

Arts Services Initiative Candidate Surveys

Every year, Arts Services Initiative of WNY, Inc. sends out surveys to candidates for public office, asking those candidates their positions on various issues relevant to the offices they seek, with a focus on government support for the arts, arts education, and cultural institutions. Respondents are told their answers will appear unedited in The Public. Below are the responses (or lack thereof) that ASI received from candidates who will appear on ballots in the November 6 general election:

2018 General Election Survey Responses:

NYS Assembly 139 District Representative

Name: Stephen Hawley

Conservative, Independence, Reform

Chose not to respond.

NYS Assembly 140 District Representative

Name: Robin Schimminger

Democratic, Conservative, Independence

Chose not to respond.

Name: Adam Ohar

Republican

Chose not to respond.

Name: Brian V. Phillips

Women's Equality

Current Occupation & Employer: n/a

The current 2018 funding of the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) is \$46.9 million, spending just \$0.42 per NYS resident. Would you support a plan to increase state arts funding to NYSCA to \$1 per NYS resident, so that arts organizations in your district can present even more accessible arts programs for all of its residents?

Yes

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only

mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

Name: Anthony Baney

Green

Current Occupation & Employer: Kluge Operator @ Mod Pac

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Yes

Optional Comment:

As long as the funding is equitably distributed, and local independent artists are preferred.

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

NYS Assembly 141 District Representative

Name: Crystal D. Peoples

Democratic

Chose not to respond.

Name: Ross Kostecky

Republican

Chose not to respond.

NYS Assembly 142 District Representative

Name: Patrick B. Burke

Democratic, Working Families, Reform

Chose not to respond.

Name: Erik T. Bohem
Republican, Conservative
Chose not to respond.

Name: Michelle M. Kennedy
Independence
Chose not to respond.

NYS Assembly 143 District Representative

Name: Monica P. Wallace

Democratic, Working Families, Independence, Women's Equality

Current Occupation & Employer: NYS Assemblymember — District 143

The current 2018 funding of the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) is \$46.9 million, spending just \$0.42 per NYS resident. Would you support a plan to increase state arts funding to NYSCA to \$1 per NYS resident, so that arts organizations in your district can present even more accessible arts programs for all of its residents?

Yes

Optional Comment:

I would support a gradual increase in arts funding to more adequately match the immense contributions that the New York State Council on the Arts makes to our community and communities across New York. I believe that it is highly beneficial to invest in arts and cultural programs, which is why I co-sponsored the Museum Education Act. That Act allows for museums and cultural institutions to apply for grant funding to conduct curriculum-based education programs. I've also fought for and secured funding for school districts to support music and arts programs.

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

Optional Comment:

I agree that arts and culture projects are a means to increase tourism and that the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council should include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, especially when it involves public art. One example that comes to mind is Shark Girl at Canalside, which has become a cornerstone attraction. Strategically placed public

art brings tourists to all parts of our community, which leads to increased patronage at restaurants, hotels, shops, and other attractions in the vicinity.

Name: Daniel R. Centinello Sr.

Republican

Chose not to respond.

NYS Assembly 144 District Representative

Name: Joseph DiPasquale

Democratic, Working Families, Women's Equality

Current Occupation & Employer: Producer, Bright Street Pictures, LLC.

The current 2018 funding of the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) is \$46.9 million, spending just \$0.42 per NYS resident. Would you support a plan to increase state arts funding to NYSCA to \$1 per NYS resident, so that arts organizations in your district can present even more accessible arts programs for all of its residents?

Yes

Optional Comment:

Arts funding is crucial to overall progress

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

Optional Comment:

The arts community should be fully represented on the WNY Regional Economic Development council as the arts community is a driving force of WNY's revitalization.

Name: Michael J. Norris

Republican, Conservative, Independence, Reform

Chose not to respond.

NYS Assembly 146 District Representative

Name: Karen McMahan

Democratic, Working Families, Women's Equality

Current Occupation & Employer: Attorney — Law Offices of H. Jeffrey Marcus PC

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Yes

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Yes

Name: Raymond Walter

Republican, Conservative, Independence, Reform

Current Occupation & Employer: Incumbent Assembly Member / Attorney w/Magavern
Magavern Grimm LLP

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Yes

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

Optional Comment:

Yes, I would advocate for better cultural representation on the WNY REDC. REDC's however, do not exist in statute, they were created solely by the Governor and are unaccountable to the legislature.

Name: Danilo Lawvere

Green

Chose not to respond.

NYS Assembly 147 District Representative

Name: David DiPietro

Republican, Conservative, Independence, Reform

Chose not to respond.

Name: Luke Wochensky

Democratic, Working Families

Current Occupation & Employer: Attorney, Eversheds Sutherland

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Yes

Optional Comment:

Residents in my district have less access to the arts than those who live near urban areas. Access to the arts for all residents, including those in rural areas is of critical importance. We do have a number of amazing arts organizations in rural Erie and Wyoming Counties and they are doing great work and they need ongoing and enhanced support.

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

NYS Assembly 148 District Representative

Name: Joseph Giglio

Conservative, Independence, Reform

Chose not to respond.

NYS Assembly 149 District Representative

Name: Joseph Totaro

Republican

Chose not to respond.

Name: Sean M. Ryan

Democratic, Women's Equality, Independent, Working Families

Current Occupation & Employer: Current Representative of NY 149th Assembly District, since 2011

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Yes

Optional Comment:

Funding the arts in our community is critical. So many benefit from engaging in the arts, from children in our schools to adults in Adult Education programs. I've met personally with those who benefited from expanded arts programs in my district and I know what a difference it has made in their quality of life. When we create an environment for all to tap into lifelong learning through artistic and cultural activities, we create a meaningful way for everyone in New York to express their unique, creative point of view.

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

Optional Comment:

Representation matters, and arts and culture amenities provide so much to our communities. Yes, they attract tourists to engage with our neighborhoods in new ways and to experience joy through another's creative means. But the economic benefit of arts and culture in New York, and particularly in my district, is undeniable. I support the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic development Council plan and believe there should absolutely be a cultural representative has an active, meaningful role in the Council.

NYS Assembly 150 District Representative

Name: Judith Einach

Dem, Working Fam, Women's Equality

Office Sought: NY Assembly 150

Current Occupation & Employer: Retired non-profit executive

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Yes

Optional Comment:

Given return on investment in the Arts, an increase would be a worthwhile, responsible use of public funds.

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

Optional Comment:

The Arts don't just enrich the experience of visitors. Art enriches the lives of everyone who lives in WNY. Residents spend money on the arts, volunteer, learn about themselves and other through the Arts, and some make a living creating art. Arts enrich life for us all. To link the Arts to tourism alone does the Arts a disservice and the residents of WNY a disservice. Our communities are better when the Arts are an everyday fact of life. The Arts make WNY a more exciting place to live, work and play for residents and visitors alike. The Arts attach us to our communities, make us proud and want work harder to strengthen and enhance the value of where we live. The Arts speak to us in ways other parts of the economy do not. WNY's architecture literally has angels in the architecture. The Arts inspire us to create and recreate the world, indeed the region we wish to see.

Name: Andrew Goodell

Republican, Conservative, Independence

Chose not to respond.

NYS Senate 59 District Representative

Name: Patrick Gallivan

Republican, Conservative, Independence, Reform

Current Occupation & Employer: NYS Senate — 59th District

The current 2018 funding of the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) is \$46.9 million, spending just \$0.42 per NYS resident. Would you support a plan to increase state arts funding to NYSCA to \$1 per NYS resident, so that arts organizations in your district can present even more accessible arts programs for all of its residents?

Yes

Optional Comment:

I am supportive of increased funding for the NYS Council on the Arts, however, would need to learn more details about specific spending plans prior to final commitment.

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

NYS Senate 60 District Representative

Name: Carima C. El-Behairy

Democratic, Working Families, Women's Equality

Current Occupation & Employer: Business Consultant

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Yes

Name: Christopher L. Jacobs

Republican, Conservative, Independence, Reform

Chose not to respond.

NYS Senate 61 District Representative

Name: Joan Elizabeth Seamans

Democratic, Working Families, Women's Equality

Current Occupation & Employer: Owner — Short Street Photographers

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Yes

Michael Ranzenhofer

Republican, Conservative, Independence, Reform

Chose not to respond.

NYS Senate 62 District Representative

Name: Robert G. Ort

Conservative, Independence, Reform

Chose not to respond.

Peter Diachun

Green

Current Occupation & Employer: Retired

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Yes

NYS Senate 63 District Representative

Name: Timothy M Kennedy

Democratic, Working Families, Independence, Women's Equality

Current Occupation & Employer: State Senator, New York State

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Yes

Name: Thomas A. Gaglione

Republican

Chose not to respond.

NYS Governor

Name: Andrew Cuomo

Democratic

Chose not to respond.

Name: Marc Molinaro

Republican

Chose not to respond.

Name: Howie Hawkins

Green

Current Occupation & Employer: Retired UPS Teamster truck unloader

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Yes

Optional Comment:

But \$1 per resident is far too low. I support New York State coming up to the European average of 0.6% of GDP, which in 2017 would have been \$468 per resident.

Several of the Regional Economic Development Council plans throughout the state include arts and culture as a priority or targeted industry, but the Western New York plan only mentions it in the context of tourism. If elected, would you advocate for the inclusion of arts and culture in the WNY Regional Economic Development Council plan and for a cultural representative to sit on the Council?

Yes

Optional Comment:

I support an arts and culture representative on the Regional Economic Development Councils in the short run. But I think we need to radically democratize funding and access to arts and culture. I support generous funding of arts and culture programs in public schools. I favor an arts and culture voucher to every voter, which can be used to direct state funding to the art and culture programs of their choice. Current funding by grants controlled by political and economic elites is biased toward the interests and experience of these elites to the detriment of working class and people of color communities. The vouchers would enable more community-based arts programs like Locust Street Art to be organized. Arts and culture funding should support affordable studio space and performance space for artists. I favor a state level Arts and Culture program akin to Works Progress Administrations' 1935-1942 Federal Project Number One, or "Federal One," which focused on employing unemployed visual artists, musicians, theater workers, and writers in producing arts and culture for the broad public to enjoy.

NYS Lieutenant Governor

Name: Kathy Hochul

Democratic, Independence, Working Families

Chose not to respond.

Name: Julie Killian

Republican, Conservative, Reform

Chose not to respond.

Name: Jia Lee

Green

Chose not to respond.

US Senator

Name: Kirsten E. Gillibrand

Democratic

Chose not to respond.

Name: Chele Farley

Republican

Chose not to respond.

US House of Representatives 26 District

Name: Brian Higgins

Democratic

Current Occupation & Employer: Member, United States House of Representatives

The budget of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was cut in half during the 1990s. With its current funding (2018) of \$152 million, the NEA spends just \$0.47 cents per American. Would you support a plan to increase federal arts funding to the NEA to \$1 per American, so that arts organizations in your district can present even more accessible arts programs for all of its residents?

Yes

Nonprofit arts organizations are community-based charities that specifically rely on donations made by individual taxpayers for a quarter of their budgets on average. Would you support the preservation of the charitable tax deduction for nonprofits arts organizations?

Yes

Name: Renee Zeno

Republican

Current Occupation & Employer: Title Abstracting Services - Owner/Operator

The budget of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was cut in half during the 1990s. With its current funding (2018) of \$152 million, the NEA spends just \$0.47 cents per American. Would you support a plan to increase federal arts funding to the NEA to \$1 per American, so that arts organizations in your district can present even more accessible arts programs for all of its residents?

Yes

Optional Comment:

The arts are an important part of my district.

Nonprofit arts organizations are community-based charities that specifically rely on donations made by individual taxpayers for a quarter of their budgets on average. Would you support the preservation of the charitable tax deduction for nonprofits arts organizations?

Yes

Optional Comment:

Absolutely

US House of Representatives 27 District

Name: Nathan McMurray

Democratic

Current Occupation & Employer: Town Supervisor of Grand Island

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Yes

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Yes

Name: Chris Collins

Republican

Chose not to respond.

Name: Larry Piegza

Reform

Chose not to respond.