

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 *

phoebeholmes81@gmail.com

Please share your name

Phoebe Holmes

What office and district are you a candidate for?

State Rep-107th

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 love attending plays at the Brookfield community theater. I also love to enjoy outdoor theater in Danbury at Richter park in the summer. Edmond Townhall offers interesting cultural enrichment from time to time, and the local libraries do as well. My son takes Irish dance lessons from Ashurst academy in Newtown. We love the arts! Brookfield craft center and Village Center for the arts offer hands on art lessons and craft project guidance in the visual arts. The Bushnell in Hartford is amazing.

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

Absolutely. The arts are meaningful and important. Creativity is an important part of being alive and exploring the creativity within yourself and others brings meaning and vibrancy to life. I intend to highlight artistic events from my platform and high level of visibility as a State Rep. I will seek to continue funding within public schools of the art and music programs.

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 definitely important in Connecticut because we have a lot to offer here for our citizens and the people in our community. We have a lot of local theaters and opportunities to participate in or observe music, dance, painting and theater.

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?

This is a great question. The arts always help to get me through hard times, and especially the solitude caused by the pandemic. I am a big fan of music, poetry, and I paint with acrylics when I feel really inspired. I love photography, and finding beauty everywhere. Using my gifts of creativity and finding beauty always helps me to heal and cope during hard times. I hope that this is something that everyone knows can be useful to minimize stress and maximize feelings of connectedness, and to combat feelings of isolation or loneliness. With mental health issues on the rise, funding and perpetuating the arts may aid in fewer mental health crisis situations.

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?

I would advocate for the importance of elevating the arts in our community and abroad. I would also support funding the arts at the state level and point out these wonderful economic advantages for our local and state economy.

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 would 100% support refilling this role at the state level. I believe that if this Arts Education Specialist at the SDE is doing their job properly- we will be able to see a rise in funding for artistic opportunities in under resourced communities.

This form was created inside of ctartsalliance.org.

Google Forms