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New Creative Minnesota Study of Renville County Reveals Large Impact of the Arts on Local Economy

SAINT PAUL, MN: Creative Minnesota, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts and Bird Island Cultural Center released a new study today indicating that the arts have a large impact on Renville County.

“Nonprofit arts and culture organizations contribute to the vibrancy of Minnesota’s economy and quality of life and make our state a magnet for jobs and businesses. Now we can quantify that in Renville County.” said Sheila Smith, Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts. “In addition to providing life changing experiences, educational opportunities and accessibility to audiences of all ages in their stages and museums, arts and culture organizations are important employers and economic engines.”

“This study will assist in evaluating and developing various programs to address how civic leaders and organizations can further support arts and culture programming,” said Olga Nichols, Executive Director of the Bird Island Cultural Centre.

“The Bird Island City Council and the Bird Island Economic Development Authority (EDA) wholeheartedly agree that arts are essential to vibrant communities and play a major role in economic development opportunities,” said Deb Lingl, Bird Island City Administrator & City EDA Secretary.

As the most comprehensive report ever done of the state’s creative sector, *Creative Minnesota 2017* fills in the gaps of available information about Minnesota’s cultural field and seeks to improve our understanding of its importance to our quality of life and economy. *Creative Minnesota 2017* quantifies the impact and needs of Minnesota’s artists and creative workers and nonprofit arts and culture organizations. The report includes both new, original research and analysis of data created by others.

All Creative Minnesota research is available for free at **CreativeMN.org**.

RENVILLE COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Renville County** may be small in population size but they are an emerging arts and cultural region.
- Renville County's 11 nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and their audiences alone drove close to a **half million dollars** in economic impact, serving an audience of over 17,000 people.
- Some of these organizations are fairly new, so this study provides Renville County with an excellent baseline from which to measure their future growth.
- **Renville County's** artists and creative generated close to another **half a million dollars** in positive economic impact based on their spending.
- Moreover, the wages for those artists and creative workers is on par with the average worker wage in Renville County.
- In summary, Renville County hosts a small but determined cohort of artists and arts and cultural organizations supported by a dedicated audience. Together they were the driving force behind a nearly **\$1 million annual economic impact**.

Dan Coughin, Olivia City Administrator said, "While Olivia prides itself on having a long history of being supportive of the arts...it [is] clear to the City Council that more can be done to raise awareness of how arts and culture impacts our economy, the stability of our area communities, and the general quality of life of our citizens."

"We intuitively know that the arts...not only provides 'quality of life' dynamics for our residents, they also create jobs and spur local and regional economic activity," said LuAnn (Susie) Lothert, Executive Director for the Olivia EDA. "From band and vocal teachers to independent musicians & painters to quilting and craft groups (and everything in between) the arts have far more impact on our region than most would believe."

"We (also) wanted to participate in this study to determine how we can utilize an existing, historic section of the Yellowstone Trail to develop an administrative hub for bringing awareness to and supporting the wealth of artisans and culture-bearers already working in our community," said Olga Nichols, Executive Director of the Bird Island Cultural Centre.

OTHER LOCAL FINDINGS:

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR:

- In Renville County the study found that the **combined economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations, their audiences and artists and creative workers in is \$952,080 annually**. This includes:
 - **\$147,759** spent by nonprofit arts organizations,
 - **\$341,408** spent by **17,269 attendees**,
 - and the direct spending of artists in their communities, on things such as art supplies and studio rental, of **\$462,913**.
- This economic impact represents an infusion of \$63.62 per county resident into the local economy from the arts and culture.

IMPACT AND NUMBER OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS:

- **11 nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Renville County served 17,269**

attendees at arts and cultural events in 2014. This number includes 650 K-12 students served annually.

NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN MN BY DISCIPLINE	
PERFORMING ARTS	1
ARTS MULTIPURPOSE	4
HISTORY & HISTORICAL PRESERVATION	5
OTHER*	
VISUAL ARTS & ARCHITECTURE	1
MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS	
LITERARY ARTS	
TOTAL	11

**OTHER includes science and children’s museums, zoos, and arts and culture programs housed in non-arts nonprofits and local governments.*

- The economic impact of **just nonprofit arts and culture audiences in this region totaled \$341,408**. This spending at local businesses is above and separate from the cost of the ticket to the event, and includes spending in restaurants, gas stations, and other local businesses by attendees on the way to and on the way home from an event. The average spent by an attendee is \$19.77, and is money that would not have been spent in the community unless the event had occurred. Nonlocals spend even more, bringing dollars to the community that would otherwise not be there.

- Finally, the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Renville County includes \$48,209 in state and local government revenues and supports 12 FTE jobs which generate \$274,000 in resident household income annually.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY INCLUDED:

- ACHF Arts Education, Renville
- Bird Island Cultural Centre
- Dakota Wicohan
- Danube Historical Society
- Oyate Nipi Kte
- Redwood Falls Public Library/Plum Creek Library System/History Projects
- Renville County Agricultural Society performance and visual arts
- Renville County Historical Society
- Renville Friends of the Arts
- River Valley Center for the Arts
- Sacred Heart Area Historical Society

LOCAL ARTISTS AND CREATIVE WORKERS:

- *Creative Minnesota 2017* found that there are over **113 artists and creative workers** in Renville County. Creative workers are defined as people who make their living wholly, or in part, by working for for-profits, non-profits, or self-employed, in 41 creative occupations.

- These occupations include:
architects, choir directors, curators, librarians, art directors, craft artists, fine artists including painters, sculptors and illustrators, multimedia artists and animators, commercial and industrial designers, fashion, graphic and interior designers, set and exhibition designers, actors, producers and directors, dancers, choreographers, music directors and composers, musicians and singers, editors, writers and authors, sound engineering technicians, photographers, camera operators
- The most common creative worker jobs in the county are in **Photography, Music, and Writing.**
- Surprisingly, the average hourly wage for creative workers in Renville County is \$18.10, which **is above the average worker wage** of \$18.00.
- The direct spending of artists and creative workers in the community generates **\$56,208 in state and local government revenues.**

OTHER STATEWIDE HIGHLIGHTS:

STATEWIDE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR:

- Statewide, the study found that the **combined economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations, their audiences and artists and creative workers is over \$2 billion annually.** This includes \$819 million spent by nonprofit arts organizations, \$564 million spent by audiences, and the direct spending of artists in their communities, on things such as art supplies and studio rental, of \$644 million.

- Just looking at the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations, Minnesota has **double the arts economy of Wisconsin** even though we have nearly the same population, **ten and a half times** the arts economy of Kansas and **twelve and a half times** the arts economy of South Dakota.

- Statewide, state and local government revenue from the arts sector exceeded \$222 million, including income and sales taxes.

STATEWIDE IMPACT AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF ARTISTS AND CREATIVE WORKERS:

- *Creative Minnesota 2017* found that there are over **104,000 artists and creative workers** in Minnesota whose **spending in the state totals \$644 million annually.**
- **24 percent of self-identified artists in Minnesota are employed full-time as artists, 42 percent are employed part-time,** and the rest, 34 percent, are retired, hobbyists or students.

STRONGEST NEEDS FOR ALL MINNESOTA ARTISTS:

- **SPACE TO WORK:** Artists desire spaces and tools of their own to do their work – but not in solitude.

- **CONNECT:** Artists have strong interest in opportunities to form connections and serve communities.
- **LEARN:** Artists embrace and are seeking more learning experiences, experienced artists would like to pass on their skills, younger artists are looking for mentors.
- **EARN:** Artists remain ambitious about developing paying audiences and generating income from their work, but their identities as artists and the non-monetary value they derive from their practice are strong regardless of earnings.
- **AUDIENCE:** Artists desire to reach wider audiences and markets.

STATEWIDE IMPACT AND NUMBER OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS:

- **1601 nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Minnesota served 22 million attendees** at arts and cultural events in 2014.
- These organizations serve **3.8 million K-12 students**, hosting **29,318 school group visits** each year. There are approximately 900,000 K-12 students in Minnesota, so on average every student is participating four times a year in arts and culture activities provided by these nonprofits.
- The economic impact of just the participating organizations and their audiences totaled \$1.4 billion, **an increase of \$185 million since our previous study in 2015.** This is primarily due to an additional 332 participating organizations, but also includes **a 1.5 percent increase in impact** by the organizations participating in both studies.

STATEWIDE PUBLIC OPINION POLLING ON THE ARTS:

Minnesotans strongly believe the arts and culture are important to their quality of life, and Minnesotans attend and participate in the arts more than other Americans:

- **76%** of Minnesotans, compared to 68% of all Americans, attend arts and culture events
- **63%** of Minnesotans, compared to 49% of all Americans, are personally involved in creative activity in their everyday life
- **91%** of Minnesotans believe that people who create art are contributing something important to their communities
- **90%** of Minnesotans believe that arts & cultural activities help make Minnesota an attractive place to live and work
- **82%** of Minnesotans believe it's important to have the opportunity to express themselves creatively or to experience the creativity of others every day

ABOUT CREATIVE MINNESOTA

Creative Minnesota is a long-term collaborative initiative of statewide arts and culture supporting organizations in partnership with Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA). Creative Minnesota's first round of studies, released in February 2015, looked at the economic impact of the nonprofit arts and culture organizations in the state's 11 arts regions and at the state as a whole. The second round in October 2015 looked at the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations in 17 Minnesota cities and counties. The 2017 study expanded

its scope to look at the impact and needs of Minnesota's artists and creative workers. All *Creative Minnesota* research is available for free at **CREATIVEMN.ORG**.

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, Bush Foundation, Mardag Foundation, and Jerome Foundation**, with in-kind support from the **Minnesota Historical Society** and others.

Highlights of Creative Minnesota 2017's Data Sources:

ORIGINAL RESEARCH:

- **"Artists Count" Survey** of 2100 Minnesota artists by **Creative Minnesota** done with 194 organizational partners in 2016.
- **"Artists Thrive" Survey** of 800 Minnesota artists by the **Minnesota State Arts Board** in 2015.
- Analysis and Update of economic impact data of 1601 nonprofit arts and culture organizations

ANALYSIS OF OTHER DATA SETS WITH MANY PARTNERS:

- **Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), University of Minnesota** analysis and mapping of *"Artists and Arts Workers in the United States"* from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages
- **Minnesota Compass** analysis of Integrated Public Use Microdata Series from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2010-2014, on arts participation
- **Minnesota Center for Survey Research, University of Minnesota**, Public Opinion Polling, *2014 and 2015 State Surveys*
- **Center for the Study of Art and Community**, literature review, synthesis and analysis by Bill Cleveland.
- **For a full list, download the report at www.creativeMN.org**

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.

Major 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.artsMN.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
- **CURA Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota:** <http://www.cura.umn.edu/>
- **Minnesota Compass:** <http://www.mncompass.org>
- **Bird Island Cultural Centre:** <https://birdislandculture.com/>

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