



**NASAA Business Meeting
November 3, 2018**

Chairman's Report
Benjamin Brown
Chair, Alaska State Council on the Arts

Thanks to everyone for your participation in this wonderful Assembly. I'm energized by what NASAA achieved this year:

- We stood up for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and helped our champions in Congress grow federal resources for the agency.
- We're engaging in meaningful cross-sector work. A good example of this is our [partnership with the NEA and the National Governors Association](#)—so timely with 36 gubernatorial elections next week.
- We held our first-ever [National Press Club briefing](#) and launched an [advocacy video campaign](#) that have reached a combined 151,000 viewers through social media.
- With our [new strategic plan](#) as a springboard, NASAA rolled out 29 new products and services in 2019, all designed to help state arts agencies to be their very best.

Your business packets included a link to a full [Action Plan Highlights](#) report on all our accomplishments, so I'm not going to recount the rest of them here. Suffice it to say that NASAA may be turning 50 this year, but we're certainly not slowing down! We're accelerating into that curve, trying a lot of new things, and bringing agility to our work. It's an exhilarating time to be part of this association.

You've already heard about our ["50 Years, 50 Ways"](#) anniversary campaign. In honor of that theme, I want to add a some of my own observations about what makes NASAA so special—and worth sustaining for the next 50 years. I could easily list 500 things that make NASAA great, but in the interests of time I'm going to restrain myself and just highlight three:

- The first is NASAA's approach to advocacy. In our work on Capitol Hill, NASAA has earned a reputation for being trustworthy, credible and nonpartisan. As a result, we've been able to build common cause around the arts and grow federal arts funding at a time when scores of other domestic programs are getting big cuts.
- No list of anyone's favorite things about NASAA would be complete without a nod to our best-in-class research, so that's number 2 on my list. Hard data from NASAA is

the antidote to fake news [WiseGY2018.jpg](#). Here's a true story: When my own state's public art program in Alaska was under threat a few years ago, our legislative committee used NASAA's Public Art Policy Brief for an objective look at how these policies benefit states. Information from NASAA helped us to turn that tide, and I know many other states have similar stories.

- Number three on my list of favorite things about NASAA is the community that we've built. NASAA creates a special space for us—a network where we all belong and where we all are invested in each other's success. When I first arrived at NASAA, I knew that it would be a source of information and advocacy, but I had no idea that it would also be a wellspring of inspiration, or a lifeline when times get tough at home. I'm grateful for this community. For those of you who are new to our field, I encourage you to make the most of this wacky, wonderful family that you're now a part of.

None of this goodness would be possible without our staff. NASAA is fortunate to have such a capable and courageous leader in Pam Breaux, plus an exceptionally creative and dedicated staff team. They're on call year-round, answering our questions, promoting our work, and being the glue that holds our network together. Pam and the NASAA staff, thank you.

And on behalf of the NASAA board, thanks to all 56 states and jurisdictions for the critical work you do back home. It is our board's honor and privilege to serve and empower your work.