

## **Excerpts from National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu's Plenary Address at NASAA Assembly 2014**

*NASAA and the state arts agencies were honored that NEA Chairman Jane Chu joined us for Assembly 2014. The chairman addressed state arts agency chairs and executive directors in their respective peer sessions, and delivered the plenary remarks at the opening luncheon. Provided below are excerpts from her remarks.*

### **Opening**

Jonathan, I want to thank you for 29 years of leadership at NASAA, to give state arts agencies a voice on the national stage. Thank you for all you've done for the field. In the coming months, I look forward to meeting with incoming NASAA leadership, as we work together to build upon what Jonathan and you all have done.

One of the first "welcomes" I received when I joined the National Endowment for the Arts five months ago, was a book of welcome letters; one from every state arts agency in the nation, presented to me through NASAA. Thank you for this memorable gesture. I will keep this book of letters forever.

### **The Importance of Our Partnership**

Through our partnership, we are together creating an environment where arts participation has broadened, deepened, and diversified. We are paving new avenues for more people to be engaged with the arts, and to find their own stories. We are creating new opportunities for both individuals and communities to see themselves transformed.

For example, we'll be celebrating the 10th anniversary of [Poetry Out Loud](#) this year. You have made this poetry recitation competition so successful; in getting schools involved, managing the state-level competitions, and contributing additional funds to grow and expand the program. Some 365,000 students are reached by the Poetry Out Loud program each year, and more than 2 million students have participated since the initiative began.

We also worked closely together through our [Education Leaders Institute](#), which was hosted by the [Illinois Arts Council Agency](#). Over 5 years, the Education Leaders Institute brought together teams from 29 states to develop solutions and strategies to advance arts education. This was such a critical step in moving forward with the NEA's goal of ensuring that every student in the nation has the opportunity to be engaged and empowered through arts education.

And finally, we are very appreciative of the work that state arts agencies will do to implement the [new NEA reporting specifications](#). Thanks to your efforts, we will be able to tell a fuller story of our impact together; one that reflects how critical states are to all that we accomplish.

We know that the implementation process is complex, and the NEA recently announced that up to \$10,000 will be given to each state arts agency and regional arts organization to assist in offsetting some of the associated costs.

### **Conclusion**

Like many state arts agencies, the National Endowment for the Arts will turn 50 next year, which gives us all an opportunity to celebrate. It's also a ripe moment to reflect on all that

we've accomplished together over the past 5 decades, and look forward to the ways we can continue to build our partnership in the future. It is as partners that we can best achieve our fundamental goal, which is to bring the power and meaning of the arts to the American people. I look forward to continuing our work together, in service to the arts and to our nation.