

2007 Distinguished Public Service Award

David Trottier Acceptance Speech

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Good afternoon. First of all, I need to thank two of the most important people in my life who, thankfully were able to be with me today. Two men that have given me, not only inspiration in my life, but also good examples to follow—my father and my brother. My father, who took the life he was given, met a woman who shared his values and raised a family with a good work ethic, good values, and lots of encouragement to live good lives and be a positive influence for our people, and a contributor to society. And my brother, who as an older brother, teased me, taunted me and picked on me as older brothers will. Then became my biggest protector in life, and then... my biggest supporter. And throughout our lives, no matter where we go or what we do, we will always be known as the boys Wayne and Adeline Trottier raised. Thank you both for being with me on this special day and I wish mom was here too. But I know she is.

Next, the people that really make things happen with the NDCA, and without whom I would not be up here today—the staff. Please give them a big round of applause, also. In all of the years that I have been involved with arts, I have tried to live by what Star Trek fans would call the Prime Directive. But for me, the Prime Directive is that “The arts are for all of the people, all of the time.” No matter who you are, no matter what you are, no matter where you are, no matter what you do, no matter what you believe, the arts will somehow and some way touch your life. From the clothes and jewelry you wear, the car you drive, the house or apartment you live in, what you have on your walls, where you like to go, what you like to do, more than likely there is some kind of art involved. The arts give us a chance to express ourselves as individuals but at the same time define our society.

The first time I picked up a bar of soap to carve it...I couldn't! And I still can't! And I can't paint or draw either. But, the first time a lady named Beth Johnson opened the door to the Fort Totten Little Theatre in Fort Totten, ND and pointed to two seats for her son and me to sit in, telling us to behave ourselves and watch Rogers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma*, I knew there was something about this, which just wasn't going to go away. And they actually kissed on stage in front of all those people! My friend Bob said, "That's a real kiss, too!" The seed of love for the arts had been planted in me, although it took a lot more years to start germinating. But when it did, it grew very fast. Although I had to find out in junior high that I couldn't carve a piece of soap, nor could I draw, I did find out later in life at a little college in North Dakota called Mayville State, that there were other ways to get involved in the arts, other ways to excel in the arts, and other ways to make an impact in the arts.

Of course, I never dreamed in my life that just because I liked to sing and be in plays I would ever end up on the state arts council, and surely I would never be the chairman of such an organization—and there is no way I would ever be receiving an award for anything in the arts, especially on a national level. Ladies and gentlemen, I say that because, this award that I have received today surely is a defining moment in my life. I am humbled to have been chosen to be the recipient of this award and I thank NASAA for deeming me worthy. I urge you all to remember, the arts are for all of the people, all of the time.

Thank you.