



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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2003 Awards for Government Leadership in the Arts Announced

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors presented their 2003 Government Leadership in the Arts Awards at a luncheon Friday as part of the Conference of Mayors' 71st winter meeting in Washington, D.C. The three awards honor public officials and programs at the state and local level that have demonstrated outstanding leadership nationally as well as in their local communities toward the advancement of the arts.

The awards will be presented to New York Governor George Pataki, Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council's (GCAC) "Children of the Future" program.

"Governor Pataki, Mayor Peterson, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council have each demonstrated immense dedication to the development of arts programming within their respective communities and states," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "Their exceptional leadership and commitment to the arts enriches the lives of citizens of all ages and backgrounds through a variety of cultural initiatives."

"We commend all the winners of this year's awards for their leadership in promoting artistic integration in cities," said Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. "Exposing communities to the arts not only stimulates local economies, but also distracts youth from violence on the street."

Mayor Peterson, Governor Pataki, and GCAC's "Children of the Future" program were honored with the awards for Leadership in Local, State, and Youth Programming respectively. Each recipient carries with them an impressive resume of initiatives and efforts aimed at advancing the arts at every level of government.

- **Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson.** Mayor Bart Peterson has made the arts a priority throughout his term as Mayor of Indianapolis. Since his inauguration in 2000, he has more than doubled public sector funding from the City County Council—from \$750,000 to \$1,625,000.

In June 2001, Mayor Peterson announced a \$10 million cultural development and tourism initiative funded by a public-private partnership with the Lilly Endowment. For 2003, he proposed only two increases to a tight budget, additional police officers and an increase in arts funding.

Mayor Peterson's commitment to the arts is evident throughout the city's public spaces, from walking and jogging trails to his own office and reception area, where he hosts a rotating exhibit featuring local artists.

- **New York Governor George Pataki.** When Governor George Pataki took office in 1995, New York's arts budget had been cut by 56 percent over the previous five years. Under Governor Pataki's leadership, state funding for the arts has gone up 52 percent, bringing the New York State Council on the Arts' current appropriation to \$50.1 million.

In the spring of 1997, Governor Pataki announced the first Empire State Partnership (ESP) Grants. The initiative, started jointly by the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York State Education Department, brings together schools and arts organizations to assist students in the mastery of cognitive and communication skills while improving their competence in the arts and other subjects.

- **The Greater Columbus Arts Council's (GCAC) "Children of the Future."** GCAC's "Children of the Future" is an arts-based Americorps public safety program targeting youth in neighborhoods that experience high crime rates and other social problems.

The program provides neighborhood safe havens and emphasizes the development of constructive communication and conflict resolution skills as a means for coping with the daily challenges of peer pressure, drugs, and violence.

"Children of the Future" grew out of a pilot afterschool arts program begun in 1992 through a partnership with GCAC and the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority, with a neighborhood improvement grant supplied from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The program was expanded to multiple sites in 1995 with funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service's Americorps program. Americorps remains a major supporter of the program.

This year's awards are sponsored by VH1 Save the Music.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

Founded in 1933, the U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with a population of 30,000 or more. The primary roles of the Conference of Mayors are to: promote the development of effective national urban/suburban policy; strengthen federal-city relationships; ensure that federal policy meets urban needs; provide mayors with leadership and management tools; and create a forum in which mayors can share ideas and information. Find more information at www.usmayors.org.

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