



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Americans for the Arts Presents the 2009 Arts Education Award to Dallas's Big Thought

WASHINGTON, D.C.— At its annual convention in Seattle today, Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America, presented the **2009 Arts Education Award to Big Thought**, a Dallas-based nonprofit that promotes creative learning in children. The award is given annually to the organization identified as the best in arts education program design and execution, as well as leadership. The award brings visibility and national recognition to model partnership programs. Recipients must demonstrate innovation, produce visible results, and be seen as a national leader in their field.

"Through its bold and engaging education programs for students of all ages, Big Thought has enhanced the lives of children, their families and citizens of Dallas," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "Big Thought's mission supports the fact that when a community works together it can lift children up and better their lives through creative arts education."

Accepting the award will be Giselle Antoni, President and CEO of Big Thought.

"I am honored to accept the Arts Education Award on behalf of Big Thought. Our success is made possible because of the many collaborations we have developed that support the idea that every young child—no matter where they live or where they come from—should be immersed every day in opportunities to imagine, create and succeed," said Gigi Antoni, president and CEO of Big Thought.

For more than 20 years, Big Thought has been dedicated to making imagination a part of everyday learning. The organization offers a diverse variety of initiatives that address academic achievement, family services, life-skills and workforce development. Big Thought's programs reach more than 300,000 children, families and teachers annually and deliver more than 1 million hours of individual creative instruction and programming each year.

Big Thought's key programs integrate arts and culture as a catalyst for general classroom learning; equip students with essential life-skills such as communication, respect and self-esteem using a curriculum rich in oral, written and artistic expression; and bring artists into schools to enrich the creative learning environment. Big Thought also manages a citywide system between the City of Dallas, Dallas Independent School District, and over 100 cultural providers to bring high-quality creative learning to children both in-school and out-of-school (afternoons, weekends and during the summer). Its programs rely on partnerships and collaborations in order to give every child the opportunity to experience creative inspiration in every school and community throughout Dallas.

The Arts Education Award is presented by the Arts Education Council of Americans for the Arts.

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.

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