



**To: Local Arts Network Members**

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

**Re: Public Partnerships Mid-Year Update**

**Date: August 22, 2019**

As we are enduring August heat, and getting ready for school to start, it is again time for me to update you on Americans for the Arts' Public Partner Activities.

Since the last update, The United States Conference of Mayors, the National Lt. Governors Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures and the National Association of Counties have all had their annual meetings. So, it has been a busy time!

As always, thanks for reading and please let me know if you have any questions about how your elected officials are involved in these associations.

## The United States Conference of Mayors



*Second Lady Karen Pence and Honorary Co-Chair of Blue Star Museums with USCM President Mayor Bryan K. Barnett of Rochester Hills, Michigan. The Second Lady was a keynote presenter at the 2020 annual meeting of The United States Conference of Mayors in Honolulu on June 29, 2019. She promoted the NEA's Blue Star Museums and Creative Forces programs.*



*Americans for the Arts Chief Counsel **Nina Ozlu Tunceli** spoke, along with NEA Chair Mary Anne Carter, at The U.S. Conference of Mayors' Tourism, Arts, Parks, Entertainment and Sports (TAPES) Committee meeting during the mayors' annual meeting in Honolulu on June 29, 2019.*

The USCM held its annual conference in Honolulu, HI from June 28 – July 1 where Americans for the Arts provided highlights of the latest research in arts and offered several arts policy resolutions at the Tourism, Arts, Parks, Entertainment and Sports (TAPES) Committee through TAPES Chairman and Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve. The resolutions went on to be unanimously adopted by the entire conference of Mayors on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Those resolutions are:

[National Arts and Humanities Month](#)

[Arts and Culture Funding for FY 2020 Federal Appropriations](#)

[Celebrating National Arts in Education Week](#)

[ArtsVote 2020](#)

[Annual Profile of Local Arts Agency Research](#)

[Americans Speak Out About the Arts](#)

[Funding Arts, Health, and Well-being Across the Military Continuum](#)

While these resolutions express the view of The USCM membership, they can also be used to remind mayors across the country about the national support for local arts initiatives. We encourage you to print/download these resolutions and remind your own mayor about what they can do to support the arts locally.

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

**Coming up:**

Americans for the Arts will again be participating in the second annual delegation of mayors attending Burning Man on August 28, 2019.

Americans for the Arts will host the annual Mayor's Arts Awards Breakfast at USCM's Winter meeting in Washington, DC on January 24, 2020, to present the 2020 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors will be again joining Americans for the Arts and the Arts Action Fund in presenting ArtsVote forums at both the DNC in Milwaukee and the RNC in Charlotte in the summer of 2020.

## National Lt. Governors Association



*Lt. Governors pose for a group photo at their Annual Meeting.*

NLGA hosted their annual meeting in Wilmington, DE July 17-19. 22 Lt. Governors attended- which is down a few from average. As usual, the arts and culture made several appearances.



I had the pleasure of presenting the 2019 Public Leadership in the Arts Award to Tennessee [Lt. Governor Randy McNally](#). The Award was presented at NLGA's evening event at the Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library. Americans for the Arts was the only speaker on the evening's program which gave us a great spotlight.

A little about Lt. Governor McNally (R-TN). He has been a longtime supporter of the arts and culture in Tennessee during his more than four decades of public service. He has championed achievement of public goals through the arts, including support for arts education as part of a well-rounded education, health and wellness for veterans and seniors through the arts and economic and community development through leveraging arts and culture assets in Tennessee communities.

Lt. Governor McNally was a founding member of the Tennessee Legislative Arts Caucus, one of the oldest in the United States. As Chair of the Senate Finance Ways & Means Committee and as Lieutenant Governor of the State of Tennessee, Lt. Governor McNally has steadfastly supported Tennessee's public funding formula for the arts through specialty license plates that citizens can choose to purchase, and through good times and difficult times, he has assured fair treatment for the budget of the Tennessee Arts Commission.

I also had the opportunity to speak to the group on our State Military and Veterans Arts Initiative along with highlighting our Social Impact Explorer (which each Lt. Governor received). Speaking of the

Initiative, I had one-on-one conversations with two of our three pilot states – Delaware and Louisiana – to make sure everything was proceeding smoothly. Louisiana will have the first convening October 8th. Delaware will go next in early 2019 and South Dakota will end the pilot program at the end of March 2019.

**Coming up:** Americans for the Arts will attend the NLGA Executive Committee meeting in Kansas City, MO in December and continue to work with the three pilot states for our NLGA Arts Initiative.

## **National Association of Counties**

NACo's Annual Conference was held on July 11-15 in sunny and (very) hot Las Vegas. As always, there were multiple arts and culture activities for attendees.



On Saturday July 13, the Arts and Culture Commission met with around 110 people attending – again, a great number given that only 25 people are on this commission. The session was titled: Creating Vibrant Communities Through Public Art. In addition to myself, other speakers included: Tony Manfredi, Executive Director of the Nevada Arts Council; Commissioner Shelly Taub, chair of the commission; Gabrielle Enfield, Washoe County, NV Grants Administrator; Joe Meschede, Civic Arts Coordinator, Burning Man Project and Mickey Sprott, Cultural Supervisor, Clark County, NV (see photo L-R). I gave an overview of the federal arts landscape, distributed the Americans for the Arts [Social Impact Explorer](#) and provided responses to various questions.

A special thanks to Tony as he did a great job talking about what the arts means to Nevada and for using a lot of Americans for the Arts' data including our LAA survey, AEP5 study, and the Creative Industries.

The next day, NACo held its Awards luncheon with approximately 800 attendees (out of about 3,000 total). This event is not part of the standard conference and attendees have to buy a lunch ticket. Our Arts Award is the only external award that is presented, and our recipient is the only awardee who is allowed to speak. We were pleased to honor [Guilford County Commissioner Kay Cashion](#) of Greensboro, North Carolina, with our the Public Leadership in the Arts Award for County Arts

Leadership. Kay has been a longtime champion of the arts and culture at NACo and perfectly embodies the criteria for the award.

A little about Commissioner Cashion. During her tenure as Chair of the NACo Arts and Culture Commission, Cashion used a variety of promotional materials including presentations, posters, and buttons to convey the value of the visual and performing arts in areas of great importance to NACo and other government officials: economic development, veterans' health, rehabilitative efforts for detained juveniles and incarcerated adults, and education. Under her leadership, participation in the Arts and Culture Commission increased from approximately a dozen to more than a hundred members within a two-year period. As a result of her success, Cashion was selected as a speaker at National Arts Advocacy Day in Washington, DC, where she encouraged attendees to share the importance of the arts with their local county representatives.

A little note about the awards luncheon. I arrived early and put down 800 of our Social Explorers brochures and referenced them from the podium when I spoke. After the luncheon, I went around and picked up the Explorers that were left over because they are expensive, and we have a limited supply. I was shocked that I picked up a little under 200 which means that 75% of attendees took our explorer. Keep in mind that these attendees were not necessarily "arts folks" but elected officials of various backgrounds and interests. I consider this a positive development.

That same afternoon, following a successful mobile tour last year in Nashville, NACo hosted a mobile tour to their Springs Preserve, WaterWorks and Boomtown 1905 Exhibits. This was an interesting combination of attendees as the tour included a museum, an active water pumping station, a historical recreation, and a wilderness preserve – all located at one location. The tour was sponsored by the NACo Arts and Culture Commission, the NACo Environmental Committee, and the NACo Natural Resources Committee. Another great example of the arts partnering with other topics. For the record, when they said "Preserve" – they mean desert – the temperature for our outdoor tour was 109 degrees---- but it was a dry heat...



That night, the NACo Arts and Culture Commission hosted a reception sponsored by Americans for the Arts at the Clark County government building which is a beautiful combination of functional office space and public art. Their rotunda is simply stunning. We re-presented our Arts Award to Guilford County Commissioner Kay Cashion and I gave some remarks about the state of the arts, our Social Impact Explorer and how the arts authentically overlap with other topics.

This conference also marked the end of a two-year Creative Counties Initiative that was supported by an NEA Our Town Grant. NACo and Americans for the Arts Staff worked with 6 counties across the county and held two workshops for any NACo member/conference attendee. We have been awarded a second Our Town grant and are happy to continue this program.

**Coming up:** NACo will host its 2020 Legislative Conference in Washington, DC next April where Americans for the Arts will participate in their Arts and Culture Committee meeting.

## National Conference of State Legislatures

NCSL held its annual convention last week in Nashville with 6,000 attendees. This is on the upswing given they were around 4,000 a few years ago.



I had the pleasure of speaking at the Military and Veterans Affairs Task Force session titled: The Battle Within: Preventing Military Suicides. I believe this is the first time AFTA has spoken about how the arts can be utilized to help prevent suicides. I was joined by other non-arts professionals who took a more clinical look at the topic where I provided some great examples of the work that is already being done to help with PTSD and TBI which are contributing factors to a person committing suicide. My comments were well received, and I had multiple people approach me afterwards to find out what is being done in their state. Thanks to Americans for the Arts' Marete Wester for helping me prepare for this session.

The session summary and speakers were: Suicides among active-duty service members reached record highs in 2018. And suicides among veterans, particularly young veterans and female veterans, are almost double that of the general population. Along with efforts by the federal government, states are training professionals to assess suicide risk, increasing funding for specific programs, and better supporting service members' transition to civilian life. Explore these and other innovative state policy efforts to prevent military suicides.

**Moderator:** Representative Tina L. Orwall, Washington (at podium)

**Speaker:** Jay Dick, Americans for the Arts, Washington, D.C. (far left)

**Speaker:** Wendy Lakso, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, D.C. (third from left)

**Speaker:** Charlie Severance-Medaris, NCSL (second from right)

**Speaker:** Jennifer Stuber, University of Washington School of Social Work (second from left)



I think the most powerful or influential person in Tennessee is Dolly Parton who spoke and sang at the opening session. I was stunned that she was interviewed by Tennessee Governor Bill Lee. Instead of the Governor just welcoming attendees, he stuck around on stage for an hour interviewing Dolly – a role he obviously relished. I have never seen a sitting governor playing the role of interviewer. Dolly has a foundation that, among other things, provides about 1.1 million books a MONTH to children age 0-5 to promote literacy and childhood brain

development. I had a nice talk with her foundation CEO and I am working to see if there is any partnership opportunities.



A special note: Our very own Julia Kirt, former Executive Director for Oklahomans for the Arts attended NCSL for the first time given her new role as an Oklahoma State Senator. It was great to catch up with her and we are planning a joint Americans for the Arts blog post on her adventures.

**Coming up:** Americans for the Arts will be one of a select group of organizations to speak and attend the NCSL Executive Committee meeting in Honolulu, HI this October. Further, Americans for the Arts will be speaking at the NCSL Military and Veterans Affairs Task Force meeting at the same conference.

## **Crossover between National Lt. Governors Association and the National Conference of State Legislatures**



I also had the pleasure of re-presenting Lt. Governor McNally his Public Leadership in the Arts Award at the NCSL conference in Nashville. This worked out perfectly as NCSL happened to be in Nashville where our awardee was from, the Lt. Governor is also the President of the Senate in Tennessee, so he was highly involved at NCSL. A special thanks to Anne Pope, Executive Director of the Tennessee Arts Commission for helping to arrange this opportunity.

The award presentation was held at the Tennessee Delegation Reception at the law offices of Butler Snow. It was the perfect event as it seemed like every Tennessee State Senator, Representative, staffer



and lobbyist were present as the place was absolutely packed. I would estimate 350 people were present.



The arts award was the only thing on the agenda, so we had a prime opportunity to highlight the arts.

Helping me to present the award was the Vice Chair of the Tennessee Arts Commission, [Jan McNally](#), the Lt. Governor's wife. After I made brief comments highlighting our Explorer, Jan talked about what the arts specifically do for the state of Tennessee economically and job wise.

Further, I was introduced by Tennesseans for the Arts lobbyist Molly Pratt. She appreciated being able to be part of this as it highlighted her above

the other scores of lobbyists present as she got to speak.

## **National League of Cities**

No major news for this edition for NLC

**Coming up:** NLC is having their Cities Summit in San Antonio this November. I continue to work with NCL leadership to establish an award honoring a city councilperson in 2019.

## **ICMA (City/County Managers Association)**

Recently, Americans for the Arts was invited to organize a panel at the [2019 Brownfields Conference](#) which is co-organized by ICMA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The conference, which will be in Los Angeles in December, focuses on ways to reuse and remediate industrial or other contaminated areas. Like the session on veterans' suicide prevention, this panel will be the first time that Americans for the Arts has spoken on arts and the environment to a group of elected officials and other key decision makers.

The panel is titled: Using Cultural Assets to Repurpose Industrial Areas while Increasing Economic Impact. Attendees will see the following description.

Every city has cultural assets - they might be hidden or need a little dusting off - but they exist in cities large and small. Learn how to identify and harness your culture assets to repurpose industrial sites, attract cultural tourist, create jobs, promote sustained economic development and increase tax revenues. Americans for the Arts' [Social Explorer](#) identifies 26 different topics which the arts authentically partners with for economic growth and sustainability. These topics include the obvious - arts education - but also topics such as arts in health care, or arts and the environment. Participants will learn about the Los Angeles' Taylor Yard Rail Yard project and how the city is safely transforming this

industrial site into a livable, walkable space with new river access using, in part, the arts and culture which will be available to all residents. Harness the arts for economic growth whether you are a city of 2,500 or 3 million.

The panel will consist of [Christopher Hawthorne](#), who is the Chief Design Officer for the city of Los Angeles, a position appointed by Mayor Eric Garcetti. [Danielle Brazell](#) who is the General Manager of the [Department of Cultural Affairs](#) for the City of Los Angeles and an Americans for the Arts' Board member and [myself](#).



Further, ICMA recently reached out to me to ask if I could recommend a key note speaker from the cultural world. I happily recommended another Americans for the Arts' Board member [Vijay Gupta](#) who is not only an accomplished violinist, but a passionate advocate for artistic voices at the center of social justice. As a 2011 TED Senior Fellow, Vijay founded and began directing Street Symphony, a non-profit organization dedicated to engaging underserved communities experiencing homelessness and incarceration in Los Angeles through musical performance and dialogue.

In addition to Vijay being invited to speak at the conference, plans are being made to allow ICMA members to volunteer at a [Street Symphony](#) event while the conference is in town. This is a wonderful example of creating a wholistic experience for the ICMA attendees.

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

## **National Governors Association**

No major news for this edition for NGA.

**Coming up:** We will work with NGA to create more opportunities to partner together.

## What About Those Other Conference Sponsors?



I thought I would share a photo that was taken of some of the other government affairs folks that make up the central group of people I work with at the various partner conferences and call my friends.

L-R – Claus Gramckow- Friedrich Naumann Foundation, who is DC based also an NLGA sponsor.  
Ann Thelen – Office Manager – NLGA (not pictured was NLGA Deputy Director Kellie Rittershausen) They are based in Kentucky.  
Chris Riley – Archer Daniels Midland (ADM). Chris is based in Illinois. He is also a great singer and on an nonprofit arts Board. ADM is also a sponsor at NGA, NLGA, NACo and USCM.  
Steve Lodge – American Beverage Association. DC based. ABA is a lead sponsor at USCM and is a sponsor at NLGA and NACo.

Not pictured – the other members of the core group are from the American College of Cardiology, Bayer, Apple, CVS Health, Home Builders, and the Public Affairs Council.

This picture illustrates how Americans for the Arts engages on a level with our nation's most substantial industry sectors in order to leverage our arts messaging and policy positions to key decisionmakers.

Thanks for reading and never hesitate to reach out should you have any questions. -Jay

[jay@artsusa.org](mailto:jay@artsusa.org)

202-371-2830 x2076