



Dwight Evans' Plan for Promoting Philadelphia's Arts and Culture Sector

I believe one way we can fight crime and reduce violence in Philadelphia is by providing economic opportunities for our residents and improving their quality of life. Promoting the arts and culture sector allows us to do both.

Philadelphia's arts and culture sector is a key economic contributor. It creates jobs, attracts visitors, and generates revenue for the City. As the economist Richard Florida notes in his article, "The Rise of the Creative Class," the ability to stimulate economic growth lies in a City's ability to attract the creative class – a group of highly-educated, well-paid, fast-growing segment of the workforce on whose efforts businesses profit and economic growth depends more and more.¹ Yet this involves more than just having an arts and culture sector; it requires providing an array of arts and cultural experiences like small galleries, music and dance, outside of institutionalized events such as the theater and orchestra, to appeal to changing lifestyles and preferences.

According to the Greater Philadelphia Culture Alliance's 2006 *Portfolio* study, the arts and culture sector employs 14,000 people and approximately 17,000 volunteers working in non-profit cultural organizations.² The arts and culture sector has provided more jobs than other key business sectors such as advertising, architectural services, and accounting throughout the region. It attracts 12 million visitors every year to as many as 56,000 cultural events in the region.³ And cultural organizations account for more than \$560 million in yearly revenues with roughly 72 organizations reporting revenues of \$1 million or more each year.⁴

¹ "The Rise of the Creative Class," by Richard Florida, *Washington Monthly*, May 2002, <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2001/0205.florida.html>

² The Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance 2006 *Portfolio*: <http://www.philaculture.org/portfolio/>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

Beyond its economic benefits, the arts and culture sector also provides educational opportunities, promotes the City's history and cultural diversity, and enhances quality of life. The City of Philadelphia has made several significant contributions in art, music, performing arts, film, and television. The Philadelphia Museum of Art, for example, showcases work by Vincent van Gogh, Pablo Picasso, as well as numerous other prominent artists like Georgia O'Keefe.

Of those who visit cultural events and organizations, 2 of every 5 are school children.⁵ Some of the cultural organizations are older than the country itself like the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts – the oldest arts school and museum in the country – and the Academy of Music celebrating the City's historical importance. Residents and visitors can enjoy a cultural event for less than what it costs to attend a sporting event or commercial event like a rock concert. For example, the average ticket price of a cultural event is only about \$20, and many visitors enjoy cultural events for free, making them accessible to people of all ages and incomes.

Besides the City's vast array of cultural organizations, including galleries and museums, ethnic parades (i.e. St. Patrick's Day Parade), festivals (i.e. Odunde and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender [LBGT] Pride Festival) and celebrations (i.e., Black history month), Philadelphia boasts the largest display of public art of any other City in the country. Dating back to the 19th Century and the creation of the Fairmount Park sculptures, Philadelphia has a long history of combining public art with urban planning. Philadelphia was the first City to establish a Percent for Art ordinance, which requires that the construction budget for City development contracts include at least one percent for fine art. Most recently, the City created a Mural Arts Program (MAP) as a way to tap the talent of local graffiti artists and use their artistic ability to improve the appearance of neighborhoods. To date, MAP has created more than 2,700 murals throughout Philadelphia, which are treasured pieces of the City's landscape and are the source of pride for the millions of residents and visitors who see them. I am proud to have provided over \$550,000 to the Mural Arts Project to help them with their important work; it is a program which I support and will continue to support if elected Mayor.

Philadelphia also is home to the Philadelphia Orchestra, Philly Pops, Pennsylvania Ballet, and the Opera Company of Philadelphia. As a state legislator, I have worked to bring the Orchestra to the community and provide free concerts as part of my vision to promote opportunity to **all** communities through arts and culture. Martin Luther High School, for example, hosted the Philadelphia Orchestra's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Tribute Concert this year for the second year in a row.

Philadelphia is also home to such cultural treasures as the Philadelphia Dance Company (PHILADANCO), the Painted Bride Arts Center, Freedom Theater, the Paul Robeson House, Marian Anderson Museum and the world-famous Curtis Institute of Music. Several local music labels such as Swan Records, Chancellor Records, and Philadelphia International Records have roots in Philadelphia, as well as famed R&B

⁵ Ibid.

musicians and producers like Kenny Gamble, Leon Huff, jazz musician John Coltrane, and rap artists DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince.

With all of what Philadelphia offers, however, there are still some neighborhoods that do not have indigenous arts organizations. Supporting our arts and culture sector means we are investing in Philadelphia's economic well-being and improving the quality of life for our residents in every community. That is why, as Mayor, I am committed to promoting this important sector of our economy.

In my economic development strategy for revitalizing our economy: http://evansformayor.com/assets/pdfs/Economic_Development.pdf, I propose to build upon Philadelphia's existing assets such as our historical charm, diversity, cityscape, and robust creative class to make Philadelphia the Hollywood of the East, and thereby grow our City's film, television, and recording industries. My plan to promote Philadelphia's Arts and Culture Sector seeks to expand on this same theme of focusing on Philadelphia's economic strengths, including our arts and culture sector.

Growing the Arts and Culture Industry

The arts and culture industry generates revenue for the local economy, creates jobs for residents, and stimulates the economy by attracting businesses, workers, and visitors to Philadelphia each year.

As Mayor, I will:

- **Reestablish the Office of Arts and Culture and Reinstitute the Mayor's Arts and Culture Advisory Council.** These two offices, under the leadership of then Mayor Ed Rendell, helped coordinate the building of the Kimmel Center and the expansion of the Avenue of the Arts. The Mayor's Arts and Culture Advisory Council, which consisted entirely of volunteers, also helped create the Marian Anderson Award, the Culture Fund and other beneficial activities within the City. As Mayor, I will bring these two important entities back and give them the support they deserve commensurate with the critical importance of arts and culture to Philadelphia.
- **Provide More Financial Support to the Arts and Culture Industry.** The Greater Philadelphia cultural organizations receive less support from local government and corporate sponsors than other major cities. The City of Philadelphia, for example, accounts for only 3 percent of the industry's total funds compared to Denver which provides 9 percent and New York City which provides 10 percent.⁶ And regional corporate sponsors make up about 2 percent of total revenue for this industry.⁷ To make up the difference, the industry relies heavily on ticket sales, individual donors, foundation support, and on volunteers. As

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

Mayor, I will work with City Council to find ways to increase the City's contribution to arts and culture organizations; whether through the identification of grants and/or to help locate physical space, I will work to enhance the City's contribution to this important industry. In addition, I will use my leadership as Mayor to influence greater corporate sponsorship, including considering increasing the "One Percent" ordinance to two percent.

- **Lead the Charge to Push for a Voter Referendum to Supply a New, Sustainable Revenue Source** to fund the arts and culture industry. Government officials in Denver, Colorado put forth a ballot initiative in the late 1980s asking voters to support a .01 percent increase (one penny of every \$10) on purchases made within a special regional tax district now called the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). The SCFD was created solely for the purpose of providing a dedicated revenue source to fund local scientific and cultural organizations. Thank to voters' support, Denver passed the ballot initiative, and since that time six more counties have joined the SCFD currently providing over \$38 million to local organizations each year. As Mayor, I will work to gain support from counties in the Southeast region to prepare a referendum asking voters to support the creation of a regional tax district to fund our arts and culture industry.
- **Create Public/Private Partnerships to Enhance Funding for the Arts and Culture Industry.** Too little government support and corporate sponsorship over the years has impacted the bottom-line of several cultural organizations here in the City. A recent study notes that about 25 percent of non-profit cultural organizations have reported operating deficits of more than 10 percent in recent years, making them vulnerable to closure. Small organizations lacking endowments are the most at-risk. As Mayor, I will reach out to private businesses to seek additional support and resources to build our arts and culture industry and ensure its sustainability. I also will look for more opportunities to encourage local collaboration for the purpose of applying and receiving more grants by hiring an arts and culture grant writer in the hopes of making it a self-funded position over time. Finally, as Mayor, I will attract greater support for Philadelphia's arts and culture organizations from large national foundations such as the Rockefeller, Ford and Knight Foundations. These large grant-makers respond when coordinated requests are made from the top leaders of a community, and no one will be more passionate than me in calling on these foundations to support these critical assets for our city.
- **Promote the Expansion of Cultural Organizations in Philadelphia.** Over the past several years, the number of cultural organizations – classified broadly by discipline as those providing community arts (like religious and ethnic events), education, museums, visual arts, historical, and scientific – have grown from 523 organizations in 1995 to 999 organizations in 2004 throughout the region with the largest increase reported in Philadelphia. Not only is this sector growing in number of organizations, but there has been growth in every discipline. As

Mayor, I will work to promote this expansion and look for more opportunities to expand the arts and culture sector further, particularly in neighborhoods where there currently are no arts or cultural organizations present. In addition, my administration will encourage and facilitate arts and cultural events such as festivals and concerts in every neighborhood that promote and employ the City's arts and culture community.

- **Become the City's Own Cultural Ambassador.** Philadelphia is blessed with a variety of cultural organizations that offer an array of events from galleries to symphonies to plays and dance productions. I want to encourage more residents and visitors to enjoy these programs, productions, lectures, galleries, concerts, and performances. As Mayor, I will use my leadership to promote the City's arts and culture industry throughout the State, region, nation, and international community by dedicating more resources to tourism and marketing of these assets. In addition, given that the Philadelphia Orchestra and PHILADANCO travel the country and the world to perform in a variety of venues, I will also make them cultural ambassadors for Philadelphia so as to continuously promote the exciting opportunities Philadelphia offers.

Promoting Culture in the Community

The arts and culture sector provides numerous benefits to Philadelphia's residents and businesses aside from entertainment and recreation such as increased property values and improved student academic performance.

As Mayor, I will:

- **Identify Opportunities to Bring Cultural Events to the Community.** Cultural events like the opera, orchestra, ballet, and theater have long been viewed as entertainment for the wealthy. I want to change this perception by bringing cultural events to the community – and not just the orchestra and theater, but events like hip hop performances and poetry slams in order to reach more people who might otherwise not have a chance to experience these events. As Mayor, I will work with cultural organizations such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, Academy of Music, and Philly Hip Hop of Philadelphia Entertainment, Inc., among others to identify opportunities to bring free or low-cost performances to our neighborhoods as part of my vision to increase opportunity for Philadelphia's youth and residents.
- **Bring More Cultural Organizations to Neighborhoods.** Studies show that neighborhoods with high cultural participation generally gain residents, while neighborhoods with low or no cultural participation lose residents and even see a decline in property values. Over a 10-year period between 1990 and 2000, a study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania revealed that the average home price in neighborhoods with high cultural participation increased by

\$30,000, whereas neighborhoods with a low or no cultural participation increased by just \$10,000.⁸ The increased presence of cultural organizations and accessibility of cultural events therefore can promote neighborhood revitalization leading to higher property values and attract more residents to a neighborhood. As Mayor, I will work with the non-profit arts and culture community, specifically dance schools, arts studios, and recording studios to provide opportunities to grow and locate in neighborhoods throughout the City, in particular, in neighborhoods with little or no cultural organization presence.

- **Offer Students Greater Exposure to Arts Education.** The Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance recently found that students who receive arts education do better on their SATs. In particular, high school students who are exposed to arts education perform better academically than those who do not. Yet only 10 percent of the region’s cultural organizations provide education and instruction. As Mayor, I will work to expand these programs and integrate them with after-school and summer programs currently offered by the City. I will also work with the School District and School Reform Commission to make the arts an integral part of every student’s education. I believe that using art expression is a terrific way to increase literacy and decrease violence; it is critical that these opportunities be made available to all Philadelphia students.
- **Work with Local Cultural Organizations to Locate Performances and Events Near Public Transportation.** One way to increase the accessibility for Philadelphia residents to enjoy local arts and cultural events is to ensure that they are located in places near public transit. As Mayor, I will work with local arts groups and cultural organizations and encourage them to host their performances in venues that can be easily accessed using public transportation.
- **Market the Arts and Culture Sector.** The Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance found that two-thirds of residents who live in the Southeast region attend arts and culture events regularly and 65 percent of Philadelphia residents report attending at least one cultural event per year.⁹ Although these statistics indicate the value of arts and culture events to area residents, more can be done to increase their value to people living outside the City and region. As Mayor, I will embark on a marketing campaign, expanding on the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance’s Campaign for Culture, to raise awareness of Philadelphia’s cultural organizations and events and look for ways to attract more visitors to Philadelphia. As part of this effort, I will appoint a cabinet-level director who will be responsible for coordinating marketing efforts with local cultural organizations to advocate arts and culture in Philadelphia. I will also work with the counties and municipalities surrounding Philadelphia to develop a regional strategy for marketing these key assets.

⁸ “Cultural Builds Community”, Stockton Rush Bartol Foundation (statistics provided by U.S. Census)

⁹ Ibid.