



Americans for the Arts Annual Convention Pittsburgh PA, June 13th- 16th, 2013

Summary

AFTA's Summit Highlights

- The Delaware Arts Alliance (DAA) participated in the State Arts Action Network (**SAAN**) council and networking meetings on June 13th - 15th.
- Nina Ozlu Tunceli, Americans for the Arts Chief Counsel and Executive Director for the Arts Action Fund, shared during the Arts Action Fund briefing that AFTA has set a goal of engaging one million members and raising \$250,000 for the PAC per election cycle (every two years). In order to accomplish its objectives, the SAAN network help (such as DAA) is fundamental. DAA will collaborate with the Arts Action Fund to capture additional membership.
- SAAN and the State Arts Agencies (SAA, in Delaware represented by the Delaware Division of the Arts) had a joint meeting on Saturday June 15th to find ways to deepen their collaboration. In Delaware, the Division of the Arts and DAA have had a close collaboration for a year. Jonathan Katz, CEO of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) suggested using arts dollar per capita to assess progress versus other states.
- The storm that hit the Northeast on June 13th led to delays and did not allow for the strategic discussion planned for the session. The discussion was postponed to the meeting in October.
- The SAAN Governance Committee certified the SAAN 2013 Council Elections. Guillermina Gonzalez was appointed Vice-Chair of the SAAN for the term beginning July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014.
- The City of Pittsburgh (with a total population of 306,211 according to the last Census) based its successful arts-economic development initiative on the establishment of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. The trust was established in 1984, supported by H.J. "Jack" Heinz II. It has been the catalyst behind the Cultural District's creation, development and promotion. The Trust is: (a) a performing arts presenter, (2) an owner/operator of theatres/galleries, (c) a catalyst for Cultural District development, (e) a visual arts exhibitor, (f) an arts collaborator. Numbers accomplished speak for

themselves, with 2 million visitors annually attending 3,000 + performances and events. The Cultural District encompasses 14 square blocks, seven theatres, four visual art galleries and multiple art spaces. Cumulative savings and costs avoidance has exceeded \$10 million since shared services began in 2000. The estimated annual economic impact exceeds \$250 million. For more details please check TrustArts.org

- The Opening Reception took place at the unique *Andy Warhol Museum*. The museum includes seven floors of Warhol's work and collection.

- **Seminars Attended / Main Ideas:**
 - *Cultural Ecosystems*: addressed the importance of mapping the cultural infrastructure in our community to pinpoint support mechanisms, draw attention to gaps and to help build a better case for the arts.
 - *Foundation giving to the arts*: about discovering the giving strategies of foundations. Important to find the intersection between community needs and business interests. The arts are not perceived enough as participating in social entrepreneurship and innovation. The panel advised to be selective when applying for grants and stressed the importance of building relationships prior to asking for money. Ideas suggested were: tactical urbanism and relating to the health field. Matching grants are becoming more prevalent.
 - *Partnering with businesses*: emphasized the need of having creative conversations between the arts and business sectors to partner on common issues. The panel suggested going after small businesses and being clear on the asking. Important to find the direct impact on the company's bottom line, give statistics and results, but do so while telling a story to humanize it. Consider sending youngsters as arts ambassadors to corporate events.
 - *Rapid Research Roundup*: Eight presenters offered an assortment of critical arts research and ways to apply them to engage stakeholders and to better communicate the value and impact of the arts.
 - *Cultural Planning on Community Revitalization*: Panelists made evident how cultural planning can leverage public engagement. They explained the cultural planning process, combining art leaders' big visions and bold new directions with ongoing fiscal challenges. Political support was defined as key but also identification of local leaders to help craft and move the agenda forward.
 - Several sessions, like the Keynote Luncheon on June 14th, the Leadership Awards and Convention Town Hall, and the Closing Keynote were live-streamed from the location:

- *The Keynote Luncheon* featured Jim Messina, Former White House Deputy Chief of Staff and the man behind the successful re-election of President Barack Obama, and Dr. Manuel Pastor, from the University of Southern California and the Environmental and Regional Equity program director. They spoke about the importance of messaging and storytelling when talking about the arts.
- *The Leadership Awards and Convention Town Hall* brought together: Danielle Brazell, Arts for LA; Mario Garcia Durham, Association for Performing Arts Presenters; Edgar L. Smith Jr., World Pac Paper; Molly Smith, Arena Stage; and Dr. William Strickland Jr., from Craftsmen's Guild. The discussion circled around how the arts are uniquely positioned to more deeply engage the members of our communities, particularly the youth. Noteworthy are Bill Strickland's results in Pittsburgh, PA with an underserved population.
- *The Closing Keynote* featuring: Paula Kerger, Public Broadcasting Service; Gary Knell, National Public Radio; moderated by Bob Lynch, Americans for the Arts. They spoke on the impact of the arts through stories and images and how public radio has contributed to the case for the arts. Trends and the future of public broadcasting were discussed.

Guillermina Gonzalez

Delaware Arts Alliance Executive Director