organizations can work more closely together. We plan on a speaking exchange of CEOs at each other’s conferences, a possible arts award and promoting each other’s research. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.



Additionally, I want to point out that NLC has a local ARPA funds tracker which can be used to identify ARPA funds that have been designated for the arts and creative economy. You can check it out [here](#). You will just need to type in “ arts” in the “search by city action” (hint, but a space in front of “arts” as it will not pull up words like “smart”).

Coming up: Americans for the Arts will participate in the NCL Annual meeting November 17-19 in Kansas City, MO.

ICMA (City/County Managers Association)

ICMA recently asked AFTA if we would work with them to design a training module on creative placemaking. This module would be designed for ICMA members (city/county managers and their staff) to provide basic information about creative placemaking, examples of cities/counties who have been successful and tools to evaluate their city/counties cultural assets and finally to embrace creative placemaking as a program their city/county. AFTA and ICMA staff are in still in conversation but when we have more concrete details, we will share with you.

Coming up: I will be working with ICMA to establish an award for a city/county manager.

2022 Schedule

I wanted to share with you where our various Public Partner's conferences are being held in 2022. If we are coming to a city near you, I will be reaching out, or feel free to contact me about ideas to get you involved.

2022 Public Partner Conferences

United States Conference of Mayors

Winter Meeting*	January 18-21	Washington, DC
Annual Meeting*	June 3-6	Reno, NV

National Lt. Governors Association

Legislative Meeting	March 30-April 1	Washington, DC
Annual Meeting*	July 20-22	Chicago, IL
Ex. Cmte. Meeting	Nov 30 – Dec 2	New Orleans, LA

National Association of Counties

Legislative Conf.	Feb. 12-16	Washington, DC
Annual Meeting*	July 21-24	Denver, CO

National Conference of State Legislatures

Legislative Summit*	Aug 1-3	Denver, CO
Military Task Force	May 19-21	Seattle, WA

Fall Forum	None - Cancelled	Washington, DC
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National League of Cities

Cong. City Conf.	March 14-16	Washington, DC
Cities Summit	November 15-19	Kansas City, MO

ICMA

Annual Conference	September 17-21	Columbus, OH
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Western Governors

Annual Conference	July 26-28	Coeur d'Alene, ID
Winter Meeting	December 5-7	Phoenix, AZ

*Public Leadership in the Arts Award Presentation

I hope you found this report useful. Thanks for reading and never hesitate to reach out should you have any questions. -Jay