



# ANNUAL REPORT



**ARTS SERVICES INITIATIVE**  
OF WESTERN NEW YORK INC

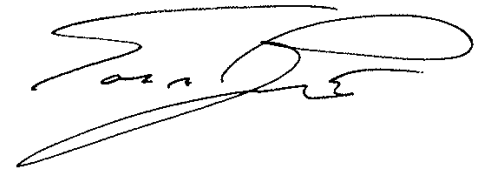
*PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE WESTERN NEW YORK CULTURAL SECTOR*

Arts Services Initiative of Western New York (ASI) promotes the cultural sector's vital role in economic development and the community through capacity building, collaboration, and advocacy in Erie, Niagara, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and Allegany Counties.

## A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2011, Arts Services Initiative of WNY was created with a mission to provide capacity building, collaboration, and advocacy services to cultural organizations and artists. We knew we would be the decentralization (DEC) grant site for Erie and Niagara Counties, and that in some way we'd offer professional development and other "arts council" type services. Five years later, ASI has manifested and evolved that mission to quickly become a key resource for groups of all sizes and artists in every phase of their careers; a leader in telling the story of the impact of the region's cultural sector at a local, state, and national level; and an innovator of programs that increase access to the arts for the general public.

We're incredibly proud of our work over the past five years and especially in 2016, and we hope that after reading some of our highlights in the following pages you will be too.



## 2016 ASI STAFF

Mr. Tod A. Kniazuk, Executive Director  
Ms. Jennifer Swan, Associate Director  
Ms. Natalie Brown, Associate  
Mrs. Parrish Gibbons Herzog, Associate  
Ms. Ally Spongr, Associate  
Ms. Julie Ricchiazzi, Bookkeeper  
Ms. Stephanie Cole Adams, Pro Bono Legal Counsel

## 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr. Randall Kramer – President	Ms. Kate Koperski - Vice President
Ms. Paulette D. Harris – Secretary	Ms. Michelle Watorek - Treasurer
Mr. Anthony Bannon	Ms. Brandye Merriweather
Mr. Broderick Cason	Mr. Daniel T. Montante
Ms. Journey Gunderson	Mr. John A. Mueller
Ms. Tina Hastings	Mr. Hal D. Payne
Ms. Anne M. Janczak	Ms. Theresa Quinn, Esq.
Ms. Sarah JM Kolberg	Dr. Irene Rykaszewski
Mr. Zack Schneider	



# Celebrating five years!

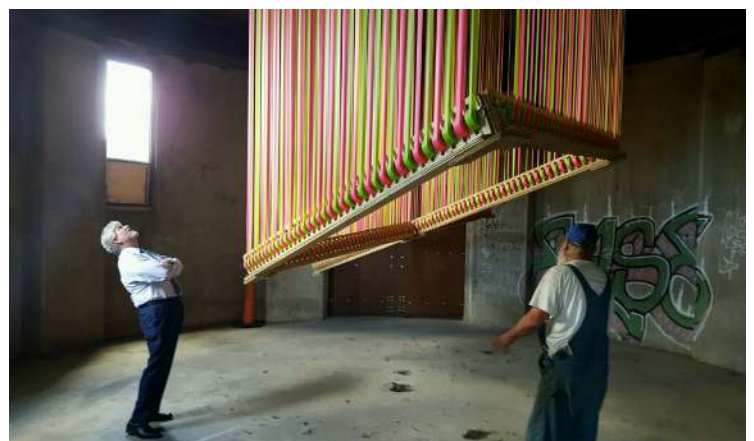
ASI celebrated its five year anniversary by bringing **Americans for the Arts (AFTA) President & CEO Bob Lynch** (pictured at right) to WNY for an event in August entitled “Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts”. Lynch discussed the arts’ impact on the economy, healthcare, veterans services, tourism, community building, education and more to over 75 local leaders, artists and cultural organizations. Since its creation in August 2011, ASI has excelled in the areas of capacity building, advocacy, and collaboration for cultural organizations and artists, as well as its work to increase access to the arts for the general public.



Team ASI with Bob Lynch in front of artist Chuck Tingley's piece entitled *Spark*



Local business leaders discuss the impact of the arts on our community's economy



Bob Lynch at Silo City during a WNY arts and culture tour

Through ASI's [grant giving](#) programs Give for Greatness, Decentralization (DEC), and Fendrick Fund over [\\$200,000](#) was allocated towards more than [100](#) small arts and cultural organizations and artists in 2016.

## 2016 Grantees

710 Main Theatre	Dance Days of Buffalo	North Shore Arts Alliance
African American Center for Cultural Development	Dave Ruch	Northwest Buffalo Community Center
Amor & Heritage	Dreamland Arts	O'Connell & Company Productions
Ani Hoover	El Museo Francisco Oller y Diego Rivera	Old First Ward Community Association
Annette Daniels Taylor	Fotini Galanes Renzoni	Olean Theatre Workshop
Artpark & Company	Fountain Arts Center	Opportunities Unlimited of Niagara
Association for a Buffalo Presidential Center	Friends of the Burchfield Nature and Art Center	Orchard Park Chorale
Belinda McGuire	Friends of Vienna	PDdance (National Parkinson Foundation WNY)
Bethany Ides	German American Musicians Association	People Inc.
Blasdell Recreation Department	Group Ministries	Polish Arts Club of Buffalo
Blues Society of Western New York	Harmonia Chamber Singers	Red Blazer Men's Chorus
Brazen-Faced Varlets	Hispanic Heritage Council of Western New York	Red Thread Theatre
Buffalo Game Space	Holland Community Choir	Sanborn Area Historical Society
Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus	Impact Artists Gallery	Southern Tier Symphony, Inc.
Buffalo Infringement Festival	Joy Scime	Springville Youth Inc.
Buffalo Jazz Collective	Juneteenth Festival	Starlight Studio and Art Gallery
Buffalo Music Hall of Fame	Kyle Marler	Subversive Theatre Collective
Buffalo Niagara Choirs	Lancaster Opera House	Sugar City
Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy/ Friends of the Japanese Garden	Lewiston Council on the Arts	The Belle Center
Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus	Lock City Glee Club	The Foundry
Buffalo Religious Arts Center	Lockport Chorale	Tina Dillman
Buffalo Silver Band	Matthew LaChiusa	Town of Boston
Buffalo String Works	Michelle Marcotte	Town of Brant
Carnegie Art Center	Moving Miracles	Town of Elma
Cattaraugus County Arts Council	Neto Hatinakwe Onkwehowe	United Cerebral Palsy Association of Niagara County (EMPOWER)
Chuck Tingley	Niagara Falls Historic Preservation Society	University District Community Development Association
Chestnut Ridge Conservancy	Niagara Falls Little Theatre / The Niagara Regional Theatre Guild	West Buffalo Charter School
Claire Ellen Schneider		Western Door Playhouse
Cuba Circulating Library		Wooden Cities

# Grant Recipient Spotlight

University District Community Development Association in collaboration with Nicholas Conrad Miller for “Bailey Fights Blight” Mural Program. This program was the DEC Program of the Year at 4th Annual Spark Awards.



**Bailey Fights Blight** is a community-based project that seeks to board up and secure blighted and vacant storefronts along Bailey Avenue, while incorporating public art as a way to beautify the neighborhood, re-imagine vacant or underutilized properties and help redevelop the commercial corridor. As Bailey Fights Blight has evolved into a more comprehensive place making initiative, volunteers, residents, and businesses have been engaged in regular cleanups, painting days, and guerilla gardening to help transform Bailey Avenue into a truly great place.

---

## Testimonials

---

*“The work I did in our Buffalo Community helped me to secure two paying residencies in other states (PA and MD). It was quite a productive year!”*

- **Ani Hoover**, DEC Grantee for South Park High School visits, Professional Development with Art Teachers and Family Art Day with the Buffalo Public Schools.

*“This grant will help us with acquisitions for the Center, but mostly it will enable us to put on more of the wonderful programs we need to do in order to tell the history of local and global African American and local history and to showcase the wealth of talent we have in our area and beyond. This will bring more people into our Center to share our culture.”*

- **African American Center for Cultural Development**, Olean NY, Give for Greatness Grantee



# Advocating for the Cultural Sector

At ASI, [advocacy for the cultural sector](#) is an important part of what we do in service of the area's 300-plus not for profit cultural organizations, their thousands of employees, and the hundreds of thousands who invest in the cultural sector through their attendance, service, and donations.

**I AM AN  
ARTS  
ADVOCATE**



Carl Calabrese, of Masiello, Martucci, Calabrese and Associates, speaks at ASI and GBCA's [Advocacy at a State Level](#) workshop to discuss the New York State budget process and how to interact with NYS to represent their interests.

ASI served as New York State Captain at the 29th Annual Arts Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill.



ASI staff and advocates from across NYS met with over 20 Congressional leaders and both Senate offices to discuss arts-related policy and appropriations issues, including National Endowment for the Arts, Assistance for Arts Education program within the U.S. Department of Education and charitable giving tax legislation.

---

### Partners in Advocacy

ASI works closely with regional networks fostering and promoting advocacy efforts for the arts and cultural organizations in Western New York including, Greater Buffalo Cultural Alliance, Cultural Alliance of Niagara, Arts Partners for Learning, the Five County Cultural Summit and National State Arts Action Network

# Increasing opportunities through Professional Development

ASI provided over 25 professional development workshops and trainings in 2016 ranging in topics from marketing, website development, event accessibility and workplace safety. All professional development sessions are free and open to the public.

## Professional Development Spotlight

ASI hosted the first *Artist as Entrepreneur Boot Camp* in WNY with New York Foundation of the Arts which provided 44 artists with five days of entrepreneurship training in order to further their careers.



*“Overall, this was SO awesome for me, meeting so many great people, learning so much and being so inspired all at once was really motivating to me. It helped me to clarify my short and long term goals and to craft a realistic plan of attack for my business.”*

- Janna Willoughby-Lohr, Artist

*“This was a unique experience for me and one that I found most valuable. Artists are a unique breed and often work alone. The seminar not only addressed the questions and concerns I had, but let me know that I wasn't alone in needing this kind of information”.*

- Ms. Ilona Middleton, Artist

**Did you know?** ASI provides one-on-one support to artists and organizations year-round at no charge. More information can be found online at [www.asiwny.org](http://www.asiwny.org).



## Public programming expands and grows



**Arts Access**, a program providing low income residents free access to the arts with the Arts Access pass, and promoting already existing discounts offered by area organizations, increased membership by 33% in 2016. The increase is due to an expansion of outreach at WNY living facilities, colleges, health and wellness fairs, veterans events and public schools.

The **Big Easy in Buffalo** celebrates 10 years! The Big Easy in Buffalo, a program of ASI, brings the best New Orleans and Louisiana bands to Buffalo for live performances and celebrates all things *NOLA*. Local professional and student musicians receive mentoring and education from these world touring musicians.



Funky Dawgz mentor students at UB Center for the Arts

### Public Programming Spotlight

ASI launched **Make Music Day WNY**, a free worldwide celebration of music on June 21st, in Buffalo and Niagara Falls!

**Make Music Day** follows the belief that the arts are for everyone by hosting a free day long festival where everyone can participate, no matter their skill level, age or location. Make Music Day allows ASI to strengthen existing partnerships in the WNY community and pushes ASI to create new partnerships with music based organizations and individual musicians. This program had an audience of approximately 5,000 people in 2016.



Performance at Colored Musicians Club during the first Make Music Day WNY



# 2016: A year in pictures



Buffalo Brass Machine plays at Cultural Connections at Canalside



Rick Smith performs at Sportsmens Tavern for ASI fundraiser



Carl Klingenschmitt & Sue Fay Allen receive Unsung Hero Award at 3rd Annual Spark Awards



ASI serves on the charitySTRONG's WNY advisory board



The public participates in Make Music Day's Harmonica Play Along at Niagara Falls State Park



Artist of the Year Finalists Zuri Elise Appleby, Chuck Tingley & Adam Zyglis at 3rd Annual Spark Awards



Attendees sign in at the Accessible Events Training, a part of the ASI Professional Development Series



Tina Satter, Quebec Artist Residency grantee



A group from the Belle Center show off their work, a 2016 DEC grantee



A group from Opportunities Unlimited, a 2016 DEC grantee



Winners from a variety of categories gather at the Battle of the Corporate Bands, a fundraiser for Give for Greatness and Music Is Art



ASI staff at the 3rd Annual Spark Awards

# 2016 Donors and Funders

Innovators (\$50,000 +)



**Council on  
the Arts**

**FUND  
FOR THE  
ARTS**

Premier Partners (\$20,000 +)



Star Partners (\$10,000 +)

**M&T Bank**

**Rupp Family Foundation**

Supporting Partners (\$5,000 +)

Buffalo Spree Magazine, City of Buffalo, CNY Arts, SIX Marketing

Community Partners (\$1,000 +)

Adam's Mark Hotel, Artvoice, Avalon Document Services, Dansa & D'Arata LLP, Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation, Harter Secrest & Emery LLP, HealthNow, Hodgson Russ LLP, Hohner, The John R. Oishei Foundation, Kelly for Kids Foundation, Key Bank, LeChase Construction Services, Lipsitz Green Scime Cambria LLP, Joe Matteliano, Montante Solar, Phillips Lytle LLP, The Public, Rigidized Metals Corporation, Tri-Main Development LLC, Vacco Farms, Inc.

Patrons (\$500 +)

360 PSG, African American Cultural Center / The Collective Buffalo, Kenneth Africano, Alfred, American Coradius International, Bennett Schechter Arcuri & Will, LLP, Brown Chiari LLP, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, Buffalo State College Foundation, Castellani Art Museum at Niagara University, Cellino & Barnes, The Copy Store, Cultural Alliance of Niagara, Curbell, Inc., Destination Niagara USA, Duke Holzman Photiadis & Gresens LLP, e3Communications, Erie County Industrial Development Agency / Buffalo Urban Development Corporation, Evans Law Associates, P.C., GHD, Jack W. Hunt and Associates, Inc., Anne Janczak, Jewish Repertory Theatre, Tod A. Kniazuk, Law Office of Francis Letro, Lewiston Council on the Arts, John & Arlene McLaren, MidCity Office Furniture, Moog, Inc., MusicalFare Theatre, National Fuel, Smart Serve Process Serving, Inc., Woods Oviatt Gilman LLP, WTF Chef

Friends of ASI (\$1 +)

Phil Aguglia, Anonymous, Atti Law Firm PLLC, Christopher J. Belling, Bender and Bender LLP, Howie Berger, David M. Block, Esq, Loran M. Bommer, Esq., PLLC, Bouvier Partnership LLP, Broderick Cason, Sandra Cassidy - Cassidy Legal, Susan Clements, Counsel Financial, Counsel Press, Inc., Lucy Dadd and Andrew Emerson, Dennis J. Bischof LLC, Dixon & Hamilton, LLP, Ed Northwood and Associates, Kim Ferullo, Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, Jack Freedenberg, Mark Goldman, Richard F. Griffin, Esq., Journey Gunderson, Gross, Shuman, Brizdle, & Gilfillan, P.C., Paulette Harris, Tina Hastings, Hispanic Heritage Council, HoganWillig - Attorneys at Law, Karen R. Kaczmariski, Eileen F. Kelchlin, Ted & Janet Kniazuk, Kate Koperski, Randall Kramer, Tom Kubinec, Law Office of Harvey F. Siegel, Lawley, Legal Med, Lewandowski & Associates, Lipsitz & Ponterio LLC, Anthony C. Marfione, Rick Mathews, Brandye Merriweather, Daniel Montante, Mosey Associates, LLP, John A. Mueller, Nixon Peabody LLP, Kelley Omel, Esq., Paramount Settlement Planning, Hal D. Payne, Amber R. Poulos, Esq., Theresa Quinn, Linda and David Reitz, Robert S. Stephenson Attorney at Law, Dave Ruch, Rupp Baase Pfalzgraf Cunningham LLC Attorneys at Law, Irene Rykaszewski, PhD, Bill and Liz Savino, JoAnne Schwartz, Catherine Schweitzer, Stuart and Veronica Shapiro, Susan Sherman, Mary Simpson, Smith, Miner, O'Shea & Smith, LLP, Spar Self Defense, Sportsmen's Americana Music Foundation, Dr. Phil Stokes, Jen Swan, Therese M. Vita, Michelle Watorek, Justin S. White, William Mattar, PC, Jon Ross R. Wilson, Esq.





Arts Services Initiative of WNY, Inc.

95 Perry St., Suite 402

Buffalo, NY 14203

(716) 362-8389

[www.asiwny.org](http://www.asiwny.org)



Photo credit: Ally Spongr, Nancy J. Parisi, Paula Court, Jackie Shi,  
Natalie Brown & Americans for the Arts

