



PRESS RELEASE

January 30, 2015

The Bronx Council on the Arts Applauds Governor Cuomo's Support for the Arts

Cultural Leaders Say \$5 million Investment in NYSCA is Good for Local Economies, Regional Impact and Economics across New York State

The Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA), a not-for-profit arts council and the Bronx's only borough-wide arts funding agency, joins with leaders from across New York State to express their support and relief for Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's 2015 budget which included a \$5 million increase for the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). BCA executive director, Deirdre Scott also praised the efforts of NYSCA Chairman Aby Rosen, NYSCA Executive Director, Lisa Rabb, and NYSCA staff, who advocated for the increase.

We all know by now that the arts improve quality of life and adds value to our economy and we are pleased the Governor increased funding for the arts, and will continue working with the NYS Legislature to advance access to arts and culture. BCA is a beneficiary of NYSCA funding as part of their re-granting program that insures funding at local levels and direct support to artists and communities across the state. **The Bronx Council on the Arts distributes over \$240,000 each year to local arts and culture organizations and artists that serve thousands of residents across the Bronx and beyond. Learn more about BCA programs at www.BronxArts.org.**

The additional funding is particularly significant since it continues an upward trend started in 2012-2013, when Governor Cuomo added \$4 million in Regional Economic Development funds to the NYSCA budget. While arts advocates agree that this is a great step in the right direction, they will continue to work to restore NYSCA to its highest amount of local assistance funding, which was \$54.3 million more than 27 years ago. There is also a proposed increase in NYSCA staff, bringing the total of staff to 30.

Arts leaders are quick to point to how such funding not only benefits arts and culture in this state, but is also a boon to local economies. New York State is home to 53,085 arts-related businesses that employ 335,683 people.

BCA executive director, Deirdre Scott adds, "Our local arts service organizations, cultural and arts education infrastructure is in urgent need of investment and ongoing commitment to growth. We are among many organizations that struggle to meet the myriad needs of our quickly-evolving community. We also work hard to fill in gaps in training, education and youth development sectors that have seen decreases in support and access for arts, culture and literacy. We know that the arts expand and extend learning and social capacities. Our society needs cultural literacy and exchange now more than ever. Funding through NYSCA translates into services to tens of thousands of people statewide, and this increase shows

that the State's priorities are moving in the right direction. I really hope that this positive uptrend continues so that we can more effectively serve citizens, artists and organizations in the Bronx. Investments such as this also flow out into the community and region as economic stimulus and sustainability, allowing service providers to reach more people, develop artists, and train and employ more folks in creative economic sectors”.

“The arts are closely linked to state tourism as well, which is a multi-billion dollar industry for NY. As our workforce and capacities grow, we continually contribute to the bottom line of this important, vital sector. Imagine NY's great Broadway without music, dancers, writer, costumes and sets (and no paparazzi) – this is just part of the richness and skills that the arts bring to the economic table. But, funding resources still vary widely and equity issues still exist,” Ms. Scott said.

About this effort:

The recent advocacy effort led by ArtsNYS was organized on behalf of all NYSCA recipients large and small. ArtsNYS is a network of arts councils and affiliated organizations from all over the state that redistribute NYSCA funds through the Decentralization Program, working closely with the cultural organizations in their communities.

Starting in October 2014, ArtsNYS coalition members met with their legislators asking them to urge the Governor to request an increase. They explained to legislators that nonprofit cultural organizations are actuality small businesses that have struggled through the recession with diminished resources and greater demand for their services. Many of these businesses do not have the access to corporate or major foundation funds like other larger, well-endowed institutions.

What can you do?

- Learn more about Governor Cuomo's vision and see planning for Tourism and Arts Economic Impact at this link:

TOURISM IN NEW YORK STATE: A VITAL ECONOMIC ENGINE

<http://www.iloveny.com/articles/view/new-york-state-tourism-summit/718/#.VMwuxmjF98E>

[Excerpt] - **The tourism sector has proven to be a vital and growing component of New York State's economy.**

In 2012, visitors to New York State generated a record \$92.2 billion in total economic impact – an increase of more than \$11 billion since 2010 – in addition to generating \$7.2 billion in state and local taxes. Our state parks alone generate \$1.9 billion annually in output and sales.

As the fifth largest employment sector in New York, tourism supported 714,222 jobs and generated \$17.39 billion in wages. In fact, 1 out of every 12 jobs in New York is directly created by the tourism industry.

#END#