SCENARIO

It has come to our attention, that President Obama is signaling that he will work with the Senate to cut some of the excess spending the House passed as part of the economic stimulus package. But he will maintain the increased funding for the National Endowment for the Arts by saying that “If singers, actors and dancers can stimulate audiences, they can also stimulate the economy.” The authors of the current stimulus package seem to think so — they have included $50 million for the National Endowment for the Arts and $150 million for infrastructure repairs at the Smithsonian.

President Obama said that “Arts groups large and small are hurting, just like every other industry. The Sacramento Ballet has canceled performances; the administrative staff of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra took a 20 percent pay cut; the Austin Museum of Art is postponing plans for a new museum downtown. We can’t let that happen.”

We know that President Obama has one chance here. One chance. If the package fails and the recession deepens, many will get hurt further, including him in the early stages of his administration.

Last week, the House Appropriations Committee took notice and approved a plan to include the arts in the recovery package, formerly known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan, with a provision for $50 million in supplemental grants funding for the National Endowment for the Arts along with other provisions to benefit arts organizations. However, the Senate Appropriations Committee has not included arts jobs funding in their version of the bill.

Bill Ivey, former chair of the NEA and a member of President Obama’s transition team, told NPR’s All Things Considered in an interview this week, "A healthy arts community is important, especially during hard times." Americans for the Arts estimates that for every dollar the NEA doles out to arts groups, another $7 is generated in additional support through local, state and private donations. They estimate that the proposed $50 million in the economic stimulus recovery bill could actually leverage $350 million of investment and prevent 14,422 jobs from being lost.

So what is the problem and why is there the opposition for this stimulus package line item? Maybe a little history lesson might shed some light on the issue at hand.

In 1965 the federal government created the National Endowment for the Arts, with the expressed idea of advancing the arts, artistic freedoms and creativity free from government approvals. To make its desires perfectly clear, Congress wrote into the NEA law that, "It is necessary and appropriate for the Federal Government to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry, but also the material conditions facilitating this release of creative talent."

Congress recognized that America did not have a long tradition of support and public assistance for the arts like in Europe. It also realized that the best art many times, can be very controversial, radical in style as well as substance. We all know that art is supposed to question the status quo, to
shake things up and elicit strong reactions from the viewer. Congress also recognized the many risks to “freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry” in a federal arts funding program.

The 1965 Senate report on the bill to establish the NEA specified that “the fullest attention” must be given “to freedom of artistic and humanistic expression,” and added: “Countless times in history artists who were vilified by their contemporaries because of their contemporaries because of their innovations in style or method of expression have become prophets to a later age.”

Congress found a way to prevent the kind of political interference or censorship that could easily destroy the integrity of public arts funding. They created an elaborate “peer panel” review structure to insulate decisions made by the Endowment from partisan pressures. The peer panels, committees of experts in the field, were to review grant applications and make recommendations to the presidentially appointed National Council and chair of the endowment. The Council relied on the recommendations of the experts.

The system worked pretty well for the first twenty-four years. There were questions raised every now and then about a theatre production, a best-selling novel or scandalous dance production, but the NEA managed to deflect the criticism and maintain its position. In a rather public episode, Congressman Mario Biaggi in 1984 objected to a performance of the Verdi opera Rigoletto because ads for the opera showed an Italian looking man in a black suit and white hat emerging from large letters spelling the words RIGOLETTO riddled with bullet holes. He felt the ads were insulting to Italians. The NEA agreed that the ads were in “poor taste”, but would not interfere; the endowment’s integrity depended on its avoiding any appearance of attempting to influence or control artistic content. Representative Biaggi’s proposals to censor the ideas found in NEA-supported works eventually died a peaceful death.

Through the leadership of the early chairs of the NEA, the endowment managed to create a wonderful presence for live theatre, classical music, dance, and the visual arts throughout America. The agency was able through its grants, which required matching funds, to create a catalytic effect. NEA approval became the “Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval” for the arts. Corporate funds began to flow to organizations with NEA approval.

Then in 1989 the system went awry and it seems that it is not altogether clear what happened. Some feel that the emergence of America’s fundamentalist right which stressed the “social” issues of sexuality, the proper place for women, patriotism, and preserving Judeo-Christian cultural values were a factor. The NEA chair at that time felt that the real issues for NEA resistance revolved around “the nature of tolerance and the unwillingness of people to encounter differences.”

Dirty words, nudity, homosexuality and eroding American values became the buzz words for the battle cries for NEA protesters. Fundamentalist leaders were able to generate thousands of letters and postcards to Congress, the White House and the NEA protesting “pornography” or “blasphemy” in particular works of art that most protesters had not even seen. The “fear of art” made the NEA an appealing target. It became increasingly clear that the goal of many the agency’s critics was to
abolish arts funding altogether. So the NEA became an easy target for government control and decreased funding.

Another factor in the success to erode NEA funding, are the feelings that many Americans have toward the arts as being “elitist”. Despite the many successes of the NEA, Public Broadcasting and other arts agencies, there is still a large gap in America between popular culture and high art culture like ballet. A suspicion of artists whose work may be different, difficult, obscure or “avant-garde” is still prevalent in the land. President Obama will have an uphill battle restoring National Endowment funding to the levels it once enjoyed in the late 1960’s.

Alpo is asking all of its member agencies to have their members support this stimulus package funding item as good for the American way of life. Send a postcard to your elected officials and tell them not to remove the NEA funding.
DOCUMENT A

QUESTIONS

The Alpo Corporation has had a long history of supporting the Arts. They are calling for all member agencies to support funding for the National Endowment for the Arts to a high level. As President of a member agency, they are asking for your support. Answer the two sets of questions below.

1. Alpo is asking all of its member agencies to have their members support President Obama’s stimulus package. In their letter, they present the case as for the American way of life. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan is the specific provision. Based on the evidence, what are the strengths and weaknesses of their case in light of current economic and social divisions? Why? What specific information in the evidence led you to this conclusion?

2. In this call for support, Alpo quotes Bill Ivey, former chair of the NEA, who states,” A healthy arts community is important, especially during hard times” yet the Senate Appropriations Committee has not included art jobs funding in their version of the bill, Why? Based on all the information and documents and any other factors you considered, what led you to your conclusion?

Your answers to the questions should include the appropriate or relevant evidence (drawn from the included sources of information, labeled DOCUMENT B – J) necessary to support your positions. Explain the reasons for your conclusions, and justify those conclusions by explicitly referring to the specific documents, data, and statement on which your conclusions are based. Your answers will be judged not only on the accuracy of the information you provide, but also on how clearly the ideas are presented, how effectively the ideas are organized and how thoroughly the information is covers.

Again, while your personal values and experiences are important, you should base your response on the evidence provided in the documents.
Memo from: Melissa Silverstein, Journalist for the Washington Post

Date: October 20, 2008

To: Claudia Rankin, Playwright

Subject: NEA Grant/Women in Hollywood

Dear Ms. Rankin:

I am pleased to hear that your grant has been approved. Your approval marks a milestone in advancement for women in the arts! This raises the number of women receiving grants from the NEA considerably even while the amounts remain below the average for male artists. Still, we are happy that your project can now move forward. This funding from the NEA makes it all possible now! Without their support your project may well have ended up on the cutting room floor. Our many congratulations and best wishes for continued success.

I am enclosing the press release that will be sent out later this afternoon for tomorrow’s edition.

RELEASE: OCTOBER 30, 2008  Equality Watch: NEA Funds 7 New Plays

To the Washington Post: NEA to Nurture 7 Varied New Plays

The National Endowment for the Arts has announced the selection of seven plays to be funded as part of its New Play Development Program. The pilot project, which is being administered by Arena Stage, is designed not only to underwrite new works already in progress but also to spot successful collaborations among artists, theaters, communities and other entities that might be used as models.

The largest grants - $90,000- went to male playwrights. Shocker. Of the five $20,000 development grants — two— went to women. Claudia Rankine and Aditi Brennan Kapil.

Total Percentage of women receiving grants- 35%
Dear Mr. Samuel L. Jackson,

We are so grateful for your participation in the upcoming Los Angeles Film Festival. You and Ms. Berry will both be honored for your contributions to film and for serving as Co-Chairs of this year's festival. Both you and Halle Berry have been able to use your stature in the industry to support independent film, the Spirit Awards, and now the Los Angeles Film Festival. The Independent Film Project/Los Angeles appreciates your championing the cause of independent film and raising awareness for new artists. Without such opportunities, new artists may never get their works seen.

As Honorary Co-Chair of the festival, Berry will host Closing Night festivities, where she will give out two Target Filmmaker Awards: The Target Filmmaker Award for Best Narrative Feature carries with it an unrestricted cash prize of $50,000 funded by Target Stores, offering the financial means for filmmakers to transfer their vision to the screen. The largest cash prize bestowed by a major U.S. film festival, the award recognizes the finest American narrative film at the festival. The award is given to the winning director of the Narrative Feature Competition. A special jury selects the winner. All narrative feature-length films screening in the Narrative Competition section are eligible. While these awards cannot begin to compare to more significant awards given by the NEA, they do make a substantial contribution to the needs of new artists.

The second award is the Target Documentary Award for Best Documentary Feature. This award recognizes the finest American documentary feature at the festival and is awarded to the winning director of the Documentary Competition. The award carries with it an unrestricted cash prize of $25,000 funded by Target Stores. Again, this is not as financially high an award as the NEA but still a major accomplishment for a new artist. A special jury selects the winner.

As Honorary Co-Chair of the festival, Mr. Jackson, you will host the annual Filmmaker Reception held on Wednesday, June 16. The Filmmaker Reception serves as a forum for VIPs to mingle with filmmakers whose work will be showcased at the festival before the official kick-off. This function also serves as recruitment for potentially award donors, so you can see that your presence will mean a great deal to these young artists!

The Los Angeles Film Festival is sponsored by Premier Sponsors - In Style and Target Stores; by Principal Sponsors - American Airlines, the Directors Guild of America, Eastman Kodak Company, and Sofitel Los Angeles; by Platinum Sponsors - 8000 Sunset, CHI, IFC, and Moviola; and by Promotional Sponsor the Los Angeles Times. Special support provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. Wireimage is the official photographer for the Los Angeles Film Festival.

IFP/Los Angeles, a nonprofit membership organization, champions the cause of independent film and supports a community of artists who embody diversity, innovation, and uniqueness of vision. IFP/LA provides its members with educational programs, affordable camera and equipment rentals, and discounts to hundreds of industry-related businesses. IFP/LA's Filmmaker Labs offer writers, directors, and producers the opportunity to develop their projects. IFP/LA's mentorship and job placement program, Project Involve, pairs filmmakers from culturally diverse communities with film industry professionals. With more than 6,000 members, IFP/Los Angeles is Southern California's largest non-profit organization for independent filmmakers.

Sincerely,

Dana Pollock
Vice President Movie City News and the IFP/Los Angeles Board

Movie City Geek and MCG are trademarks of Movie City News.
Local government arts funding reached an all time high in 2008, up an estimated 5 percent to $858 million, marking a fourth consecutive year of growth. This upward trend reestablishes a positive trajectory that was sidetracked by cuts in 2003, when local government arts funding dropped for the first time in 15 years, due to the sluggish economy and post-9/11 drops in tourism.

In 2008, state legislative arts appropriations increased for the fourth consecutive year—up 2.7 percent to $359.6 million. State arts funding, which tracks closely with the economy, had record growth in the late 1990's—reaching a high of $451 million in 2001—followed by a precipitous drop to $281 million by 2004 (38 percent decrease).

The 2008 Congressional appropriations to the NEA was the agency’s largest increase in 28 years, up 16 percent to $144.7 million. After reaching a high of $176 million in 1992, the NEA budget was cut 40 percent in 1996 and remained relatively unchanged until 2001.


www.AmericansForTheArts.org
Arts Facts ... National Endowment for the Arts
The NEA supports the creation, preservation, and presentation of the arts in America—a profound responsibility, yet funded by Congress at a per capita rate of just 48 cents.

NEA Appropriations History
Fiscal Years 1966 to 2008


www.AmericansForTheArts.org
Ten Good Reasons to Eliminate Funding for the National Endowment for the Arts

April 29, 1997

Ten Good Reasons to Eliminate Funding the National Endowment for the Arts

by Laurence Jarvik, Ph.D.

Backgrounder #1110

As the U.S. Congress struggles to balance the federal budget and end the decades-long spiral of deficit spending, few programs seem more worthy of outright elimination than the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Indeed, since its inception in 1965, few federal agencies have been mired in more controversy than the NEA. Nevertheless, steadfast partisans of "welfare for artists" continue to defend the Endowment, asserting that it promotes philanthropic giving, makes cultural programs accessible to those who can least afford them, and protects America's cultural heritage.

In fact, the NEA is an unwarranted extension of the federal government into the voluntary sector. The Endowment, furthermore, does not promote charitable giving. Despite Endowment claims that its efforts bring art to the inner city the agency offers little more than a direct subsidy to the cultured, upper-middle class. Finally, rather than promoting best in art, the NEA continues to offer tax dollars and the federal seal of approval to subsidize "art" that is offensive to most Americans.

There are at least ten good reasons to eliminate funding for the NEA:

Reason #1: The Arts Will Have More Than Enough Support without the NEA
The arts were flowering before the NEA came into being in 1965. Indeed, the Endowment was created partly because of the tremendous popular appeal of the arts at the time. Alv Toffler’s *The Culture Consumers*, published in 1964, surveys the booming audience for art in the United States, a side benefit of a growing economy and low inflation. Toffler’s text recalls the arts prior to the creation of the NEA—the era of great Georges Balanchine and Agnes de Mille ballets, for example, when 26 million viewers would turn to CBS broadcasts of Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic. In fact, nearly all of the major orchestras in the United States existed before 1965, and will continue to exist after NEA subsidies are ended.

In spite of the vast splendor created by American artists prior to 1965, partisans of the NEA claim that the arts in the United States would face almost certain demise should the Endowment be abolished. Yet Endowment funding is just a drop in the bucket compared to giving to the arts by private citizens. For example, in 1996, the Metropolitan Opera of New York received only $390,000 from the Endowment, a federal subsidy that totals 0.29 percent of the Opera’s annual income of $133 million—and amounts to less than the ticket revenue for a single sold-out performance.

The growth of private-sector charitable giving in recent years has rendered NEA funding relatively insignificant to the arts community. Overall giving to the arts last year totaled almost $10 billion—an increase of $6.5 billion in 1991—dwarfs the NEA’s federal subsidy. This 40 percent increase in private giving occurred during the same period that the NEA budget was reduced by 40 percent from approximately $170 million to $99.5 million. Thus, as conservatives had predicted, cutting the federal NEA subsidy coincided with increased private support for the arts and culture.
That many major cultural institutions are in the midst of successful fundraising efforts belies the questionable claim of NEA supporters that private giving, no matter how generous, could never compensate for the loss of public funds. As Chart 2 shows, many of these institutional campaigns have fundraising targets many times greater than the NEA's annual federal appropriation of $99.5 million. In New York City, the geographic area which receives the largest relative share of NEA funding, the New York Public Library is raising some $35 million (with 70 percent already completed), the Museum of Modern Art, $300 million-450 million (with 30 percent raised), the Metropolitan Museum of Art some $300 million (with 8 percent already obtained). In fact, philanthropist Frederick O. Schwartz, Jr., recently told *The New York Times* that "we've entered a period of institutional excitement comparable on the scale that which occurred after the Civil War until World War I when several of the city's great civic and cultural institutions were built."

In Great Britain, economist David Sawers's comparative study of subsidized and unsubsidized performing arts concluded that major cultural venues would continue to thrive were government subsidies to be eliminated. According to Sawers's calculation, 80 percent of all London theater box office receipts, including ballet and opera, went to unsubsidized theater. (Britain's renowned Glyndebourne opera, for example, relies entirely on private funding.)

Even smaller organizations can succeed without depending on the federal government. As Bradley Scholar William Craig I
Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts Industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Activity</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Economic Activity</td>
<td>$166.2 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Spending by Nonprofit Arts Organizations</td>
<td>$63.1 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Spending by Nonprofit Arts Audiences</td>
<td>$103.1 Billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Jobs Supported                                         | 5.7 Million |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Generated</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Tax Revenue Generated</td>
<td>$29.6 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Income Tax Revenue</td>
<td>$12.6 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government Revenue</td>
<td>$9.1 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Revenue</td>
<td>$7.9 Billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Household Income Generated                             | $104.2 Billion |

- Arts organizations are responsible businesses, employers, and consumers. Spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations—only a fraction of the total arts and entertainment industry—was an estimated $63.1 billion in fiscal 2005, and leveraged an additional $103.1 billion in event related spending by arts audiences. This $166.2 billion in total economic activity supports 5.7 million FTE jobs and generates $29.6 billion in government revenue annually.

- From large urban cities to small rural towns, this research shows that the nonprofit arts are an economically sound investment. They attract audiences, spur business development, support jobs, and generate government revenue. Locally as well as nationally, the arts mean business.

- The arts are a growth industry. In five years, the economic activity of nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences grew nearly 24 percent from $134 billion in 2000 to $162.2 billion (11 percent when adjusted for inflation).

# DOCUMENT H

Samples of Work Submitted for NEA Funding

| --- | --- |
The Impact of Arts Education on Workforce Preparation

Summary
The arts provide one alternative for states looking to build the workforce of tomorrow—a choice growing in popularity and esteem. The arts can provide effective learning opportunities to the general student population, yielding increased academic performance, reduced absenteeism, and better skill-building. An even more compelling advantage is the striking success of arts-based educational programs among disadvantaged populations, especially at-risk and incarcerated youth. For at-risk youth, that segment of society most likely to suffer from limited lifetime productivity, the arts contribute to lower recidivism rates; increased self-esteem; the acquisition of job skills; and the development of much needed creative thinking, problem solving and communications skills. Involvement in the arts is one avenue by which at-risk youth can acquire the various competencies necessary to become economically self-sufficient over the long term, rather than becoming a financial strain on their states and communities.

Programs incorporating the arts have proven to be educational, developmentally rich, and cost-effective ways to provide students with the skills they need to be productive participants in today’s economy.

This Issue Brief provides examples of arts-based education as a money- and time-saving option for states looking to build skills, increase academic success, heighten standardized test scores, and lower the incidence of crime among general and at-risk populations. It offers examples drawn from states that are utilizing the arts in education and after-school programs, and it provides policy recommendations for states looking to initiate or strengthen arts education programs that improve productivity and foster workforce development.

Human Capital’s Role in the New Economy
The New Economy has reshaped previously held beliefs regarding productivity. Knowledge has supplanted labor-intensive careers as the preferred path to economic growth and stability. Human capital has become the primary determinant of a region’s economic vitality. Today’s challenging workplace demands academic skills (i.e., a college degree) as well as “intangible” assets such as flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and interpersonal skills. Old hierarchical, boundary-laden, and static organizational structures are giving way to new kinds of “learning organizations” with flattened hierarchies. More decision-making and problem solving authority rests in the hands of front-line employees, and
self-managed, cross-functional teams are replacing bureaucratic assembly lines. Furthermore, extensive cross training, teamwork, and flexible work assignments are taking the place of elaborate work rules.²

The Workforce Skills of Today and Tomorrow
Today's knowledge-based economy relies on a combination of academic prowess and fluency with foundation skills relating to communication, personal and interpersonal relationships, problem solving, and management of organizational processes. The skills necessary to acquire and retain a job in today's workforce include:³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Skills</th>
<th>Higher-Order Thinking Skills</th>
<th>Affective Skills and Traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Oral communications</td>
<td>• Problem solving</td>
<td>• Dependability and responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reading, especially understanding</td>
<td>• Learning skills, strategies</td>
<td>• Positive attitude towards work, following instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Basic arithmetic</td>
<td>• Creative, innovative thinking</td>
<td>• Conscientiousness, punctuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing</td>
<td>• Decision making</td>
<td>• Efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Interpersonal skills and cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Working as a team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-confidence, positive self-image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Adaptability, flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Enthusiasm, motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-discipline, self-management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Appropriate dress, grooming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Honesty, integrity, ability to work without supervision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Arts Help Build New Economy Workforce Skills
The arts are one tool used by states to enhance workforce readiness for students in both the general and at-risk populations. Programs incorporating the arts have proven to be educational, developmentally rich, and cost-effective ways to provide students the skills they need to be productive participants in today's economy. Arts programs combine academic and workforce development skills in a manner attractive to participants of all age groups and economic backgrounds. Children raised in higher socioeconomic brackets and exposed to the arts through other sources such as families and communities reap the benefits of these activities. In general, at-risk children lack the resources available to other children, are less likely to be introduced
to the arts, and lose out on the important educational advantages that the arts can provide. Arts education can have a beneficial and enriching effect on all children, but in some cases, the effects on at-risk children are even more dramatic, especially among those from low-income situations.

Research reveals that when young people (both general and at-risk populations) study the arts, they show heightened academic standing, a strong capacity for self-assessment, and a secure sense of their own ability to plan and work for a positive future. The report, Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning reviews research conducted by scholars from Columbia University’s Teachers College, Harvard University, Harvard’s Project Zero, Stanford University, the University of California at Los Angeles, and the University of Connecticut. The researchers found that arts education can enhance academic achievement, reach students on the margins of the educational system, create an effective learning environment, and connect learners’ experiences to the world outside of school. Multiple studies cite strong positive impacts across socioeconomic groups with respect to both academic and personal success.

Other studies of the effects of arts instruction on learning have found that children who study the arts are:

- four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement;
- elected to class office within their schools three times as often;
- four times more likely to participate in a math and science fair;
- three times more likely to win an award for school attendance; and
- four times more likely to win an award for writing an essay or poem.

In addition to academic success, students introduced to arts education have heightened soft skills. In a study of more than 2000 middle school students in four states, researchers at Columbia University found that children receiving at least three years of in-school arts instruction scored significantly higher on quantitative tests of creative thinking than their peers with less arts instruction. Students with more arts instruction had index scores averaging 20 points higher than their peers on measures of creative thinking, fluency, originality, elaboration, and resistance to closure.

Some critics have argued that arts curricula may not produce increased standardized test results. An analysis of 188 previous studies describing correlations between the arts and performance on mathematics and verbal skills tests found a causal link between studying the arts and improved academic performance in only 3 of 10 areas studied. Researchers Ellen Winner and Lois Hetland, in Harvard’s Reviewing Education and the Arts project, urged caution with respect to justifying arts education programs on the sole basis of instrumental grounds such as test scores.
Nonetheless, arts education appears to develop cognitive skills and traits which may or may not be easily measured through standardized testing. According to Dr. Elliot W. Eisner of Stanford University, schooling in the arts has cognitive effects that help prepare students for the 21st-century workforce. Eisner identifies key competencies of cognitive growth that are developed through an education in the arts. These include:

- perception of relationships;
- skills in finding multiple solutions to problems;
- attention to nuance;
- adaptability;
- decision-making skills; and
- visualization of goals and outcomes.

School districts are finding that the arts develop many skills applicable to the “real world” environment. In a study of 91 school districts across the nation, evaluators found that the arts contribute significantly to the creation of the flexible and adaptable knowledge workers that businesses demand to compete in today’s economy.

In addition to supporting general workforce competencies, arts competencies in themselves can be marketable skills in today’s economy. For instance, today’s media workers are applying arts skills in careers such as television and film production, Web site design, and advertising. Design skills taught through the arts are both professional and technical and can lead students to careers in the architecture or fashion industries. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has counted more than 2 million full-time workers in artist occupations. In this way, workforce development programs that involve the arts may provide dual benefits, opening up careers in the creative industries for some students while enhancing the overall workforce preparedness of others.

**Arts Based Education for General, At-Risk, and Incarcerated Youth Populations**

As states continue to focus on the future development of their workforces, arts-based education proves to be a viable option for developing skills necessary for increased productivity and prosperity. The following programs highlight several states’ best practices in arts education for general, at-risk, and incarcerated youth.

**Incorporating the Arts as a Foundation for the General Population**

Schools throughout the country are implementing arts-focused curricula targeting the general population to create a more educated workforce with a set of well-rounded and applicable skills. Programs in California,
Dearest Hallie,

Girl, I'm so happy you're involved in this program. I could just jump up and down all over Steedman! You know how hard I push reading and the fact that we've turned this into a film makes it even better. Just so you know how big this is going to be. I'm sending you some of the information I have on the Reading Center and the Big Read program. It began in the August Wilson Center—never hurts to have a famous playwright involved, huh? Reading changes lives! I have been so blessed to have gotten support early on from the NEA to get this project rolling. I can pay for it now, but back then I couldn't rub two pennies together to make them scream so I am deeply grateful for the help I got.

This Read for Life Campaign is a community challenge to inspire new, reluctant, and lapsing readers to make a commitment to ensure that reading becomes an essential part of their lives. Asserting that a love of reading improves the quality of one's life, we encourage people of all ages to visit their local libraries, educational resource centers and book stores to pick up a book and READ! More than half of adults in the U.S. do not read literature and according to the Literacy Campaign, a quarter of the adult workforce reads below the fourth grade level. Reading enables people of diverse backgrounds and experiences to lead healthy, well-rounded and enjoyable lives. Are you ready to read?

Thank you so much for joining me in this project, Hallie. Your friendship and dedication to furthering education is invaluable to me. I love you one, sistah!

Love,

[Signature]
The August Wilson Center is encouraging everyone to read Their Eyes Were Watching God. The first 100 pledges to read will receive a FREE copy of the novel! Call 412.258.2665 or e-mail bigread@augustwilsoncenter.org to receive your pledge card. The Big Read is designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest. The Big Read: Pittsburgh 2008 reads Their Eyes Were Watching God by Hurston is brought to you by the August Wilson Center and the United Black Book Club of Philadelphia.

What is The Big Read?
The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. The August Wilson Center for African American Culture, The United Black Book Clubs of Pittsburgh and The Allegheny County Library Association are working together to inspire the Pittsburgh region to read Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston through exciting programs and events surrounding this seminal novel and to educate the community about the life and times of Zora Neale Hurston. Join us for exciting Big Read programs and events from now until June.

About Their Eyes Were Watching God
Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God is one of 16 classic novels - all modern American classics - selected by the National Endowment for the Arts for promotion nationally in various communities through June.

Hurston (1891-1960) is considered one of the pre-eminent writers of twentieth-century African American literature. Hurston was closely associated with the Harlem Renaissance and has influenced such writers as Ralph Ellison, Toni Morrison, Gayl Jones, Alice Walker and Toni Cade Bambara.

Their Eyes Were Watching God is arguably the best-known and perhaps the most controversial of Hurston's fiction works. It is about Janie Crawford, the fair and long-legged, independent and articulate woman who sets out to be her own person - no mean feat for a black woman living in the black town of Eaton, Fla. in the 1930s. Janie's quest for identity takes her through three marriages and into a journey back to her roots.

Halle Berry is currently in production on the Oprah Winfrey produced tele-film "Their Eyes Were Watching God" from the best-selling book of the same name by Zora Neale Hurston. Next up is the highly anticipated summer film "Catwoman," opening soon. Berry most recently opened the psychological thriller " Gothika," which grossed more than $140 million worldwide. For her performance in Lions Gate Films' "Monster's Ball," Berry made history by becoming the first African-American woman to win an Academy Award for Best Actress. In addition, she earned a SAG Award, the Berlin Silver Bear and was named Best Actress by the National Board of Review. On the small screen, Berry starred in and produced the HBO movie "Introducing Dorothy Dandridge," which brought her a Golden Globe, SAG and Emmy Award. She will soon begin production on the independent film "October Squall," in which again, she will star and produce.