

# PRESS RELEASE



**Arts & Economic  
Prosperity IV**

A Project of **Americans for the Arts**

**nebraskans  
FOR THE  
ARTS**

**Contact:** Marjorie Maas, Nebraskans for the Arts director, [marjorie@nebraskansforthearts.org](mailto:marjorie@nebraskansforthearts.org)  
(office) 402.595.2125 (mobile) 402.679.0459

---

**For Immediate Release  
June 13, 2012**

**Omaha and the State of Nebraska's Nonprofit Arts and Culture Industry Generate \$174 Million in Economic Activity and Support 6,473 Jobs Annually According to Americans for the Arts**

***Nebraska's Arts Industry Returns \$18.7 Million in Revenue to Local and State Coffers***

Omaha, Neb. — The nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$174.4 million in annual economic activity in the State of Nebraska—supporting 6,473 full-time equivalent jobs across the state, both directly and indirectly, and generating \$18.7 million in local and state government revenues—according to the *Arts & Economic Prosperity IV* national economic impact study. The most comprehensive economic impact study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry ever conducted in the United States, *Arts & Economic Prosperity IV* was conducted by Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education.

Omaha contributes \$89.9 million to this economic impact in direct expenditures, affecting 3,431 full time jobs, and contributing \$9.1 million to local and state government. *This accounts for approximately half of the state's arts economic activity.*

"In Nebraska, we understand that cultural excellence is an important component of vibrant, thriving communities. The quality and diversity of the arts help to attract and promote business development. Arts-related industries create jobs, attract investments and enhance tourism. Additionally, the arts connect us to one another and add richness to our lives," says Governor Dave Heineman.

Omaha Mayor Jim Suttle emphasizes the importance of the cultural community saying, "Omaha is a city that embraces the arts. By investing in them, we are not only adding to the character of our community but creating jobs and growing our economy."

According to the study, nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Nebraska spent \$95.8 million during fiscal year 2010. This spending is far-reaching: organizations pay employees, purchase supplies, contract for services and acquire assets within their community. Those dollars, in turn, generated \$157.9 million in household income for statewide residents.

Arts and culture organizations in Omaha spent \$45.9 million during fiscal year 2010 and generated \$76.3 million in local household income.

"This study changes the lens through which we can look at the arts. We fundamentally know how the arts enliven and bind together communities, and now we can begin looking at them as an industry giving back financially to their city and state," comments Marjorie Maas, director of Nebraskans for the Arts, the organization responsible for data collection both statewide and in Omaha.

(CONTINUED)

“Investing in the arts makes good economic development sense,” said David G. Brown, president and CEO of the Greater Omaha Chamber. “The arts support more than 3,400 local jobs, both directly and indirectly, and account for \$76 million in resident household income contributed to our economy. What’s more, we know that a vibrant arts community is essential to making Omaha a city where people want to live, work and play.”

Nationally, the *Arts & Economic Prosperity IV* study reveals that the nonprofit arts industry produced \$135.2 billion in economic activity during 2010. This spending—\$61.1 billion by nonprofit arts and culture organizations plus an additional \$74.1 billion by their audiences—supported 4.1 million full-time equivalent jobs and generated \$22.3 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues.

“This study shines a much-needed light on the vital role the arts play in stimulating and sustaining economic development,” says Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “Contrary to popular belief, the arts are a bustling industry that supports a plethora of diverse jobs, generates significant revenues for local businesses and to federal, state and local governments and provides quality of life that positions communities to compete in our 21st century creative economy.”

### **Arts Industry Boon for Local Businesses**

In addition to spending by organizations, the nonprofit arts and culture industry leverages \$78.6 million in event-related spending by its audiences. As a result of attending a cultural event, attendees often eat dinner in local restaurants, pay for parking, buy gifts and souvenirs, and pay a babysitter. What’s more, attendees from out of town may stay overnight in a local hotel. In Omaha, survey respondents who reported overnight lodging expenses had an overall event-related spending average of \$148.14 per person, per event, compared with average attendee spending of \$25.86 (above the price of admission).

“This study shows overnight visitors attending arts and culture venues spend nearly six times more than local patrons,” said Dana Markel, executive director of the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau. “It quantifies how valuable overnight visitors are to the local economy.”

Todd Simon, an avid arts supporter and Omaha Steaks senior vice president and family owner, commented on the study’s importance by saying, “The data shows clearly that arts organizations are absolutely businesses and leaders who care about community and economic development can feel good about choosing to invest in the arts.”

The *Arts & Economic Prosperity IV* study was conducted by Americans for the Arts and supported by The Ruth Lilly Fund of Americans for the Arts. Americans for the Arts’ local, regional, and statewide project partners contributed both time and financial support to the study.

**The full text of the national statistical report is available at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/EconomicImpact](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/EconomicImpact).**

### **About Nebraskans for the Arts:**

Nebraskans for the Arts is a nonprofit membership organization. The organization promotes the advancement of learning in and through the arts for all Nebraska residents and is committed to promoting the arts to federal, state and local policymakers. Find more information at [www.nebraskansforthearts.org](http://www.nebraskansforthearts.org).

*Member of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network and state affiliate for Americans for the Arts*

###