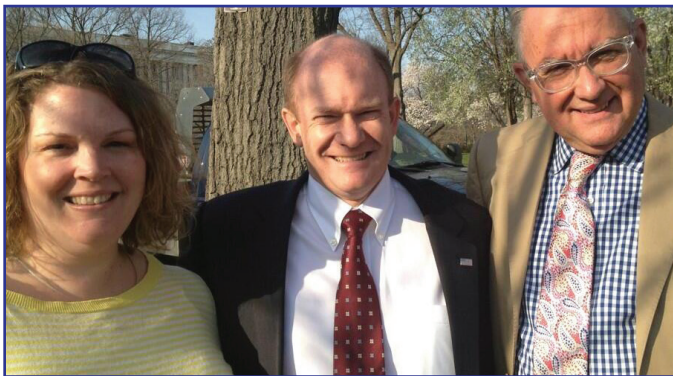


## MAKING YOUR VOICE FOR THE ARTS HEARD:

*Attend National Arts Advocacy Day in DC*

The 2015 National Arts Advocacy Day activities will take place on March 23 and 24. If you wish to join the DAA delegation and make your voice heard in support of the arts, please contact Nivea Mercado at (302) 425-5500, ext. 102 or by e-mail at [nmercado@delawareartalliance.org](mailto:nmercado@delawareartalliance.org).

Each year, National Arts Advocacy Day gives everyday people who are arts advocates the opportunity to speak up about the importance of the arts and arts education to Congressional leaders. Organized by Americans for the Arts, National Arts Advocacy Day brings together cultural and civic leaders, grassroots advocates, and arts educators to advocate for policies supporting the arts and promoting increased public funding for the arts on Capitol Hill.



*DAA Board President Carrie W. Gray, Senator Chris Coons, and DAA Board Member George Meldrum at National Arts Advocacy Day 2013.*

DAA annually leads a delegation of arts advocates to Washington, DC to participate. DAA board members, staff, Individual Members, and friends lobby Delaware's elected representatives to talk about the importance of the arts. Following the delegation's 2014 visit, Senator Chris Coons signed Senator Tom Udall's letter to the Appropriations Committee expressing support for robust funding for the NEA and NEH for Fiscal Year 2015.

## MARCH FOR THE ARTS

*Celebrating Arts Education in Delaware*

DAA and the Delaware Division of the Arts are partnering again in March for the annual March for the Arts celebration, which pays tribute to the important role of the arts in education.

The March for the Arts began in 2003 when Delaware Senator Dorinda A. Connor authored Senate Bill No. 116, designating the month of March as "March for Arts in Education Month". Senator Connor envisioned a month devoted to celebrating arts education throughout the state—recognizing the critical role that the arts play in providing a well-rounded education for Delaware's youth. Twelve years later, the month of March continues to recognize excellence in education in Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual Art. Stay tuned to the DAA website for more details!  
[www.delawareartsalliance.org](http://www.delawareartsalliance.org)

## ALL ABOARD!

*DAA Welcomes Amtrak as a Sponsor*

Amtrak has generously agreed to become a sponsor of DAA for 2015! We are delighted and grateful to Amtrak for their support of DAA's mission and programs.

Amtrak is generously sharing a discount for DAA Members and friends: a 30% companion rail fare discount for travel to and from WIL. Visit [www.Amtrak.com/VisitWilmington](http://www.Amtrak.com/VisitWilmington) and click on the "Book It Now" to make reservations and take part in this generous offer. Thank you Amtrak for your support of DAA!



## MEET THE DAA ARTS ADVOCATE:

*Brian DiSabatino*

Family, community, and work are closely connected for DAA Individual Member Brian DiSabatino. DiSabatino, who has worked for EDiS (a construction management company based in Wilmington) for 28 years, says that supporting the communities in which his employees live and work is an important part of the EDiS culture.



*DAA Individual Member Brian DiSabatino*

"The EDiS Company was founded on quality, community and family," DiSabatino says. "The ability to maintain those core values today, and experience success during our 100-year plus history, is due to EDiS' extraordinary company culture embraced by their employees. The responsibility our employees feel to the neighborhoods in which they live and work strengthens relationships between EDiS and our communities."

DiSabatino believes that supporting the arts and recognizing the vital role it plays in Wilmington is one of the most important ways to give back, which is why he chose to become a Delaware Arts Alliance Member. And DiSabatino practices what he preaches. He's on the board of the Grand Opera House and he uses his role as a business and community leader to advocate for how the arts supports economic development. To that end, he is most impressed with DAA's annual report on the arts, which raises awareness in a quantifiable way, and measures the economic value and impact of arts in Delaware.

With the support of business and community leaders like Brian DiSabatino, Delaware's arts scene is certain to continue to thrive. Thank you, Brian for your support and advocacy!

## JFC HEARINGS

*Making the Case for the Arts*

In February, DAA provided testimony to the Department of Education and Department of State (where the 2016 DDOA budget is presented) Joint Finance Committee hearings.

Speaking on behalf of the DAA at the Department of State hearings was Ashley SK Davis, Executive Director of Pieces of a Dream, Inc., a recipient of DDOA funding. She noted that the Americans for the Arts "Arts and Economic Prosperity Report" details that the arts give back \$9.9 million in local and state revenue. Additionally, she addressed how DDOA funding has helped Pieces of a Dream expand its dance troop as well programming. Davis closed her remarks by discussing DAA Institutional Supporter Wilmington Renaissance Corporation's plans to spearhead the Creative District in the Quaker Hill neighborhood of downtown Wilmington.

Thomas Dean, a teacher from the Brandywine School District, and Matt Coyle, a graduate Mount Pleasant High School, spoke on behalf of DAA at the Department of Education hearings. They asked that the Committee to help keep the arts as a core part of school curriculums so that our sons and daughters will be competitive in increasing globalized markets. Dean noted, "A talented workforce is locally developed when students learn about the arts alongside math and sciences."

## ARTS NETWORKING AND DISCUSSION:

*DAA DAA Arts Rendezvous in Kent County*

DAA members and friends gathered for DAA's Arts Rendezvous in Kent County on Monday, February 23 at the Dover Century Club on The Green. Former Representative Darryl M. Scott shared advocacy tips in his discussion, "Legislation 101". And guests got a glimpse at the Dover Downtown Development District plan from Ann Marie Townshend, ACIP, City of Dover Director of Planning & Community Development. Thanks to all who braved the snow and cold to attend! Be sure to stay tuned for details on Arts Rendezvous in Sussex County in May!



*Former Representative Darryl M. Scott, DAA Executive Director Guillermina Gonzalez, and Dover Mayor Robin R. Christensen at Arts Rendezvous in Kent County.*