

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

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Iowa Arts Advocacy Caucus seeks to empower Iowa arts advocates

*Coalition of local, state and national organizations educates Iowa arts leaders on Caucus process Friday
All 2016 presidential candidates invited to share arts policy positions*

Press availability at 10:00 AM with Lt. Governor Reynolds, Mayor Cownie, national arts leaders

DES MOINES –More than 170 of Iowa’s top arts and culture leaders will gather for the Iowa Arts Advocacy Caucus on Friday, Aug. 14, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the State Historical Building of Iowa, 600 E. Locust Street in Des Moines.

The event is co-hosted by a first-ever coalition of the Iowa Arts Council, a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, the Iowa Alliance for Arts Education, and Bravo Greater Des Moines, along with national partners Americans for the Arts, Americans for the Arts Action Fund, the National Association of Music Merchants, and the United States Conference of Mayors. A bipartisan group of business, nonprofit and civic leaders serve as the event [Leadership Committee](#). All 2016 presidential candidates have been invited to attend the Iowa Arts Advocacy Caucus and offer their arts policy positions.

Timed to coincide with the opening weekend of the Iowa State Fair, representatives from the full spectrum of Iowa’s cultural community – from school districts and libraries to performing and visual arts organizations, artists and civic leaders alike – will learn how to become actively engaged as caucus-goers in the nation’s first presidential caucus state.

While more than 60 percent of registrants indicate they have previously attended at least one presidential caucus, the goal of the Iowa Arts Advocacy Caucus is to educate all registrants on how to become informed, engaged, and connected as caucus-goers, while learning how best to advance arts and arts education policies at the local, state, and federal levels.

The event will feature interactive training sessions presented by a mix of local and national arts advocates as well as political and media strategists. The Americans for the Arts Action Fund will release the [“Why the Arts Matter in Iowa”](#) fact sheet along with a series of customized [ArtsVoteIowa](#) web tools at the conference as part of their #ArtsVote2016 campaign. Keynote sessions will feature Robert L. Lynch, President & CEO of Americans for the Arts, as well as Randy Cohen, Americans for the Arts Vice President of Research & Policy.

In addition, the agenda will feature additional remarks and/or presentations by:

- Iowa Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds
- Mary Cownie, Director, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- Frank Cownie, Mayor, City of Des Moines
- Simon Estes, Opera Singer, Philanthropist
- State Senator Herman Quirmbach, Chair, Iowa Senate Education Committee
- Linda Langston, Linn County Supervisor and Immediate Past President, National Association of Counties
- Leon Kuehner, Executive Director, Iowa Alliance for Arts Education
- Tom Cochran, Executive Director and CEO, United States Conference of Mayors
- Mary Luehrsen, Director of Public Affairs and Government Relations, National Association of Music Merchants
- Nina Ozlu Tunceli, Executive Director, Americans for the Arts Action Fund

The day will also feature special performances by renowned Iowa operatic bass-baritone and Iowa native Simon Estes as well as selections from “Caucus! The Musical,” by Iowa playwright Robert John Ford.

The Iowa Arts Advocacy Caucus is free to attend, but pre-registration is required. For more information, and to register, go to www.ArtsActionFund.org/Iowa-Caucus.

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The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs and its three divisions – the Iowa Arts Council, Produce Iowa-State Office of Media Production and the State Historical Society of Iowa – empower Iowa to build and sustain culturally vibrant communities by connecting Iowans to the people, places and points of pride that define our state. The department’s work enables Iowa to be recognized as a state that fosters creativity and serves as a catalyst for innovation where the stories of Iowa are preserved and communicated to connect past, present and future generations. www.culturalaffairs.org

