

Nevada County Arts Council
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June 22, 2016

Nevada County Board of Supervisors
Eric W Rood Administrative Center
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

Nevada County Arts Council seeks your support by the Resolution of the Board in authorizing our application to California Arts Council for State-Local Partnership Program funding for FY 2016-2017. This implies the Board's approval of Nevada County Arts Council as Nevada County's designated Local Arts Agency, and for this reason, we felt you might enjoy some highlights, outlined below, from 2015-16. If at all possible we would also like to share these with you in person at a meeting of the Supervisors in July.

Expanding our programs has been at the core of our progress during 2015-16. While we have continued to act as the go-to resource for promoting all the arts across the County – with our online arts calendar, monthly newsletters and advocacy – we have also recognized the need to show our community that we have our finger on the pulse in terms of the most potent needs in our region.

This year, with funds from California Arts Council, we participated in its **Veterans Initiative in the Arts**, creating *Image Nation* alongside thirteen Nevada County veterans under the artistic direction and tutelage of veteran award-winning photographer Michael Llewellyn. Partnering with Welcome Home Vets, this year-long collaboration culminated in an exhibition on a theatrical scale right here in the Rood Center – free and open to the public over the course of a full month.

Our support of the visual arts has continued as a priority through our **A TOAST to the Truckee Creative Community**. *TOAST* is an Open Art Studio Tour inviting locals and visitors to experience the evolution of art from creative spark to finished product through demonstration and dialog with some of Truckee's finest professionals. Our post-*TOAST* survey during 2015 indicated significant sales income and hefty commissions, for both individual artists and participating galleries and partners – and we hope to surpass this for this year's *TOAST*.

We continue to partner with **Wild and Scenic Film Festival** through its juried *Art Exhibition and Contest*. Designed to increase awareness of the intersection between arts and the environment we invite local and regional artists to submit work, showing it at venues across Grass Valley and Nevada City. In January, Donn Harris, Chairman of California Arts Council, attended as a judge at our invitation. He then reported so favorably on his visit that California Arts Council has since pledged to host one of only six public meetings per year here in Nevada County. This implies some of the State's top artists and arts leaders visiting us in the year to come, and offers us a opportunity to engage with both our arts community and our elected officials in putting together an agenda which showcases our second-to-none creative scene.

Visual arts has continued as a theme for us through our **Micro Gallery Program**, which operates through the Greater Grass Valley Chamber of Commerce, and by which we invite submissions from our artist community to showcase and offer for sale their art. For every exhibition we host an opening reception and we spread the word far and wide. And our annual **Art Marketing Bootcamps** are now offered in both Eastern and Western Nevada County. These are six-week branding, marketing and sales strategy classes teaching sustainable income generation using proven sales methods based on an artist's personality, style and approach with people.

The work of our Literary Arts Committee and our **Salon Series** has thrived during 2015-16, offering participatory talks and workshops by professional artists, or professionals working in the interface between business, finance, law and art. Presentations have included what it means to be entrepreneurial as an artist, copyright law for visual, performing and literary arts, the art of writing, poetry, and publishing, and some seriously high comedy.

Connecting life-long learning with another emerging priority for us has been our attention to Nevada County's youth. In April we celebrated 16-year old Nevada County resident, Noah Gregoire, through his first place win in the **US House of Representative's Congressional Art Competition** for California's 1st Congressional District. Noah will be celebrated at an annual awards ceremony in Washington DC during the summer, and his work displayed for one year at the US Capitol. Nevada County Arts Council will also hang his work at the Greater Grass Valley Chamber of Commerce during the fall, alongside other works by Nevada County high school students.

As a judge for the Competition – for both the 1st and 4th Congressional districts – our role is to encourage participation. The good news is that – for District 1 – we pulled through with more student submissions than from Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, Glenn or Placer together. Go Nevada County!

Nevada County Arts Council continues to show an enduring commitment to education. During the last year, through the work of our Arts Education Leadership Group and our Board of Directors' Education Committee, we have launched initiatives and led arts agendas, such as:

- **Formation of a County Arts Plan**
California's state education code requires that students receive K-12 instruction in visual arts, music, theater and dance. Yet, during years of tough financial times, many schools were forced to cut their arts programs. NCArts has been leading a systematic effort to pass a county-wide arts plan that means as new funding comes in, both a commitment and a plan are in already place.
- **VAPA Coordination for Nevada County schools**
NCArts succeeded in gaining approval from our Superintendent of Schools to ensure a number of hours per month were dedicated to Visual and Performing Arts advocacy and administrative coordination through a single staff member. There's more to do, however.
- **California State Summer School for the Arts (CSSSA)**
Last year NCArts worked with CSSSA to secure maximum high school participation resulting in 11 Nevada County high school students successfully entering the program. We celebrated our youth at a public reception last fall, and look forward to doing the same this year.
- **1st Annual Nevada County STEAM Expo – leading its Art Planning Committee**
In early April Nevada County's first STEAM Expo spotlighted developments in science, technology,

engineering, arts and math. Organizations, businesses and schools showcased innovations and educational programs with the very children who will become our future leaders and entrepreneurs, creative minds, scientists, engineers and programmers.

➤ **Student Voices Campaign**

Working through the Superintendent of Schools Office and directly with local schools, we spearhead local participation in The Student Voices Campaign. This was launched by the California Alliance for Arts Education, we invite students in grades 7-12 to create videos that share their vision for better schools and their education and share them with school district leaders as part of the annual Local Control Funding Formula) planning process.

➤ **Young at Art**

This annual exhibition is Nevada County's largest annual youth art event and forms part of a national program recognizing Youth Art Month. Sponsoring an open house and reception we partners with the Superintendent of Schools Office in creating a public testament to the value of arts in education. Here the public can experience the visual arts within our schools through works submitted by hundreds of students across the county.

➤ **Artists in Schools**

Working with local schools, with a planning grant from California Arts Council, we have worked with four professional Nevada County visual artists on conceiving thirty really creative weekly lessons, all combining the Visual Arts Content Standards with Common Core curriculum.

In closing, we celebrate not on only another year of service but our successful applications to California Arts Council for three new or renewed programs, to be rolled out in the year to come:

1. **Artists in Schools** – an implementation grant allowing us to work more deeply, and in more school districts, in the year to come.
2. **Veterans Initiative in the Arts** – allowing us to take *Image Nation* on the road, showcasing the work of our veterans and involving more members of the public both east and west in Nevada County.
3. **1st Annual Sierra Poetry Festival** – via a small Local Impact Grant we will draw from a rich cultural resource of poets and performers spanning the entire county, in partnership with Sierra College. Our festival will be designed as a pilot for an ongoing annual event which will reach beyond county lines. Included in our festival will be the inauguration of a **Poet Laureate Program for Nevada County**. We look forward to working with you, our Board of Supervisors, on this!

Nevada County Arts Council has served as the designated Local Arts Agency for Nevada County for almost seven years. Your designation allows us to apply for nominal and much needed core funding via California Arts Council's State-Local Partnership Program. We appreciate your past support and advocacy, and hope that you will approve a Resolution of the Board for FY 2016-17.

Please don't hesitate to contact me for more in-depth information on our current position, plans and progress.

Sincerely,



Eliza Tudor
Executive Director