



NEWS AND INFORMATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07/20/2004

Broward County Board to be Presented with the 2004 National Award for County Arts Leadership

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Americans for the Arts in conjunction with the National Association of Counties (NACo) will present the 2004 National Award for County Arts Leadership to the Broward County Board of County Commissioners, Broward County, Florida, at NACo's annual meeting in Phoenix on July 20, 2004. The award honors an elected county board or individual leader who has significantly advanced the arts. The Broward County Board of County Commissioners was nominated for this award by Mary Becht of the Broward County Cultural Division. The National Award for County Arts Leadership is part of a series of Public Leadership in the Arts Awards given annually by Americans for the Arts.

Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO for Americans for the Arts, stated, "Through its generous support for capital development, grants to local arts and cultural groups, and a dedication to public art and design projects, the Board of County Commissioners has established a record of commitment to integrating the arts into economic development and community planning throughout life in Broward County. Its citizens are all the richer for it."

The Broward County Board of County Commissioners is composed of Mayor Ilene Lieberman of Fort Lauderdale, FL; Vice-Mayor Kristin D. Jacobs; Commissioners Ben Graber; Jim Scott; Lori Nance Parrish; Sue Gunzburger; John E. Rodstrom, Jr.; Diana Wasserman-Rubin; and Josephus Eggelletion, Jr., and County Administrator, Roger J. Desjarlais.

"We are pleased that our efforts to promote the arts in Broward County are being recognized at a national level," Broward County Mayor Ilene Lieberman said. "Enhancing the quality of life in Broward County through culture and the arts is a top priority for the Broward County Board of County Commissioners."

Among their many accomplishments, the Broward County Commission has generated a total of \$40 million in capital funds for the establishment of ArtsParks facilities in four Broward municipalities. ArtsParks are cultural facilities for "hands-on" activities in the visual, performing, and literary arts that are readily accessible to all segments of the community for cultural activities. Via county ordinances, the Broward commissioners have dedicated

approximately \$5 million for annual arts and cultural programs, and established the Public Art and Design program, which dedicated 2 percent of capital improvement projects for public art. This is considered a model program nationally and one of about five in the country with a 2 percent allocation.

With funding assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts and the State of Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, the Broward County commissioners constructed a state-of-the-art Cultural Information Center for promoting the arts and entertainment in Broward County, and oversaw \$1 million in renovations for a facility which houses ArtServe, an arts incubator. ArtServe provides business, technical, legal, and marketing assistance as well as offers meeting rooms, office space, performance and rehearsal space, and exhibit space in their gallery. Broward County has provided ongoing operational support since ArtServe's inception in 1994.

Looking ahead, Broward County is planning and supporting the development of ArtSpace projects designed to provide living and work space for local artists. The Broward County Board of Commissioners is also working with economic development partners (Broward Alliance, The Broward Workshop, and Nova Southeastern University) in an effort to produce a twenty-year economic development plan, entitled VisionBroward, which includes a creative industries component.

Americans for the Arts established the National Award for County Arts Leadership in 1999 to recognize the positive role county government leaders play in improving arts programs, increasing funding to the arts, and making the arts accessible in their communities. Past recipients include Douglas M. Duncan, County Executive in Montgomery County, Maryland; the Prince George's County Council, Maryland; the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors; County Commissioner Park Helms of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; and County Commissioner Betty Lou Ward of Wake County, North Carolina.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

NACo, the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States, continues to follow the traditions established by those early county officials. With its headquarters on Capitol Hill, NACo is a full-service organization that provides an extensive line of services including legislative, research, technical, and public affairs assistance, as well as enterprise services to its members. The association acts as a liaison with other levels of government, works to improve public understanding of counties, serves as a national advocate for counties, and provides them with resources to help them find innovative methods to meet the challenges they face. NACo is involved in a number of special projects that deal with such issues as the environment, sustainable communities, volunteerism and intergenerational studies.

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