



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Americans for the Arts & Business Council to Merge Operations

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Americans for the Arts and Arts & Business Council Inc. announced today that the two organizations will merge their operations, creating the largest-ever advocacy group for the arts in America. The merging of Arts & Business Council Inc. with Americans for the Arts will allow the organization to increase its efforts to secure increased funding for the arts from the private sector. Americans for the Arts, based in Washington, DC, is the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America and has led national public-sector advocacy efforts for many years. Arts & Business Council Inc., headquartered in New York City, is the oldest arts and business partnership association in the world, devoted to stimulating partnerships between the arts and business that benefit both sectors and the communities they serve.

The resources and programming initiatives of both organizations will be combined into a powerful integrated operation. It will stimulate increased support for the arts from individuals, corporations, and foundations through the development of innovative programming and the recruitment of national partners. This will happen not only by formal design but also as a direct result of uniting the constituencies of Americans for the Arts and Arts & Business Council Inc. Among these stakeholders are some 4,000 local arts agencies and united arts funds (Americans for the Arts) and the affiliates and national program partners (Arts & Business Council Inc.) that together will have improved tools to advance support for the arts.

"This merger is a great step forward for the arts in America," stated Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "Our two organizations have shared interests and great strengths, and we will be more effective together than we could ever be separately."

"By joining forces with Americans for the Arts, the Arts & Business Council will have substantially greater resources and programmatic opportunities," stated Gary P. Steuer, president and CEO, Arts & Business Council Inc. "The arts in America need enhanced and

consolidated advocacy, and I am very pleased that our two organizations could agree to move forward in unison.”

Private-sector support for the arts from individuals, foundations, and corporations represents a critical piece of arts funding in America. However, the larger private-sector relationship with the arts has changed dramatically in recent years. While corporate and foundation leaders continue to support the arts, recent modest gains in overall giving disguise the fact that the market share of total philanthropy devoted to the nonprofit arts has declined by nearly one-third since the early 1990s.

Both organizations recognized the challenges facing the arts today and recently completed strategic plans that emphasized, among other things, the need to increase private-sector support for the arts and arts education in America. Rather than pursue their efforts separately, the decision was made to join forces. Both the Board of Directors of Americans for the Arts and the Board of Directors of Arts & Business Council Inc. unanimously voted to approve this merger, and the new organizational structure went into effect thereafter. In the organizational structure now in effect, Arts & Business Council Inc.’s national operation will be known as the Arts & Business Council of Americans for the Arts. The merger has already received support from corporate funders, including MetLife, American Express, and Altria.

Arts & Business Council Inc. will maintain all of its local chapters and program partners. They are located in Phoenix, AZ; Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego, and San Francisco, CA; Clearwater, Fort Lauderdale, and Miami, FL; Chicago, IL; Boston, MA; Detroit, MI; New York, NY; Cincinnati, OH; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, PA; Houston, TX; Providence, RI; and Washington, DC.

Arts & Business Council Inc.’s programs serving New York will be re-branded as the “Arts & Business Council of New York” and will have its own advisory body that will provide critical local leadership and guidance for the New York organization. The flagship chapter will undergo this name change to reflect its strong New York focus. The New York chapter will be strengthened by being able to take advantage of the Americans for the Arts infrastructure.

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.

Arts & Business Council Inc. was founded in 1965 and is devoted to stimulating partnerships between the arts and business that benefit both sectors and the communities they serve. A&BC is the oldest such arts and business partnership association in the world. Its major national programs include, Business Volunteers for the Arts®, the National Arts Marketing Project sponsored by American Express, and the MetLife Foundation National Arts Issue Forum Series.