



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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State Arts Action Network Announces New Leadership

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America, today announced the election of two new officers of the State Arts Action Network (SAAN). Sheila Smith and Anne Katz, both serving SAAN members have been elected to serve one-year terms as SAAN Council Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. The election took place in June at Americans for the Arts' national convention.

Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO for Americans for the Arts, stated, "I am delighted to celebrate the election of these two accomplished leaders to the State Arts Action Network. Both illustrate exemplary leadership in advancing the arts in their communities and bring their extraordinary skills to this network. SAAN is a great example of collective action, which is the most effective way to positively impact and advance the cause of arts advocacy."

Sheila Smith—Chair

Sheila M. Smith has been executive director of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts since 1996. She also recently served as a public policy consultant for the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) and is part of MCN's Public Policy Cabinet. Before joining MCA, Smith served as staff at the Minnesota State Senate and lobbied local governments for Continental Airlines in Houston, Texas. Appointed by the Governor in 2002 to the Capitol Area Architectural Planning Board, she is also chair of the Friends of the Minnesota State Capitol, advocating to preserve the state's most important historic building. She received a master's degree in arts administration from St. Mary's University and has a B.A. in Shakespeare from St. Olaf College. She wrote and produced, with many partners, *The Arts: A Driving Force in Minnesota's Economy* and *Artists Count: the Economic Impact of Minnesota's Artists*, in 2006 and 2007.

Anne Katz—Vice-Chair

Katz is executive director of Arts Wisconsin, Wisconsin's nonprofit statewide community arts action, service, and development organization. Under her leadership, Arts Wisconsin received

the 2004 Governor's Award in Support of the Arts from the Wisconsin Foundation for the Arts. Katz was also honored by *Madison Magazine* in June 2004 for her community development work. Katz was an Arts Administration Fellow in the Locals Program of the National Endowment for the Arts in 1988, was selected as a member of the first class of Leadership Greater Madison in 1993–94, and graduated in 2004 from the Wisconsin Rural Leadership Program. She is a current participant in the James P. Shannon Leadership Institute for Nonprofit Organizations, based in St. Paul. She has been a peer review panelist for the City of Milwaukee Arts Board, Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission, Wisconsin Arts Board, Wisconsin Humanities Council, Iowa Arts Council, South Dakota Arts Council, and the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts. She serves on the board of the Wisconsin Nonprofits Association.

The organization was formed in 2004 when two independent arts advocacy organizations (the State Arts Advocacy League of America and the National Community Arts Network) merged into Americans for the Arts. SAAN's major project this year is to strengthen the infrastructures of the individual SAAN members and to assist in the creation of statewide organizations in those 8 states that currently do not have an organization. SAAN consists of 46 organizations in 39 states. There are 15 members of the SAAN Council and 46 SAAN Members.

The State Arts Action Network is working to strengthen and build arts advocacy and service infrastructure in the United States at national, state, and local levels. It focuses on helping to shape public policy, initiate effective advocacy campaigns, set research agendas, provide meaningful professional development, and provide peer-to-peer networking opportunities to emerging arts organizations.

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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