



## NEWS AND INFORMATION

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07/14/2003

### **Douglas Duncan Presented with The 2003 National Award for County Arts Leadership**

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Americans for the Arts in conjunction with the National Association of Counties (NACo) today presented the 2003 National Award for County Arts Leadership to Douglas M. Duncan, County Executive in Montgomery County, Maryland. The award honors an elected county board or individual leader who has significantly advanced the arts. Mr. Duncan was nominated for this leadership award by Theresa Cameron, executive director of the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County. The award was officially presented at NACo's annual meeting in Milwaukee.

Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO for Americans for the Arts, stated, "Doug Duncan is a county leader who truly understands and appreciates both the economic and aesthetic value of the arts to the community. He has incorporated the community. He has incorporated the arts into the development of new and revitalized urban centers, including Downtown Silver Spring, Bethesda, Germantown, and Wheaton. He has also advocated for the county's development of statewide legislation for arts and entertainment districts. His work and contribution to the citizens of Montgomery County is exemplary."

"It is a special honor for me to receive national recognition for my contribution to the local arts community," said Montgomery County Executive Douglas M. Duncan. "I'm proud of what we've been able to accomplish in Montgomery County and of the first-class arts community that we have built over the years."

During his tenure as County Executive, Mr. Duncan has increased funding for the arts ten fold, with more than \$3 million going for arts organizations and activities last year. He has developed an innovative approach to community development by using facilities as anchors of development. Within Montgomery County, there are 367 local cultural organizations and over 1,000 individual artists.

Mr. Duncan has spearheaded the investment of more than \$57 million in capital development projects including: the renovation of Silver Theatre for the new East Coast Headquarters of the American Film Institute; a new children's theatre for Bethesda Academy of Performing Arts Imagination Stage; a new arts center in Germantown for the Blackrock Center for the Arts;

the renovation of Glen Echo Park including Adventure Theater, the Puppet Company, the Yellow Barn Gallery, and the Spanish Ballroom Renovation of Liz Lerman Dance Exchange's Takoma Park facility; new and renovated spaces for Olney Theatre Center; a new home for Pyramid Atlantic, a visual arts facility; three new homes for Round House Theatre; and the new Strathmore Hall 2000-seat concert hall.

Mr. Duncan also supported the creation of Montgomery County's first cultural plan, and each year he and his wife host the Executive's Ball for the Benefit of the Arts and Humanities with proceeds distributed as arts and humanities education grants.

Americans for the Arts established the County Arts Leadership Award in 1999 to recognize the positive role county government leaders play in improving arts programs, increasing funding to the arts, and making the arts accessible in their communities. Past recipients include the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors; County Commissioner Park Helms of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; and County Commissioner Betty Lou Ward of Wake County, North Carolina.

NACo, the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States, continues to follow the traditions established by those early county officials. With its headquarters on Capitol Hill, NACo is a full-service organization that provides an extensive line of services including legislative, research, technical, and public affairs assistance, as well as enterprise services to its members. The association acts as a liaison with other levels of government, works to improve public understanding of counties, serves as a national advocate for counties, and provides them with resources to help them find innovative methods to meet the challenges they face. NACo is involved in a number of special projects that deal with such issues as the environment, sustainable communities, volunteerism, and intergenerational studies. Additional information is available at [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).

***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](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).

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