NASAA STRATEGIC PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2022



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY of STATE ARTS AGENCIES



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NASAA STRATEGIC PLAN

Our nation is contending with generation-defining events. The COVID-19 pandemic, racial injustices, natural disasters and human conflicts have reshaped our reality. Even as our country aches from acute political, geographic and economic divides, we are reaching for hope and healing. America is a work in progress, and this is a time of reckoning and—most importantly—of renewal.

In such times, the arts restore our connections to each other, spark our revival and galvanize our resolve. They strengthen our communities, our economy and our well-being. The arts also can be a vehicle for civic discourse about hard issues, helping us understand the past, grapple with the present and envision a new future.

CREATIVITY AND RESILIENCY

State arts agencies facilitate these benefits, but they face formidable challenges. They must respond to crises with resilience and creativity. They must assert their value and demonstrate a robust return on investment. They must help the creative sector adapt to new norms of cultural production and participation. State arts agencies not only support the arts, they also shape public policy. State arts agencies can be government's better angels, finding new ways to assist communities and fulfill

America's promise of government

that serves *all* people.

Because each state and jurisdiction is different, every state arts agency will find unique solutions to these problems. NASAA takes pride in helping all state arts agencies to flourish, honoring their distinctiveness and their commonalities. This strategic plan reflects our renewed commitment to NASAA's core mission: to strengthen state arts agencies. With this framework as a guide for action, NASAA will equip state arts agencies to meet the challenges of today—and fortify them to thrive in the future.

NASAA takes pride in helping all state arts agencies to flourish, honoring their distinctiveness and their commonalities.





THRIVING FOR ALL

Arts and creativity help people and places to thrive, strengthening the economic, educational and civic fabric of American communities. State arts agencies ensure that all towns and rural regions—not just the largest cities or wealthiest areas—have access to these opportunities.

WHY OUR WORK MATTERS

Arts and creativity make us stronger— as individuals, families, communities, states and as a country.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

THE WORK OF STATE ARTS AGENCIES, SUPPORTED BY NASAA, EMPOWERS:

STRONG ECONOMIES

Arts and creativity are economic engines, putting people to work in many industries. They stimulate commerce and offer opportunities for young people, rural areas and creative entrepreneurs to prosper.

THRIVING COMMUNITIES

The arts promote connection by providing shared experiences, celebrating local culture and encouraging civic discourse. They tell our stories, helping us preserve and pass on cherished traditions and empathize with others. The arts also enliven our communities, creating desirable places for people to live, work, play and raise their families.

GOOD HEALTH

The arts reduce isolation and contribute to physical and psychological well-being. They facilitate healthy aging and provide effective therapies for injured military personnel, trauma survivors and people struggling with depression, anxiety or addiction.

ESSENTIAL EDUCATION

The arts boost achievement in academic fundamentals, setting young people up for success. Education that includes the arts teaches lateral thinking as well as the value of practice and persistence—essential skills for school, work and life.

INSPIRING INNOVATION

A creative workforce gives businesses a competitive edge by helping them engage customers, originate new ideas and find fresh solutions to problems. The arts exercise our creative muscles throughout our life span, igniting our imaginations when we're young and facilitating meaningful learning and community engagement as we grow older.

RESILIENT SPIRITS

Intrinsic to the arts is the power to uplift us and help us perceive things in new ways. In the face of hardship and adversity, the arts are a force for recovery, understanding and healing. Through the arts, we express who we are as a nation today, and who we aspire to become tomorrow.





AGENCIES

NASAA EMPOWERS THE WORK OF STATE ARTS AGENCIES THROUGH:

KNOWLEDGE

NASAA provides authoritative data to support evidence based case making and decision making. Our research and professional We shape public policy, development services inform and inspire state arts agencies, sparking new ways of working, serving the public and developing the resilience of our field.

REPRESENTATION

NASAA is a champion and advocate for state arts agencies, asserting the importance of the arts to decision makers. foster multisector support for the arts and give state arts agencies a persuasive voice in influential national networks.

COMMUNITY

NASAA convenes and connects state arts agencies. Our professional community energizes the work of state arts agencies, unites our members around common goals and builds a shared vision for the future.

> NASAA amplifies the expertise, influence, funding and vision that state arts agencies employ on behalf of every American. Through NASAA, state arts agencies achieve more together than they can alone.





VALUES

NASAA'S WORK IS GUIDED BY THESE ENDURING VALUES:

ACCESS FOR ALL

We believe the public sector bears a special responsibility to help all communities thrive through the arts. To this end, NASAA strives to reduce barriers and dismantle bias based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, religion, geography, political affiliation or economic status.

SERVICE

NASAA programs are timely, relevant and responsive to the needs of members. Because every state and jurisdiction is unique, NASAA tailors our services to the needs of each member agency.

CREDIBILITY

NASAA earns trust by sharing factually accurate information and aligning our deeds with our words.

NONPARTISANSHIP

NASAA builds consensus around the arts and cultivates advocacy champions across the political spectrum.

EXCELLENCE

NASAA is recognized for the high caliber, creativity and professionalism of our services. We exemplify accountable stewardship of public resources, and rigorous evaluation spurs continual improvement.

TRANSPARENCY

NASAA is a member-driven organization that communicates clearly, openly shares information with our stakeholders and welcomes feedback.

COLLABORATION

NASAA initiates partnerships across multiple sectors as well as within the arts field—to broaden our impact and expand support for the work of state arts agencies.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are bedrock values as well as action commitments for NASAA. In alignment with NASAA's DEI policy, our framework encompasses:

DIVERSITY

Recognizing all dimensions of human identity and difference.

FNIIITY

Providing the means for all people to realize fair and just treatment, benefits and opportunities.

INCLUSION

Engaging diverse individuals, communities and perspectives to ensure access, representation and belonging for all.

NASAA's action plans enumerate activities we pursue to advance DEI each year. Annual progress reports document what we've accomplished, keeping us accountable and transparent. See page 9 for more information on DEI in NASAA action plans.





ADVOCATE

ADVOCATE FOR STATE ARTS AGENCIES

By developing policy resources and relationships that advance state arts agencies, NASAA ensures that the arts play a central role in American public life and that all communities have equitable access to the arts. We build consensus about the arts across the political spectrum and position the arts for sustained support despite swings of the political pendulum.

OBJECTIVES

- Advocate for a robust and well-funded National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).
- B Develop other federal resources and relationships beneficial to state arts agencies.
- C Strengthen state level advocacy practices.
- D Foster cross-sector support and strategic partnerships to benefit state arts agencies.



HONE THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF STATE ARTS AGENCIES

State arts agencies need savvy and agile leaders capable of addressing immediate crises without losing sight of their long-term goals.

NASAA's research and professional development services inform state arts agency practice and spur the continual development of our field.

OBJECTIVES

- A Supply authoritative facts about state arts agencies.
- B Facilitate members' use of information for planning, decision making and case making.
- Catalyze state arts agency innovation, improvement and change.
- D Deliver educational programs that boost members' knowledge, leadership skills and resilience.



CONNECT STATE ARTS AGENCIES

Our Assembly is an inclusive, welcoming community where members learn from each other and find common purpose. Connecting through NASAA also bolsters policy: the state arts agency community empowers our decisions, increases our influence and defines NASAA's credibility as a representative policy voice.

OBJECTIVES

- A Keep state arts agencies informed through timely, relevant and accessible communications.
- B Facilitate peer-to-peer networking.
- Promote the understanding and use of NASAA services.
- B Engage members in the governance, planning and advocacy work of the Assembly.



BUILD NASAA'S CAPACITY

To strengthen state arts agencies now and into the future, NASAA must grow the financial and operational capacity to meet our members' escalating demands for services. Fulfilling these objectives helps us attain all of NASAA's goals.

OBJECTIVES

- A Develop and diversify NASAA's revenues.
- B Develop NASAA's human resources.
- lmprove NASAA's operations and technology.
- D Evaluate our work and learn from the results.









DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Advancing DEI requires more than good intentions. It necessitates concrete actions and continual learning. NASAA addresses this by:

- offering services that help state arts agencies pursue DEI in their policies, programs and funding practices, and
- adopting policies and practices that strengthen DEI within NASAA.

Part of how NASAA embodies our DEI values is by recognizing and respecting differences that exist among state arts agencies.

Although the commitment to helping all communities thrive is universally shared, each state and jurisdiction needs the freedom to tailor its tactics to its own geography, demographics, authorizing environment and operating realities—no universal formula will succeed everywhere. NASAA therefore offers a range of methods for advancing DEI. Listening and learning are important elements of our DEI leadership approach, which blends long-term strategy with situational improvisation to propel our field forward.

NASAA enumerates our DEI action commitments in action plans, seeking member input to guide services and activities. Specific DEI actions are interlaced within every goal in our action plan. For transparency and accountability, NASAA regularly reports on our DEI activities and accomplishments to our board and membership. See:

- DEI Activities Report
- Current Action Plan
- DEI Resources Hub
- NASAA Policy Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The public sector bears a special responsibility to help *all* communities thrive through the arts.

WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER

State arts agencies are NASAA's primary stakeholders, volunteers, advisors and ambassadors. Most importantly, state arts agencies are the owners of this Assembly, its originators, leaders and investors. State arts agencies created NASAA in 1968, and still count on their Assembly today to expand their knowledge and influence. Members share an equal stake in the goals of this plan—and share equal responsibility for building an association to achieve them. NASAA issues calls to action throughout the year and we urge state arts agencies' full engagement in that work.

BETTER TOGETHER

Collaborations beyond the state arts agency field are integral to NASAA's success, and to the success of state arts agencies themselves. NASAA's annual action plan identifies specific collaborations that can help us attain our objectives in any given year. Some relationships, however, have perennial importance. These partners include:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

NASAA represents state arts agencies to the NEA and fosters program and policy collaborations between the NEA and its state partners.

ADVOCACY COALITIONS

NASAA intersects with national and regional advocacy coalitions, state arts advocacy organizations and other networks advocating for the arts, the humanities and the creative sector. NASAA's role in advocacy collaborations is guided by the needs and priorities of our member state arts agencies.

POLICY NETWORKS

NASAA connects with national organizations that shape the knowledge and actions of state policymakers. Through these groups, NASAA helps governors, legislators and other public officials understand the value of the arts and state arts agencies.

CROSS-SECTOR NETWORKS

Working with organizations in fields such as economic development, community development, education and health helps us broaden support for the arts and bring important insights back to the state arts agency field.

REGIONAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS (RAOS)

NASAA advocates for NEA funds that support the work of RAOs as well as NASAA and state arts agencies. We meet regularly with RAO leaders to identify shared interests and to synchronize efforts that benefit state arts agencies.

ARTS SERVICE NETWORKS

NASAA routinely collaborates and consults with leadership networks and organizations that focus on arts development and grant making.

State arts agencies also are strengthened by numerous state and local allies. NASAA serves as a resource to philanthropic partners, local arts organizations, government agencies, civic groups and others who work in concert with state arts agencies to advance the arts.

Citizen advocacy organizations, philanthropic partners, public agencies and civic groups work in concert with state arts agencies to advance the arts.



STAYING CURRENT

NASAA planning is evergreen—it is continually renewed and never stands still. We do this by combining strategic plans and action plans. Our strategic plan (this document) charts NASAA's overall course. It sets forth our purpose, our long-range goals and the principles that guide our work, without an expiration date. Action plans are time-bound. They itemize the near-term steps we take to achieve our long-term goals. This tandem approach ensures that NASAA's day-to-day priorities align with our strategic vision.

Action plans ensure the dynamic currency of NASAA's work, helping us address new realities, opportunities or constraints. We invite feedback and input from every state and jurisdiction through an annual interview process, and a membership vote is taken to approve the action plan. The strategic plan is regularly assessed for relevance, too. The standard review interval is three years, but the board can initiate a planning cycle sooner or later as circumstances warrant. This plan, originated for 2018, reflects revisions made to attune the plan to new realities in 2023 and beyond.

WHY AN EVERGREEN STRATEGIC PLAN?

NASAA conducts a miniature strategic planning process every year, through rigorous and memberdriven action planning. This keeps us in step with rapidly changing conditions. We initiate a full strategic planning cycle when we anticipate significant environmental shifts. By conducting comprehensive planning judiciously, NASAA can devote more time and resources to serving members.



EVALUATING OUR IMPACT

In keeping with our evergreen approach, planning at NASAA does not end when planning documents are approved. Rigorous measurement practices—fully transparent to members—continually refine our aim and improve our performance.

DIALOGUE

We talk with—and listen to—members every day. Our annual nominating interviews ask every executive director and council chair to rate their satisfaction with NASAA, weigh in on our services, identify unmet needs and offer suggestions for the future. Combined with parallel discussions among our standing committees and NASAA's board, these feedback channels form a human chain of qualitative data that keeps NASAA's planning evergreen.

PROGRESS REPORTING

Action Plan Highlights and reports of DEI activities itemize progress made toward our activity targets. These reports show what we've done to advance each goal and objective in our plan.

FIELD MONITORING

NASAA monitors a variety of indicators of state arts agency strength and capacity. These indicators help NASAA to track the stability and growth of our field.

PERFORMANCE METRICS

NASAA monitors a robust suite of operational performance metrics. The targets are informed by best practices among professional associations and monitored by the Planning & Budget Committee.

DATA MINING

We analyze information requests, member engagement and an array of communications measures. This active data mining informs action planning and provides real-time intelligence that NASAA uses to adjust tactics to address member needs.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

NASAA conducts evaluations of individual programs, using the results to guide future activities.



OUR PLANNING PROCESS

This plan—initially adopted in 2018 and substantially revised for 2023—was formulated through an inclusive process designed to shape our long-range goals, reach out to new stakeholders and surface insights that will help NASAA be smart in our day-to-day work. The participatory process was led by NASAA's Planning & Budget Committee. We used a mix of methods to invite candid, diverse opinions and make sure every voice was heard.



SHAPING THE FUTURE

FUTURE FORECASTING

As a first step in planning in 2017, we engaged the full membership in a dialogue about the future of our field. In 2017 and again in 2022, our board focused on changes affecting the success of state arts agencies. We also examined future forecasts for state government, the arts and professional associations.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Staff and board appraised strengths and weaknesses—and considered what needed to change—for both state arts agencies and NASAA.

MEMBER INPUT

Because state arts agencies are NASAA's primary stakeholders, member input was a keystone of our process. To develop the original plan for 2018 we conducted 84 member interviews, received 143 responses to our membership opinion poll, and engaged 29 board and committee members in developing plan drafts. Our 2022 revision included 83 interviews with executive and council leaders. It also reflects contributions from 30 additional board and committee members, plus invitations for all state arts agency and regional arts organizations to comment on the draft. Interviews with the executive directors and board chairs of each state and jurisdiction continue as an annual process.

CROSS-SECTOR PERSPECTIVES

We cast a wide net, reaching far beyond our membership to engage 83 outside advisors in our process when the plan was originated for 2018. We conducted 51 interviews (a mix of phone and face-to-face) with people representing the fields of economic development, government innovation, creative placemaking, community development, education, health care, agriculture and philanthropy as well as the arts. Face-to-face forums with associations serving state government, regional arts organizations and national arts service networks reinforced key relationships—and built new ties for the future.

DATA ANALYSIS

We analyzed 5,455 historical information requests and conducted a statistical benchmarking study comparing NASAA to 41 other associations serving state government or the arts. To inform fundraising and revenue diversification, we evaluated the success of NASAA's past Annual Fund campaigns and conducted indepth prospect research to identify foundations that may be likely candidates for future support. Budget forecasting and analysis of current information requests, contributions and foundation prospects continue as part of our action planning cycle.

THIRD-PARTY OBJECTIVITY

To ensure an unbiased assessment (and to expedite the work for 2018), NASAA engaged a consulting team to lead portions of our planning process. Artistic Logistics conducted interviews, facilitated forums and reality-checked our conclusions.

DRAFT REVIEWS

Members, nonmember planning informants and independent consultants offered revisions to the plan in draft form in both 2018 and 2022.

TRANSPARENCY

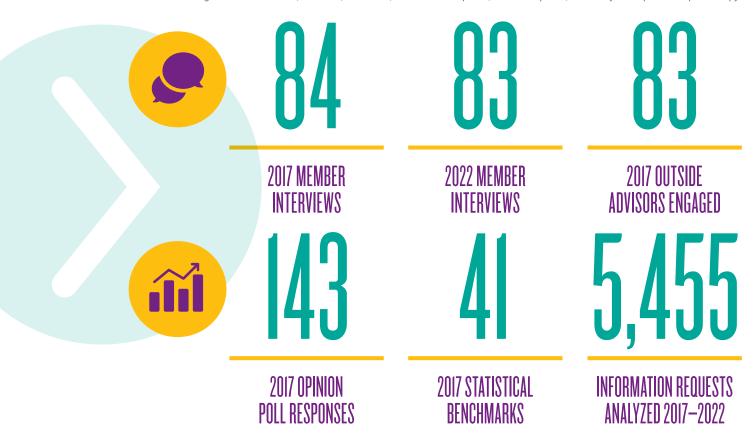
NASAA established a publicly accessible strategic planning hub on our website to share our findings and invite ongoing input.

The adoption of this strategic plan represents the beginning—not the end—of a process. Together, state arts agencies, NASAA and our partners will work to sustain the arts as an asset for individuals, families, communities and state governments across America. We invite you to join us.

PLANNING ENGAGEMENT



*Includes informants from the fields of government innovation, education, health care, economic development, rural development, community development and philanthropy.



THANKS!

NASAA is deeply grateful to the many individuals and colleague organizations who contributed their expertise, ideas and volunteer time to the creation of this plan.



NASAA Planning & Budget Committee

Ken May (SC, 2017 NASAA Treasurer)

Amber Sharples (OK, 2022 NASAA Treasurer)

Donna Collins (OH)

Christian Gaines (Western

States Arts Federation)

Sue Gens (MN)

Karen Hanan (WA)

Stephen Hill (NC)

Elliot Knight (AL)

Liz Shapiro (CT)

Sandy Shaughnessy (FL)

Lorén Spears (RI)

John Strickland (WV)

State Arts Agencies

Alabama State Council on the Arts

Alaska State Council on the Arts

Arizona Commission on the Arts

Arkansas Arts Council

California Arts Council

Colorado Creative Industries
Connecticut Office of the Arts

DC Commission on the Arts

and Humanities

Delaware Division of the Arts Florida Division of Arts

and Culture

Georgia Council for the Arts

Guam Council on the Arts & Humanities Agency

Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

Idaho Commission on the Arts

Illinois Arts Council Agency

Indiana Arts Commission

Iowa Arts Council

Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission

Kentucky Arts Council

Louisiana Division of the Arts

Maine Arts Commission

Maryland State Arts Council

Massachusetts Cultural Council

Michigan Arts and Culture Council

Minnesota State Arts Board

Mississippi Arts Commission

Missouri Arts Council

Montana Arts Council

Nebraska Arts Council

Nevada Arts Council

Nevada Arts courier

New Hampshire State Council on the Arts

New Jersey State Council on the Arts

New Mexico Arts

New York State Council on the Arts

North Carolina Arts Council

North Dakota Council on the Arts

Northern Marianas Commonwealth Council

for Arts and Culture Ohio Arts Council

Oklahoma Arts Council

Oregon Arts Commission

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts

South Carolina Arts Commission

South Dakota Arts Council

Tennessee Arts Commission

Texas Commission on the Arts

Utah Division of Arts & Museums

Vermont Arts Council

Virginia Commission for the Arts

Washington State Arts Commission

West Virginia Commission on the Arts

Wisconsin Arts Board

Wyoming Arts Council

THANKS!

Regional Arts Organizations

Arts Midwest

Mid-America Arts Alliance

Mid Atlantic Arts

New England Foundation for the Arts

Western States Arts Federation

South Arts

Cross-Sector Perspectives (2017)

Jeremy Anderson, Education Commission on the States

Elizabeth Armstrong, National Association of Government Communicators

Mike Bartlett, National Governors Association

Jen Bokoff, Foundation Center / GrantCraft

Kelly Brown, D5 Coalition

John Brown, Windgate Foundation

Corina Eckl, National Conference of State Legislatures

Charles Fluharty, Rural Policy Research Institute

Michael Fraser, Assoc. of State and Territorial Health Officials

Barbara P. Glenn, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture

Erik Hein, National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers

Doug Herbert, U.S. Department of Education

Maria Rosario Jackson, Kresge Foundation

Paula Kerger, PBS

Jeremy Liu, PolicyLink

Esther Mackintosh, Federation of State Humanities Councils

Ann Markusen, Humphrey School of Public Affairs

Robert McNulty, Partners for Livable Communities

Beth Simone Noveck, GovLab Center for Government Innovation

Julie Palkowski, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Arturo Pérez, National Conference of State Legislatures

Bob Reeder, Rural LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation)

Ron Regan, Association of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Molly Theobald, Appalachian Regional Commission

Margy Waller, Topos Partnership San San Wong, Barr Foundation

Cultural Leadership & Advocacy Perspectives (2017)

Jamie Bennett, ArtPlace

Alan Brown, WolfBrown

Janet Brown, Grantmakers in the Arts

Randy Cohen, Americans for the Arts

María López De León, National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures

Mario Garcia Durham, Association of Performing Arts Professionals

Aaron Dworkin, University of Michigan

Guillermina Gonzalez, Delaware Arts Alliance

Heather Ikemire, National Guild for Community Arts Education

Grace Kewl-Durfey, The Association of American Cultures / Broward Cultural Division

Sherron Long, Florida Cultural Alliance

Bob Lynch, Americans for the Arts

Liz Merritt, Association of American Museums / Center for the Future of Museums Ann Marie Miller, ArtPride New Jersey

lan David Moss, Createquity / Fractured Atlas

Betty Plumb, South Carolina Arts Advocate

Jeff Poulin, Americans for the Arts

Lori Pourier, Oglala Lakota, First Peoples Fund

Molly Pratt, Tennesseans for the Arts

Bruce Richardson, University of Wyoming

Barbara Robinson, Former NASAA President

Jesse Rosen, League of American Orchestras

Mary Margaret Schoenfeld

John Schratwieser, Maryland Citizens for the Arts / Kent County Arts Council

Barbara Shaffer Bacon, Animating Democracy

Betty Siegel, Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability at the Kennedy Center

Richard Stein, Californians for the Arts / California Arts Advocates

Steven Tepper, Arizona State University

Carlton Turner, Alternate Roots

Beth Tuttle, DataArts

Zannie Giraud Voss, National Center for Arts Research

Laura Zabel, Springboard for the Arts

National Arts Service Organizations (2017)

Alternate ROOTS

American Alliance of Museums

American Composers Forum

Americans for the Arts

Association of Art Museum Directors

Association of Performing Arts Professionals

Chamber Music America

Chorus America

Dance | USA

Future of Music Coalition

League of American Orchestras

Local Learning

National Alliance for Musical Theatre

National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures

National Council for the Traditional Arts

Network Theatre Ensemble

New Music USA

OPERA America

Performing Arts Alliance

The Recording Academy

Theatre Communications Group

Artistic Logistics (2017)

Lisa Mount

Kathie deNobriga

MK Wegmann

Design

KINETIK, Inc., Washington, DC

Photography

Cover | RedCan Invitational Graffiti Jam, Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, photo courtesy of Cheyenne River Youth Project

Page 2 I "Two Big Black Hearts" by Jim Dine, deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, photo by Troy B. Thompson

Page 3 | Musician Desmond Mason, photo courtesy of the Oklahoma Gazette

Page 4 | Jamestown science students, photo courtesy of the North Dakota Council

on the Arts and Jamestown Elementary

Page 6 | Ercilia Brazil at Española Valley
Fiber Arts Center, photo by Diane Bowman

Page 7 Native American Drum and Dance Ensemble (Sioux Nation), photo by Chad Coppess courtesy of the South Dakota Department of Tourism

Page 8 | Woodcarving photo by Austin Ramsey, Shreveport, Louisiana

Page 9 | MusicianShip program in Washington, DC, photo by Michael Harrison Photography

Page 11 | 2019 People and Places convening, photo by Lise Metzger courtesy of the National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations

Page 12 | Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, photo courtesy of Sheila Smith

Page 13 | Montana Artrepreneur Liz Chappie Zoller, Pearl Snap Studio

Page 15 | "Far East of the Blues" performed by Dancing Wheels, choreographed by Donald McKayle, photo by Russell Brown

Page 17 I "King Salmon" sculpture and photo by Ray Troll, photo courtesy of the Alaska State Council on the Arts



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