

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

Kate Farrar

What office and district are you a candidate for?

State Representative, 20th 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?

In my District, I'm proud to have the Playhouse on Park which is a special theatre and performing space. They persevered and emerged from COVID and most recently I was thrilled to enjoy their performance of Pippin.

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

Yes, I will work to strengthen the arts and culture community in West Hartford and Newington. There are several ways to support our arts and culture community including funding in the state budget and for bonding projects, economic and community development projects that incorporate arts organizations and artists in planning, and the inclusion of artists on state boards and commissions.

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?

Arts and culture are the heart of any community. Arts and culture are important to Connecticut because they provide inspiration and creativity for all ages, unite community members across differences, and provide economic engines for our communities.

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?

To me one of the most incredible artistic moments during COVID was the unveiling of the MLK39 mural for Juneteenth in West Hartford in 2021. The celebration and the mural was a meaningful way for our residents to connect, reflect and be united in creating an inclusive community. This experience is a valuable reminder for me as I consider the role of arts in every aspect our state - from education to economic development.

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?

At the state level, we have started to invest more in our arts and tourism budget after many years of cuts. I welcome ideas from arts and culture organizations, fellow legislators, and examples from other states about how we can create more stable funding and its connection to our economic development planning.

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?

Yes I will support this. Plus, I hope this specialist will coordinate with our newest Black, Latino, AAPI, and Native American studies curriculum offerings.

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