

# 2022 Create the Vote Candidate Survey

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts on Arts and Culture in advance of the 2022 election. We'll post your responses on our website so that voters can make informed decisions about who will best represent the Arts and Culture community at the legislature.

We ask that you complete the survey by Friday, September 23rd. **We know your time is limited so we understand that your responses will be brief.**

Don't miss out on this important opportunity to be an Arts champion!

Email \*

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Please share your name

Greg Hahn

What office and district are you a candidate for?

Senate - 31st District

Every town in Connecticut can boast cultural assets that contribute to a vibrant community and improve the quality of life for its residents.

*What are some exciting arts and cultural events and organizations that you have experienced in your community?*

I started the Bristol Arts and Culture Commission, President of the Bristol Arts and Culture Fund. I am a working musician and run several music organizations. Events in Bristol: Mum Festival, ACE Gala, Summer Concert Series, Bristol Brass and Wind Ensemble Concerts (Free to public). Bristol Chorale Concerts, and more.

*If elected, will you work to strengthen the arts and culture community in the town(s) you serve? If so, how? If not, why?*

I have been involved in developing the Arts and Culture Community in Bristol for the past 10 years and will continue. I have extensive contacts in the Arts and Culture community. My non-profit, Bristol Arts and Culture Fund, helps promote and fund events and organizations in the Bristol area. When elected, I will bring my knowledge and experience to the state level in support of the Arts and Culture Community.

Sandwiched between Boston and New York, Connecticut is often dismissed as a “pass through” state when it comes to tourism. Yet, our state has many world class arts institutions and a rich cultural landscape.

*Why do you think arts and culture are important in Connecticut? What is unique about our state's arts and culture?*

Quality of life is a question when businesses come to a community and the Arts is a top consideration. Communities with a thriving arts community attract business.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many people discovered that arts and creativity play a critical role in helping us cope with emotional stress and sustain our mental health. Art helped us process loss, fight loneliness, stay connected and feel hopeful.

*Can you share a way that the arts have helped you, your family or your community get through the difficult times of Covid? How will that experience influence choices about the arts you would make as a legislator?*

The Arts community is very resilient. During Covid, outdoor events were scheduled with proper distancing. This enabled people to feel the ability to stay in touch and still be part of the community. As Manager of an 18-piece big band, brass quintet, jazz quintet and jazz quintet and member/past president of a 60 piece concert band, I have been involved with bringing music to the community throughout the pandemic and saw first-hand the importance of this connection with the community.

The arts and creativity have a proven track record of economic benefit to our state. The National Endowment for the Arts' Office of Research & Analysis and the Bureau of Economic Analysis report that, in 2020, arts and cultural production in Connecticut added \$8.9 billion to our economy and accounted for 3.2 percent of our gross state product, while the arts and cultural industries employed 49,159 workers with wages and benefits totaling more than \$5.1 billion. ([https://nasaa-arts.org/nasaa\\_research/creative-economy-state-profiles/](https://nasaa-arts.org/nasaa_research/creative-economy-state-profiles/))

*Despite these contributions, the arts have historically been first on the chopping block when it comes to budget priorities. What would you do to help keep arts and creativity funded in our state at a level that recognizes their economic importance?*

I have seen the difficulty in funding fledgling and established arts organizations. That is why I created the Bristol Arts and Culture Fund, Inc. We help to fund the growth of the Arts in our community. Our next effort will be to identify and contact state-level organizations so we can funnel support through our organization to our community. In Senate, I will work to increase support to the Arts and make sure that there is a direct correlation between a healthy Arts Community and a thriving business environment.

Connecticut has not had an Arts Education Specialist at the State Department of Education (SDE) since 2016, when the last specialist left. This position is critical to assuring that our State and National Arts Education Standards are consistently implemented in all of Connecticut's school districts, especially those in under-resourced communities where students' access to the Arts is often extremely limited compared to affluent communities.

*If elected, would you support refilling the Arts Education Specialist at SDE? If not, why?*

Definitely. While on city council in Bristol, I helped to bring the new Arts Magnet School to Bristol. I understand and have lived the success of a healthy Arts education.

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