

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

Jan Hochadel

What office and district are you a candidate for?

State Senate, District 13

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 have enjoyed the plays put on throughout CT, whether it is Cabaret at Goodspeed or Hamilton at the Bushnell. I also enjoy many of the free concerts throughout my district.

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

We need to promote more art and cultural events in some of our economically disadvantaged areas. New London has a blueprint we should follow to make the arts central to their community. I know how important it is for people to have access to the arts. My daughter got into trouble as a teenager and it was the arts that got her through.

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?

Being between New York and Boston is an advantage, not a problem. We see many of the touring companies traveling from those cities. We also have terrific art galleries at Yale, the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, the New Britain Museum of Art, and many others.

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?

During Covid, I listened to a lot of music and began e-painting. The arts helped me get through cancer the previous year as well. Too often, the arts are viewed as a "nice to have," not a "need to have." That is wrong. They are necessary in our communities and in our schools.

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/)

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?

We need to do a better job advocating for the arts during three budget process. As a legislator, I will make sure I am advocating for funding in caucus and on the floor.

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?

I taught high school in Stamford and Waterbury, and I had many students who needed the arts to be successful in school. As President of AFT CT, I have a great relationship with Commissioner Russell-Tucker. I agree that filling that position should be a priority, and I will work on getting it filled.

This form was created inside of ctartsalliance.org.

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