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Press Release

Action & IMPACT: Community Arts Advocacy Day on May 20

An event to support the arts and arts education programs in the Commonwealth.

Franklin, MA April 21, 2017: *Action & IMPACT: Community Arts Advocacy Day* is a multi-town event bringing together artists, art advocates, cultural organizations, and local businesses to participate in a morning of grassroots activism and education supporting the importance of arts and arts education in our culture.

After it was announced that the proposed federal and state budgets would cut an array of domestic programs (which include funding for local art, music, theater and cultural groups as well as arts education programs), the Franklin Cultural Council decided to take initiative to not only raise awareness, but to give local organizations and residents an opportunity to network while also advocating for this important issue. The event will provide participants with an overview on how to advocate with state and federal legislators, how to leverage their own PR marketing, how to engage their local community through social media, how to lobby for funding, and how to create corporate partnerships.

"We at the Franklin Cultural Council have been very concerned with the threat to arts funding, both at the federal and state level, and the message that sends to members of the community," says FCC Chair Stacey David. "It implies that the arts and arts education aren't really important. President Trump has proposed cutting the entire National Endowment for the Arts, based on his promises to reduce the federal debt and on his thinking that the programs funded by the NEA only matter to the wealthy elite. However, the NEA represents only 0.025% of the federal budget—clearly not enough to have any true effect on our debt, yet enough to have substantial impact on the culture of our country. Much of the NEA funding gets divided up amongst the state Cultural Councils, who in turn hand it down to the local level. The bulk of the grants the Local Cultural Councils award each year are possible thanks to NEA funding combined with additional State funding. The State Ways and Means Committee has also proposed cutting arts funding for the coming year by 28%. The grants the Franklin Cultural Council awards aren't for big 'elitist' projects, but are to fund field trips for our school children, Concerts on the Common, performances at the schools and Senior Center, the Harvest Stroll, the Cultural Festival and other small, local programs. These programs and events will touch 26,770 members of our community...which is impressive considering Franklin only has a population of approximately 31,000."

For Release Friday, April 21, 2017

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"In addition," David goes on to say, "people often don't realize that the economic impact of the arts is far greater than the government expenditures. According to Americans for the Arts, a national advocacy and support organization, the arts industry generates \$135.2 billion annually in economic activity, plus an additional \$22.3 billion in local, state and federal government revenue, all in response to only \$4 billion in collective government allocations. Once people see the numbers, it seems like a no-brainer to continue funding the arts, and yet many legislators see the arts as an easy area to cut."

"We decided to hold an arts advocacy day to give members of area arts and cultural organizations the tools they need to advocate for change. We are delighted to be partnering with a variety of organizations and other Cultural Councils in over a dozen towns to bring this event about. Our hope is that both concerned citizens and members of these various organizations will come together to show our legislators that the arts really are a fundamental part of our lives. They help define our humanity and bring beauty to our world. They are worth fighting for."

Action & IMPACT is a **free** program of the Franklin Cultural Council, with additional support from the Norfolk Cultural Council, Cultural Alliance of Medfield, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and MASSCreative.

- **When:** Saturday, May 20, 2017, 8:15 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- **Where:** Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill Street, Franklin, MA 02038
- **Register:** online at www.franklinma.gov/cultural-council

Agenda:

8:15 - 9:00:	Registration, Breakfast & Networking
9:00-9:15:	Welcome Address
9:15-9:30:	Why Advocate?...the economic and cultural impact of the arts and what advocacy can achieve
9:30-9:50:	Your Arts Story "Elevator Pitch"...using your personal story to advocate for change
9:50-10:10:	Creative Break to Advocate...grassroots advocacy activities
10:15-11:00:	Educational Workshop Session 1
11:00-11:45:	Educational Workshop Session 2
11:45-12:00:	Wrap up & Social Media Call to Action...one last advocacy action!

Workshops:

Tips for Successful Grant Writing — Barb Gardner, Franklin Cultural Council & Lillian Gould, MFA

Barb, a grant writer for Tufts University, and Lillian, a grant writer for the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, will offer specific tips and information on ways to improve your future Cultural Council grant applications, as well as resources for finding other grants and suggestions on ways to write a successful grant app.

Leveraging PR & Email Marketing— Tamara Starr, Franklin Cultural Council

Tamara is a former Content Producer for the Boston Globe and former editor of Patch.com and knows what it takes to grab the attention of the press. This workshop will focus on how to write a great press release, manage relationships with editors, examples of impactful "letters to the editor" that support your arts and advocacy message, and more!

Community Engagement through Social Media—Charity Stolarz & Taylor McVay, Norfolk Cultural Council

Learn to leverage the power of social platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to connect to your community and amplify your message. Charity and Taylor will give you a crash course in the basic usage of the most popular social media platforms, along with tips and advice on which platforms are best suited for use in various circumstances. You'll get tools and

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techniques to boost your reach and maximize engagement with your target audience, and a chance to practice posting, liking, sharing and retweeting in real time with a workshop full of new social media followers. No social media experience necessary!

Lobbying Your Town for Arts Funding — Jean Mineo, Cultural Alliance of Medfield

Jean successfully lobbied the town of Medfield 3 years ago to match Mass Cultural Council funding. She, in conjunction with the MCC, developed a Toolkit and Webinar on the topic outlining the successful strategies to use as well as pitfalls to avoid when approaching your town for funding.

The Ins and Outs of How to Advocate— MA Representative Jeff Roy & Andre Green, MASSCreative

Representative Roy will talk to us about the issues he faces regarding State arts funding budgeting, the objections his colleagues might have to supporting the arts, and how to successfully address those objections when advocating. Andre, Political Director at MASSCreative, will then expand on our earlier elevator pitch activity to guide people in coming up with talking points and "scripts" for advocacy meetings with legislators, giving time to role play these meetings with Rep Roy and others.

Art Builds Business Builds Art: Creating Symbiotic Corporate/Arts Relationships

Local businesses and arts organizations can create mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationships. Corporations offer sponsorship and funding for the arts, while the arts foster a desirable work environment, increased efficiency and morale, and build competitive advantages for businesses. This workshop will explore those relationships and how to create them within your community.

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