



Official Statement on Proposed Elimination of the National Endowment for the Arts

March 16, 2017

Today, President Trump released a budget proposal which would eliminate funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in FY2018. As the budgeting process ensues, the NEA will continue to operate as usual until a new budget is enacted by Congress.

Arts United, a nonprofit local arts agency and united arts fund founded in 1955, mobilizes resources for arts and culture organizations in northeast Indiana. Arts United's primary source of funding is the generous private philanthropy of community members in northeast Indiana.

Rather than speculate on the future of the NEA at this time, Arts United would like to commend the leaders of the NEA for the ways in which they support the arts in our community.

The National Endowment for the Arts contributes to northeast Indiana by:

- Providing overall leadership for the arts in the country with significant impact in communities both large and small.
- Providing direct funding for arts and culture projects. A recent example is the Creativity Connects Grant, which awarded \$63,000 to the Fort Wayne Dance Collective for the Healing Arts program, conducted in partnership with Parkview Health, and \$10,000 to the University of Saint Francis for the Jesters program.
- Partnering with state arts commissions, like the Indiana Arts Commission (IAC), to distribute funds to the nation's arts and culture organizations and programs. The IAC receives approximately 20% of its budget from the NEA. The other 80% comes from the Indiana General Assembly.

Arts United is a Regional Arts Partner of the IAC, administering grants on their behalf to arts and culture organizations in northeast Indiana, serving the counties of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, LaGrange, Miami, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells and Whitley. This provides an avenue for local review and decision-making on how state and federal dollars are spent for the arts. Through this partnership, Arts United re-granted \$190,966 to 29 local organizations and projects on behalf of the IAC in FY2017.

The arts are flourishing in northeast Indiana. In 2014, northeast Indiana boasted 22,261 arts and culture events and activities; 1,311,954 total attendance; 301,642 youth/student attendance; 6,047 participating artists; and 355 paid administrative staff on behalf of support provided by Arts United and the IAC. According to a study by the Community Research Institute of Indiana-University-Purdue University Fort Wayne, commissioned by Arts United during a cultural planning process in 2015, there are approximately 18,834 creative economy jobs in northeast Indiana (approximately 4.5% of all jobs). This [study was expanded to a state-wide level by the Indiana Arts Commission](#), and there are 160,621 creative economy jobs in the state of Indiana (approximately 4.3% of all jobs).

Individual philanthropy is the backbone of nonprofit arts organizations in our region. Arts United will continue to do its part in advancing the creative sector to elevate the quality of life of northeast Indiana, and we hope to do so alongside the tremendous leadership of the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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