

# 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 \*

Tony@TonyHwang.org

Please share your name

Senator Tony Hwang

What office and district are you a candidate for?

State Senate, 28th Senate 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?*

visual, music, theater - all aspects of arts & culture that was especially crucial during the Covid pandemic.. it fed the soul and kept us engaged

*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, absolutely! line item funding to sustain, preserve and help innovate engagement of arts and culture to all communities. Especially the our young adults.

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?*

Uniquely Connecticut! Our natural beauty from coastline to riverways to woodland forests, CT has always attracted world class artists and performers - and as CT residents, these artists have enhanced the quality of life in their respective CT communities along with the rest of the world.

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?*

Art, particularly music and visual arts help us stay connected and hopeful during Covid. It also served as a welcoming unifying force during our divisive and partisan political process - expressive arts knows no political party affiliation.

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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?*

Arts + Culture = Economic Vitality - Beyond the emotional and intrinsic contributions, it has been a momentum building economic engine. It is a win-win for our communities.

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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?*

Enthusiastically YES!

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