

Nevada County Arts Council
128 E Main Street
Grass Valley
CA 95945
Ph: (530) 718 0727
Web: nevadacountyarts.org
Email: eliza@nevadacountyarts.org



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

May 30, 2017

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 2017-2018. 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 2016-17. We also look forward to sharing these with you in person at a meeting of the Supervisors on June 13.

Much of our work this year has been connected with our aim to support Nevada County as a premier cultural destination. For this to happen, our artists need to feel supported and our community – and our visitors – need to know where to find them. Therefore, we have continued to act as the go-to resource for promoting the arts across Nevada County, with our online arts calendar, artist directory, newsletters and advocacy.

But we have also added another layer to our work around placemaking. This year, we counseled the Cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City and the Town of Truckee on opportunities surrounding AB 189¹, resulting in two applications for State Cultural District designation via California Arts Council's emerging State Cultural District Program. As a result, both the proposed *Truckee Cultural District* and *Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District* are semi-finalists among only 22 state-wide. We hope to hear by early July as to the final outcome of collective applications, and we thank you for signing letters of support for each.

Also by July we will have published our inaugural (annual) Nevada County Visual Artist & Gallery Guide, designed to further establish Nevada County as a premier visual arts destination. In the year to come 7,500 hard copies will be distributed across Nevada County and beyond, including San Francisco, Sacramento, Chico, and Reno, with a web version and an online distribution of 15,000.

During 2016-17, with matching funds from California Arts Council, we participated once again in its *Veterans Initiative in the Arts*, creating a mobile exhibit so that we could present Image Nation in Eastern Nevada County – free and open to the public over the course of a full three months at Truckee Community Recreation Center. At the same time, eight further Nevada County veterans are receiving tuition from US

¹ a.) For information on Assembly Bill 189 – https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB189
b.) For information on California Arts Council's State Cultural District Program – <https://www.caculturaldistricts.org>
c.) For a map of semi-finalists – http://www.cac.ca.gov/files/CCD_2017_Semi-finalists.pdf

veteran, award-winning photographer Michael Llewellyn, and we are preparing a fresh exhibit for the Rood Center by spring 2018.

This year we celebrated National Poetry Month with some exciting literary "firsts" for Nevada County:

1. We held the **1st Annual Sierra Poetry Festival** on April 1 in partnership with Sierra College, a highlight being the first visit to Nevada County of Dana Gioia, California Poet Laureate and former Chair of National Endowment for the Arts, along with a plethora of local, national and international poets.
2. In the run-up to our festival we hosted a **fringe festival of free community pop-up poetry events** throughout the county.
3. We coached students from three Nevada County High Schools and one middle school to ensure **student participation at the festival**.
4. We welcomed nationally acclaimed **Climbing PoeTree** to Nevada County for the first time thanks to a key partnership with The Center for the Arts.
5. We announced a **Nevada County Poet Laureate Program** in collaboration with you, our Board of Supervisors, and we are celebrating our first Poet Laureate, Molly Fisk, for an initial term of one year.
6. At Sierra Mountain Coffee Roasters on Maltman Drive in Grass Valley a **Poetry Wall** was unveiled that has become a community poem with broad input from the public.

During 2017 we entered into our 6th year of partnership 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 invited local and regional artists to submit work, showing it at venues across Grass Valley and Nevada City. In January, at our invitation, the esteemed artist Nashormeh Lindo, also Vice-Chairman of California Arts Council, attended as both judge and presenter.

This year, for the first time, Nevada County Arts Council co-chaired the arts and culture agenda for the Nevada County Community Leadership Institute. This saw over a dozen arts organizations represented at an all-day convening for new leaders in Nevada County, and forming multi-disciplinary panels on subjects such as the role the arts play in the health of our communities; public safety; and economic and social revitalization.

Nevada County Arts Council continues to show an enduring commitment to education. During the last year, through the work of our Board of Directors' Arts Education Committee, we have launched initiatives and led arts agendas, alongside California Alliance for Arts Education, California Arts Council, and Nevada County Superintendent of Schools, including:

1. **Artists in Schools**

Our California Arts Council-funded Artists in Schools Program has seen us working with teaching artists in schools across Nevada County on seriously fun, creative lessons combining Visual Arts Content Standards with Common Core curriculum for close to 300 students. During the coming year we will expand our program to a further 280 low-income students in the Grass Valley After School and Summer School Programs. 36 weekly art lessons will be developed and integrated into the PBIS-based character education program at these sites. Student works will be displayed at both the Nevada County Fair and Young at Art Exhibition. 20 other targeted students will attend a similarly-themed summer art camp

through scholarship funding.

2. Student Voices Campaign

In California, the Local Control Funding Formula, or LCFF, guarantees students a voice in planning and budgeting for their school district. The Student Voices Campaign is a creative way for young people to make their voices heard through creating 2-minute videos. This year, thanks to our advocacy, the California State First Prize went to Nevada County student, Aiden Conley of Bear River High School.²

3. California State Summer School for the Arts

With California State Summer School for the Arts (CSSSA) our aim is to encourage high school participation from Nevada County in this rigorously competitive program. Most years this results in more high school attendees than from any other surrounding county. We are available for information and mentoring at any stage of a student application.

4. US House of Representatives National Congressional Art Competition

As blind judges for the US House of Representatives National Congressional Art Competition – for both the 1st and 4th Congressional districts – our role is to encourage student participation from Nevada County. During the year to come our aim is to use this opportunity to deepen our connection with our congressmen, and to help each more truly understand the role and value of art in healthy, safe societies.

Looking ahead, the following new or follow up projects will begin unfolding from July:

1. Arts in Corrections: County Jails Project

In partnership with California Lawyers for the Arts with funds from National Endowment for the Arts we will teach theatre to incarcerated adults at our County Jail, the Wayne Brown Correctional Facility in Nevada City. We are thrilled to be working with Nevada County Probation and veteran actor, director and teacher, John Deaderick, on this much-needed project.

2. Artists Activating Communities

In the year to come, thanks to an Artists Activating Communities grant from California Arts Council, artist Ruth Chase will lead as artist-in-residence of a new initiative we have called Belonging. Belonging is a new community art program that centers around our vulnerable mountain home and the people who tend it, love it and depend on it. Ruth will mobilize perspectives on our most active issues - whether climate change or cannabis farming, land ethics or displacement, and what it means to be indigenous. From this, a series of paintings and a film will emerge, manifesting as public art, and tools for activism and bridge-building.

3. Image Nation

With support from the California Arts Council, and in partnership with Welcome Home Vets, NC Arts will extend its successful Image Nation project still further, through photography workshops for veterans of all skill levels and at least one public exhibition. We will produce from these workshops a webinar series for veterans who cannot attend all workshops in person, and create an online gallery of their work in order to both exhibit and generate income for them.

² Enjoy Aiden Conley's winning video: <http://studentvoicescampaign.org/post/159834079505/art-in-education-by-aidan-at-bear-river-high>

4. A Rebrand and new Website for NCArts

It has been seven years since we took a look at our brand and, having received a small grant from California Arts Council last fall, we will at last launch a new website which, with a fresh look and re-optimization, should be live by the end of June. Our purpose for this drive has been to better serve our arts community and local population, and to more effectively attract visitors from elsewhere to Nevada County.

5. Poetry Out Loud

From 2018, Nevada County Arts Council will take the lead for Poetry Out Loud in Nevada County. Poetry Out Loud is program of the National Endowment for the Arts, co-sponsored by California Arts Council. It is a National Recitation contest that, for us, begins right here in Nevada County classrooms. Through Poetry Out Loud we will help high school students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life.

6. 2nd Annual Sierra Poetry Festival

Scheduled for late April 2018, our 2nd Annual Sierra Poetry Festival will incorporate Poetry Out Loud and youth voices, our pan-county literary community, and poets from across California and beyond.

7. Professional Development for Artists

In the year to come we will present an arts marketing and business conference called *The Art of Business* – by and for professional and emerging artists on the interface between business, finance, law and art.

Thank you for your advocacy of Nevada County Arts Council in naming us eligible to apply for State-Local Partnership status with California Arts Council. Though the core funding this implies is not large, this symbolic contract with the State allows us to serve, and represent, our community in a truly unique way.

Sincerely,



Eliza Tudor
Executive Director

On behalf of the Board of Directors for Nevada County Arts Council