

For Immediate Release

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**Western New York's Nonprofit Arts and Culture Industry Generates \$352 Million
in Economic Activity and Supports 10,000 Jobs Annually
According to Americans for the Arts and Arts Services Initiative of WNY
*Arts Industry Returns \$40 Million in Revenue to Local and State Cooffers***

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$352.1 million in annual economic activity in Western New York — supporting 10,160 full-time equivalent jobs and generating \$40.3 million in local and state government revenues, according to the *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5* national economic impact study. The most comprehensive economic impact study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry ever conducted in the United States, *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5* was conducted by Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education. The Western New York report — encompassing Erie, Niagara, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, and Allegany counties — was led by Arts Services Initiative of WNY (ASI). Data was collected from 126 nonprofit cultural organizations in the five counties, as well as 1,302 audience members. The full report is available at www.asiwny.org/aep5

Results show that nonprofit arts and culture organizations spent \$156 million during fiscal year 2015, and supported 4,705 full-time equivalent jobs. This spending is far-reaching: organizations pay employees, purchase supplies, contract for services and acquire assets within their community. Those dollars, in turn, generated \$100.7 million in household income for local residents and \$13.1 million in local and state government revenues.

“While arts and culture have many positive impacts on Western New York, a sector is often judged primarily on its economic impact and how many jobs it creates,” said ASI Executive Director Tod A. Kniazuk. “As this report proves, the cultural sector stands strong as a driver of employment, economic growth, tax revenue creation, and more. That’s far from the only reason to support the arts, but all who read this report will know that supporting the arts is a good investment that’s also good for our community.”

Nationwide, the *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5* reveals that the nonprofit arts industry produces \$166.3 billion in economic activity every year, resulting in \$27.5 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues. In addition, it supports 4.6 million full-time equivalent jobs and generates \$96 billion in household income.

“This study demonstrates that the arts are an economic and employment powerhouse both locally and across the nation,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “A vibrant arts and culture industry helps local businesses thrive and helps local communities become stronger and healthier places to live. Leaders who care about community and economic vitality can feel good about choosing to invest in the arts. Nationally as well as locally, the arts mean business.”

Arts Industry Boon for Local Businesses

In addition to spending by organizations, the nonprofit arts and culture industry leverages \$196.1 million in event-related spending by its audiences. As a result of attending a cultural event, attendees often eat dinner in local restaurants, pay for parking, buy gifts and souvenirs, and pay a babysitter. What’s more,

attendees from out of town often stay overnight in a local hotel. In Western New York, these dollars support 5,455 full-time equivalent jobs and generate \$27.1 million in local and state government revenues.

“The arts are an expression of our region’s diverse and vibrant culture and an important element of our appeal as a tourism destination,” said New York State Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul in response to the report. “They are also central to our effort to attract and retain a highly skilled, creative-class workforce in Western New York. The Americans for the Arts report shows the impact of our cultural institutions and makes it clear that they are a necessity to our economic success, now and in the future.”

The *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5* study was conducted by Americans for the Arts and supported by The Ruth Lilly Fund of Americans for the Arts. Americans for the Arts’ local, regional, and statewide project partners contributed both time and financial support to the study. Financial information from organizations was collected in partnership with DataArts™, using a new online survey interface. For a full list of the communities who participated in the *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5* study, visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AEP5Partners.

The Western New York study was led by Arts Services Initiative of Western New York (ASI) and supported by Fund for the Arts and M&T Bank, with additional support provided by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, as well as from Erie County. ASI provides professional development, grants, opportunities, and advocacy to cultural organizations and artists, as well as public programming to increase access to the arts. More information about the services available to arts and cultural organizations and artists can be found online at www.asiwny.org.

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