

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

KNOWLEDGE ★ REPRESENTATION ★ COMMUNITY

Report to Councils

December 2016

NASAA wants to help you spread the word about the value of public funding of the arts. Check out this edition of Report to Councils for timely tips, support and opportunities.

If you're not on the Report to Councils e-mail list, contact NASAA Communications Manager [Sue Struve](#).

Simple Ways to Advocate for the Arts

With federal elections concluded, a new administration is settling in and Congress is establishing its business agenda for the year. NASAA is forging productive working relationships that help the White House and Congress learn about state arts agencies and recognize what investment in the arts achieves for America.

In addition to federal elections, more than 5,900 state elections were held, filling 80% of state legislative seats nationwide. Now is an important time for arts constituents to be reaching out—and NASAA has a new tool to help you do just that!

Designed for grass-roots groups and state arts agency grantees, [Three Simple Ways to Advocate for the Arts](#) offers straightforward advocacy strategies that every arts organization can do to cultivate good working relationships with elected officials. In addition to describing easy ways to reach out, it includes links to state legislative contacts, a sample note congratulating a new legislator and additional NASAA resources on the impact of government arts funding.

Winter Generosity Campaign

Please consider supporting our state arts agency community with a year-end gift to NASAA. Your generosity is especially needed to support NASAA's advocacy on behalf of the states. This past year, *people like you* helped NASAA provide practical (and free) advocacy tools such as [Who's Who in Government Arts Funding](#), which helps you explain how the work of your agency fits into the national arts public funding ecosystem, and a [per capita funding estimator](#) that forecasts how funding growth—or cuts—could affect your national rank. With your help, NASAA will continue to protect bipartisan support for the arts in 2017. [Please give today](#). Thank you!

Why I Give to NASAA

When I donate to NASAA, I know that my money will make a difference. NASAA is a stellar service organization that strengthens state arts agencies. The staff is very competent, producing programs and services that reflect the needs of our agencies. NASAA arms state arts agencies with the research, best practices and peer support that help us realize our mission. We are truly fortunate to have them!



Nola Ruth
NASAA board member;
Chair, Missouri Arts Council

Arts Bills in State Legislatures

State legislators annually consider hundreds of bills that could affect the arts or state arts agencies (SAAs). What were the trends in 2016 that might foreshadow the legislative session to come? NASAA's [2016 State Legislative Roundup](#) describes more than 60 bills pertinent to the arts from state legislatures around the country. The report illuminates the arts issues and policies that legislators considered this year and includes examples of legislation that passed, as well as bills that failed. Key issues included:

- state arts agency revenue
- public art
- cultural districts and the creative economy
- arts education
- special SAA programs and commissions

For deeper dives into state arts legislation, contact NASAA Research Manager [Paul Pietsch](#).

NASAA Assembly 2016 Proceedings, Council Peer Session Notes



Wild Swan Theater shared the story of Rosie the Riveter, accompanied by ASL actor-interpreters. Photo: George Long.com

There's nothing like a NASAA convening to reinforce a sense of connection to the wider state arts agency field. Council members, especially, found NASAA Assembly 2016 valuable as a way to learn about innovative programs and gain skills for your important roles as arts leaders and ambassadors.

The [Proceedings](#) of this year's conference—held in artful Grand Rapids, Michigan—include reports on briefings, seminars and workshops that covered issues likely to be on arts councils' agendas in the coming year. Also check out notes from the [Chair and Council Member Peer Session](#), which

included a visit by National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu along with a discussion about state arts council diversity.

And Speaking of Convenings...

State arts agencies themselves bring people together to learn, celebrate and imagine a creative future. Find out how with our [SAA Convenings bento box](#). The second in a series of samplers of innovative state arts agency initiatives, it visually demonstrates some of the ingenious ways state arts agencies each out to their communities.



Join Us in Portland in October

Planning for [NASAA's 2017 Leadership Institute](#)—designed for SAA council members and executive staff—is under way. Please mark your calendars and join us in Portland, Oregon, October 11-13!