



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Henry Winkler and Tony Bennett to Receive 2004 Legendary Artist and Arts Legacy Awards

Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors to Present Awards at Mayors Arts Luncheon

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors will present **Henry Winkler** with the 2004 Legendary Artist Award and **Tony Bennett** will receive the 2004 Arts Legacy Award. The Legendary Artist Award recognizes artists who use their public personae to raise awareness for causes that benefit the public good. The Arts Legacy Award is an inaugural award honoring an individual concerned with the advancement of the arts for future generations.

These awards are part of a series of Public Leadership in the Arts Awards given annually by Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors since 1997. In addition to Winkler and Bennett, recipients of the other 2004 awards are: **Mayor Martin O'Malley** of Baltimore for Local Arts Leadership and **Governor Edward G. Rendell** of Pennsylvania for State Arts Leadership. All four awards will be presented at the Mayors Arts Luncheon held during the Conference of Mayors winter meeting in Washington, D.C. on January 22 at the Capital Hilton.

"This country has a long tradition of artists using their gifts to benefit their fellow citizens," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "Henry Winkler and Tony Bennett are superb examples of nationally prominent artists putting their visibility to good use by advancing the arts and other causes that help improve the human condition."

"When we think of how artists can use their talents and good will to benefit others, we do not have to look any farther than Henry Winkler and Tony Bennett," said Hempstead, NY Mayor and Conference President James Garner. "Each has used his abilities to help others—especially our young children to become better artists and, thus, better persons."

Henry Winkler is instantly recognizable from his role as "The Fonz" on the long-running 1970's TV series *Happy Days*, and the black leather jacket he wore on the show has hung in

the Smithsonian since 1980. In addition to his successful acting career, he is an award-winning producer and director of family and children's programming, including television specials dealing with adoption, child abuse, teenage drunk driving, and young people coping with divorce. He is deeply committed to children's welfare and uses his visibility to work with numerous children's groups. He says that had he not succeeded as an actor, he would have become a child psychologist because of his deep interest in working with children.

Winkler is a founder of the Children's Action Network, an organization composed of entertainment industry leaders dedicated to raising the profile of children's issues through the media. In an effort to raise awareness about children's learning differences, he recently co-wrote a series of children's books called *Hank Zipzer: The Mostly True Confessions of the World's Best Underachiever*, inspired by his true-life experiences growing up with undiagnosed dyslexia.

"I think that the responsibility for the honor of walking on the Earth is that you enjoy yourself, you add to the future, and that it is mandatory that you give back the energy that you have gotten," said Winkler.

Former Legendary Artist Award recipients include Harry Belafonte, Rita Moreno, Stevie Wonder, and Lionel Hampton.

With more than 50 million records sold worldwide, **Tony Bennett** has introduced dozens of pop standards into the "Great American Songbook," while winning 11 Grammy Awards, including the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. He is also a dedicated painter whose interest in art began as a child, and his work has been exhibited in galleries around the world. Throughout his career, Bennett has always put time into a number of humanitarian concerns, including the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, the American Cancer Society, and the Save the Rainforest Foundation.

Tony Bennett conceived and spearheaded the establishment of the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, a New York City high school, which opened in the fall of 2001. The school offers an intensive specialized arts program in its full academic curriculum and provides an emphasis on community service by partnering with hospitals, day care centers, and senior citizen residences. Through a charitable nonprofit organization he established, *Exploring the Arts*, Bennett is committed to providing and enhancing arts education in cities across America.

"Growing up in New York City, I received a great education in all areas and was fortunate enough to have wonderful art and music teachers who encouraged my pursuits in those areas. We have all seen how arts education in our public schools has been scaled back over the years. I felt it was important to put my efforts towards a public school that puts arts education in the forefront without sacrificing academics. It is my hope that the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts will be a role model for schools all over the country," said Bennett.

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.

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.

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