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Arts and Culture Means Business in South Eastern Minnesota

New Study Shows Strong and Growing Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture on South Eastern Minnesota Economy

SAINT PAUL, MN: We have known for a long time that the arts and culture are important to South Eastern Minnesota. They enhance our quality of life, bring diverse communities together, and make our area a magnet for jobs and businesses. A new study was released today by Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council and Minnesota Citizens for the Arts that, in addition to contributing to our state's great quality of life, shows the nonprofit arts and culture sector is also a substantial industry in South Eastern Minnesota generating **over \$25.6 million in total economic impact annually.**

As the most comprehensive report ever done of the creative sector, *Creative Minnesota* is a new effort to fill the gaps in available information about Minnesota's cultural field and to improve our understanding of its importance to our quality of life and economy. It kicks off a new centralized, concentrated effort to collect and report data on the creative sector every two years for analysis, education and advocacy. All of the research developed by the *Creative Minnesota* team will be available at creativemn.org.

Creative Minnesota: The Impact and Health of the Nonprofit Arts and Culture Sector found that **122 nonprofit arts and culture organizations support the equivalent of 716 full time jobs** in South Eastern Minnesota. Over **724,113 people attend** nonprofit arts and cultural events annually in the region.

Creative Minnesota is a snapshot of the health and impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations in 2013 and looks at their spending and their audiences as well as other indicators of the sector's health and impact on the economy. **South Eastern Minnesota is third ranked in the economic impact of the region from the arts and culture compared to the rest of the state, behind only the Twin Cities Metro Area and the Arrowhead.**

The most recent comparable statewide economic impact study of the arts and culture sector was 2006's *The Arts: A Driving Force in South Eastern Minnesota's Economy*, conducted just before the Great Recession and also just before the Legacy Amendment was passed in Minnesota. The Legacy Amendment created dedicated funding for the arts and culture as well as for conservation. **The new report showed a growth in the economic impact of the arts and culture in this region of over \$7.7M since the last report. The region also had the second largest increase in jobs supported, 206, and an increase of 355,204 attendees, behind only the Twin Cities Metro Area.**

Sheila Smith, Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, said “It is a testament to how much Minnesotans care about arts and culture that, although Minnesota is just now crawling out of the Great Recession, the nonprofit arts and culture sector seems to have shown resilience and even growth in this period.”

“The arts have always contributed to the quality of life and enhanced local economies throughout Southeastern Minnesota,” said Robin Pearson, Executive Director, Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council, Inc. “Our communities actively engage in the many unique arts and cultural assets offered by a variety of arts organizations and individual artists. This study serves to underscore the broad economic impact and value of the arts to those who live, work, and visit the region.”

Local legislators were impressed by the strength of the arts impact on local economies:

"Throughout our region, the arts are a very important piece of the social, economic, and cultural fabric. I am proud to support the Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council and I applaud their work to inspire artists and intrigue audiences. Strong support for the arts allows our communities the opportunity to thrive socially and economically while creating excellent educational possibilities for all ages," said Minnesota State Senator Jeremy Miller.

Creative Minnesota was developed by a collaborative of arts and culture funders in partnership with Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA). The report leverages new in-depth research made possible because of Minnesota’s participation in the **Cultural Data Project** (culturaldata.org).

“We hope that arts advocates, legislators, local government officials and arts and cultural organizations will use this report to find new ways to improve their lives and economies with arts and culture,” said Sheila Smith, Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts.

The *Creative Minnesota* team includes **Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, The McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Forum of Regional Arts Councils of Minnesota, Target, the Bush Foundation, Mardag Foundation, and Jerome Foundation**, with in-kind support from the **Minnesota Historical Society** and others.

Kate Wolford, President of The McKnight Foundation said, “Like other entrepreneurs and small business owners, artists add significant economic and creative value across the entire state. Backed by hard data, *Creative Minnesota* reveals important truths about how our state’s artists and arts and culture organizations are making dynamic contributions to our economic vitality and to our high quality of life.”

The report references data about **122 arts and culture organizations** in South Eastern Minnesota including: Albert Lea Art Center; Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies; Austin Area Art Center; Austin Area Commission for the Arts; Austin Artist Series; Austin Community Band; Austin Community Charitable Fund; Austin Symphony Orchestra; Big Island Rendezvous and Festival; Bluff Country Studio Art Tour; Brave Community Theatre; Bridge Chamber Music Festival; Cambodian Association of Rochester Minnesota; Cannon Valley Youth Orchestra; Carleton College; Cello an American Experience; Chatfield Brass Band; Chatfield Center for the Arts; Children's Dance Theatre; Choral Arts Ensemble of Rochester; City of Faribault; City of Harmony Arts Board; City of Hokah; City of Northfield; City of Red Wing; City of Rochester Music Dept./Riverside Concerts; City of Wabasha; City of Winona; Commonweal Theatre Company; Cultural Diversity Network of Owatonna; District One Hospital; Dodge County Historical Society; Dover Eyota Music Association; Dreamery Rural Arts Initiative; Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center; Faribault Art Center Inc.; Fillmore County Historical Society; Folk Forum; Freeborn County Historical Society; Friends of St. Rose; Friends of the Houston Nature Center; Frontier Legends Entertainment; Frozen River Film Festival; Goodhue County Historical Society; Great River Shakespeare Festival; Hambone Music Festival; Home and Community Options; Honors Choirs of SE MN; I Cantanti Chamber Choirs; Jefferson Township; LaCrescent Area Historical Society; Lake City Historical Society; Lanesboro Arts Center; Lanesboro Community Theatre; Lockwood Theater Company; Mantorville Art Guild; Matchbox Children's Theatre; Minnesota Conservatory for the Arts;

Minnesota Marine Art Museum; Minnesota State Public School Orphanage Museum; Mower County Historical Society; National Eagle Center; Northfield Arts Guild; Northfield Historical Society; Northfield Senior Center; Northfield Youth Choirs; Northland Words; Norwegian-American Historical Association; Olmsted County Historical Society; Olmsted Medical Center; Owatonna Arts Council; Performance Center at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota; Peterson Station Museum; Picaresque II; Preston Historical Society; Project FINE; Red Dragonfly Press; Red Wing Arts Association; Rice County Historical Society; Rochester Aria Group; Rochester Art Center; Rochester Arts Council; Rochester Chamber Music Society; Rochester Civic Theatre; Rochester Community and Technical College; Rochester Dance Company; Rochester International Film Group; Rochester Irish Fest; Rochester Male Chorus; Rochester MN Writing Group; Rochester Music Guild; Rochester Repertory Theatre; Rochester Symphony Orchestra & Chorale; Rosie Belle Performing Arts Theatre; Rural America Arts Partnership; Rushford Area Historical Society; Rushford-Peterson Schools; Saint Charles Community Education; Saint Mary's University of Minnesota (Minnesota Conservatory for the Arts); SEED Performance Art; Sing Out Loud; SoundStrings; Southeast Minnesota Bluegrass Association; Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council; Southeastern Minnesota Suzuki Association; Southeastern Minnesota Youth Orchestras SEMYO; Spring Valley Historical Society; Steele County Historical Society; T. B. Sheldon Memorial Theatre; The Merlin Players; Theatre du Mississippi; University of Minnesota (Houston County); Valley Grove Preservation Society; Wabasha County Historical Society; Winona Area Barbershoppers; Winona Brass Band; Winona County Historical Society; Winona Symphony Orchestra Association; Winona-Dakota Unity Alliance; Wits' End Theatre; Words Players Theatre; and Zumbrota Area Arts Council.

Caveats

This study did not analyze the reason for the growth in the sector between 2006 and 2015. The growth is likely a combination of factors:

- Overall growth of these numbers since 2006 was driven in large part by the addition of hundreds of new small and medium organizations to the study. However, it may also reflect increased public funding for arts & culture, growth of organizations' individual impact or the addition of new organizations to the sector.
- It is important to note that the Cultural Data Project (CDP), which was the source for about a third of the data about participating arts organizations in 2015, did not exist in 2006. The CDP gives us much more detail on the economic activities of nonprofit arts & culture organizations than we had in the past.
- In addition, more nonprofit arts & culture organizations participated in this new study, not only because of the existence of CDP but also because it includes grantee data from the Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB), Regional Arts Councils (RACs), and Minnesota Historical Society (MHS), and the previous study did not.
- It is notable that the Arts and Culture Fund of the Legacy Amendment, passed by voters in 2008, also came into play during this period, which has increased the number and type of grantees from the MSAB and RACs by 75% (from 1219 in 2008 to 2139 in 2012), and also increased the grants made by MHS. Separate from this study, it has been confirmed that attendance at arts events funded by the Minnesota State Arts Board and Regional Arts Councils has increased by 21% (from 10,421,608 attendees in 2008 to 12,612,314 in 2012) since the passage of the Legacy Amendment (*source: Minnesota State Arts Board*).

Notes on the Cultural Data Project and other Sources:

This research was made possible by the state's participation in the **Cultural Data Project**, www.culturaldata.org/ which is a web-based data system utilized by arts and culture grant makers in thirteen states and the District of Columbia. Many public and private grant makers in Minnesota require some or all of their arts and culture grantees to submit data to the CDP. Most CDP data is financial, though it includes information about services provided, numbers of participants, staffing and volunteers as well. CDP data in this report is from 298 arts nonprofits as they reported it to the CDP.

The CDP data was supplemented by the responses of 396 arts and culture nonprofits to a brief online financial survey and by 575 organization's grantee data provided by the Minnesota State Arts Board, Regional Arts Councils and the Minnesota Historical Society. In addition, 3410 audience members completed a survey at arts and culture events around the state. Additional information came from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Tourism Marketing Council, Explore Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Education and others.

Americans for the Arts (AFTA) was commissioned to calculate the economic impact research portion of this report as part of *Arts & Economic Prosperity® IV: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences in the State of Minnesota*, Americans for the Arts, 2014 and the associated eleven regional Minnesota studies, which can be downloaded at creativemn.org. Additional data analysis was done by CliftonLarsonAllen using the data sources cited above.

The Legacy Amendment

The Legacy Amendment was passed by a statewide vote of the people of Minnesota in 2008 to dedicate a portion of the state's sales tax to create four new funds for 1. land conservation, 2. water conservation, 3. parks and trails, and 4. arts and culture. The legislature appropriates the dollars from the Legacy Arts and Culture Fund to the Minnesota State Arts Board, Regional Arts Councils, Minnesota Historical Society and other entities to provide access to the arts and culture for all Minnesotans.

Sponsoring Organizations

- **Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA)** is a statewide arts advocacy organization whose mission is to ensure opportunity for all people to have access to and involvement in the arts. MCA organizes the arts community and lobbies the Minnesota State Legislature and Congress on issues pertaining to the nonprofit arts and conducts original research. MCA works with over 40,000 arts advocates in Minnesota. 651-251-0868, www.mncitizensforthearts.org @MNCitizen.
- **The McKnight Foundation:** www.mcknight.org
- **Target:** <https://corporate.target.com/corporate-responsibility>
- **Bush Foundation:** www.bushfoundation.org
- **Mardag Foundation:** <http://www.mardag.org/>
- **Jerome Foundation:** <http://www.jeromefdn.org/>
- **The Minnesota State Arts Board:** <http://www.arts.state.mn.us/>
- **Forum of Regional Arts Councils of Minnesota:** <http://www.arts.state.mn.us/racs/forum.htm>
- **Minnesota Historical Society:** <http://www.mnhs.org/about>
- **Ideas that Kick:** www.ideasthatkick.com
- **Americans for the Arts:** www.AmericansForTheArts.org

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