



4/14/15

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Arts and Culture Means Business In South Central Minnesota

New Study Shows Strong Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture on South Central Minnesota's Economy

SAINT PAUL, MN: We have known for a long time that the arts and culture are important to South Central 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 the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council and Minnesota Citizens for the Arts that shows that, in addition to contributing to our state's excellent quality of life, the nonprofit arts and culture sector is also a substantial industry in South Central Minnesota generating **over \$13.6 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 **89 nonprofit arts and culture organizations support the equivalent of 348 full time jobs** in South Central Minnesota. Over **358,731 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 Central Minnesota is "punching above its weight" in terms of local economic impact. While the region was 6th ranked in population in 2010 among the eleven regions studied, it ranked 5th in size of its economic impact from the arts and culture.**

The most recent comparable statewide economic impact study of the arts and culture sector was 2006's *The Arts: A Driving Force in South Central 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 \$3.6M since the last report, in addition to an increase in attendance of 86,523 people since 2006 after adjusting for a for-profit that was mistakenly included in the earlier study.

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.”

Brenda Byron, Executive Director of the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council said, “This study helps us to better understand the full impact of the arts on our regional and state economies. When someone buys a ticket to an arts event in Fairmont, Mankato, New Ulm or Waseca, they are also having dinner in a local restaurant, shopping in local stores, and buying gas for the trip home. In addition to the positive economic impact, the arts entertain us, inspire community engagement, provide thought provoking dialog, and enrich our cultural lives. The bottom line is that the arts increase our quality of life in many ways.”

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 **89 arts and culture organizations** in South Central Minnesota: including: 4 Playwrights Project; American Guild of Organists; Arlington Town and Country Days; Arts and Heritage Center of Montgomery; Arts Center of Saint Peter; Arts 'N More; Blue Earth County Historical Society; Blue Earth Town and Country Players; Blue Earth Valley Concert Association; Boy In Blue Civil War Memorial; Brown County Historical Society; Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota; Christkindlmarkt; City Center Partnership - CityArt Program; City of Arlington; City of Janesville; City of Mankato; City of New Richland; City of New Ulm; City of Waseca; CityArt Sculpture Walk; Community And Seniors Together; Dance Conservatory of Southern Minnesota; Fairmont Opera House; Farming of Yesteryear; Good Thunder Reading Series; Govenaires Drum Bugle Corps; Gustavus Adolphus College and Lutheran Church Archives; Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth of Brown County; Henderson Chamber of Commerce; Henderson Sauerkraut Days; Highland Summer Theatre; History Fest; Humanities are Vital to Education (H.A.V.E.); Lake Crystal Area Community Band; Le Sueur County Historical Society; Le Sueur-Henderson Community Education; Madelia Area Chamber of Commerce; Mankato Mdewakanton Association; Mankato Area 77 Lancers Marching Band Parent Association; Mankato Area Arts Council; Mankato Area Community Band; Mankato Area Community Education; Mankato Area Youth Symphony Orchestra; Mankato Ballet Company; Mankato Community Education; Mankato Figure Skating Club; Mankato Symphony Orchestra Association Inc.; Martin County Preservation Association; Merely Players Community Theatre; MHIS; Minnesota Over 60 Band; Minnesota Shorts Play Festival; Minnesota Valley Chorale; Minnesota Valley Chorus Sweet Adelines; Minnesota Valley Music Teachers Association; Musicorum; New Ulm Actors Community Theatre (NUACT); New Ulm Civil War Commemoration; New Ulm Retail Development Corporation; New Ulm Suzuki School of Music; Nicollet County Historical Society; Performance Series MSU Mankato; Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council; Project GEM; Rock Bend Folk Festival; Saint James Theater and Arts Association; Saint Peter Ambassadors; Saint Thomas Oratory Irish Fest; Sakatah Arts Experience; Sibley County Historical

Museum; Sleepy Eye Area Historical Society; Sleepy Eye Community Education; Springfield Area Historical Society; St. Peter Choral Society; St. Thomas Oratory (Jessenland); The Concord Singers; The Fairmont Opera House; The Govenaires Drum and Bugle Corps; The Grand Center for Arts and Culture; The Mankato Children's Chorus; Twin Rivers Council for the Arts; Wanda Gag House Association; Waseca Arts Council; Waseca Chamber of Commerce; Waseca Classic; Waseca County Historical Society; Winnebago Area Musical Players; and Young Writers & Artists Conference.

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.

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