



## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Arts and Culture Study Paints a Picture of the Economic Impact of the Arts on our Region.**

**Orlando, FL** - Americans for the Arts in partnership with *myregion.org*, United Arts of Central Florida and the seven-county Central Florida Arts Councils: Brevard Cultural Alliance, Lake County Tourism and Business Relations, Orange County Arts and Cultural Affairs, Osceola Center for the Arts, Polk Arts Alliance, Seminole Cultural Arts Council and Volusia County Leisure Services have announced the release of the most comprehensive study of the Economic Impact of Non-Profit Arts and Cultural organizations in the Central Florida Region.

The *Arts and Economic Prosperity III* Study, which began in January 2006, includes data which demonstrates that communities investing in the arts benefit from jobs, economic growth and a high quality of life that allows them to effectively compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global economy.

Non-profit arts and culture is a \$165.31 million industry in the Central Florida Region – one that supports 5,661 full-time equivalent jobs, \$111.72 million in household income and generates \$20.69 million in local and state government revenue. Arts and culture organizations are employers, producers and consumers. Their direct spending totaled over \$77 million in the Central Florida Region in 2005.

"These statistics reveal our youth as a region. We track significantly lower on our numbers than many like-sized communities we compete with for economic development," said Margot H. Knight, President and CEO of United Arts of Central Florida and Chair of the Arts and Culture Quality of Life Committee with *myregion.org*. "It looks like we can learn a lot from Nashville, Miami/Dade, Austin and Atlanta. On the bright side, money invested in local cultural organizations shows a great return on investment."

Volunteers also play a significant part in contributing to the arts, as they are crucial in to keeping the industry viable. These volunteers donated approximately 665,000 hours of their time at an estimated value of \$12 million.

In addition, numbers also suggest that cultural audiences are not entirely local to Central Florida. Data from the 2,000 audience surveys collected shows that visitors spend 103% more on meals and other expenses than local attendees.

"This study demonstrates the power we can harness by working and learning together as a region." said Shelley Lauten, Project Director for *myregion.org*

Central Florida is one of 156 communities and regions across the nation that participated in the study. The nation's non-profit arts and culture industry has grown steadily since the first analysis by Americans for the Arts in 1992, expanding at a rate greater than inflation. The report reveals that the nonprofit arts industry generates \$166.2 billion in national economic activity every year. The total economic activity has a significant national impact, generating 5.7 million full-time equivalent jobs, \$104.2 billion in resident household income, and \$29.6 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenues.



This study is a reminder that the non-profit arts and culture bring many advantages to our economy. Vital revenue is being pumped back into local restaurants, hotels, retail stores, parking garages and other businesses as a result of audience spending. The study dispels the myth that communities support the arts at the expense of local economic development. In fact, revenue to government is much greater than local and state government investment.

Arts and Culture are an industry that supports jobs, generates government revenue and is a cornerstone of tourism.

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