

CREATE THE VOTE

2022 LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE ARTS 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. Candidates who choose not to participate by that date will be tagged "no response." **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!

*****PLEASE SEND YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY TO brett@ctartsalliance.org*****

1. 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?

Your answer: I have enjoyed the Mashantucket and Tantaquideon Tribal museums for the educational experience. The same could be said of the Leffingwell Inn Museum in Norwich. I have also enjoyed the theatrical productions of the Norwich Arts Center, The Chestnut Street Theater and the Chelsea Players. The art Gallery at NAC is also exceptional exhibiting the work of local artists.

If elected, will you work to strengthen the arts and culture community in the town(s) you serve? If so, how?

Your answer: Yes. I will first attend events at the venue and work to ensure that funding is provided through the state budget as a member of the Appropriations committee.

2. 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?

Your answer: I believe it reflects the cultural aspects of our region and enhances the quality of life for those of us in our region.

3. 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. They 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?

Your answer: I enjoyed many programs on television as well as my personal recordings to fill the vacuums during that period. Having been a board member for a couple of arts organizations in my community I realize the importance of art in people's lives and will continue to show my support.

4. 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 importance as an economic driver?

Your answer: I will continue to personally support the venues in my area. As I mentioned in a previous response I will work as a member of the Appropriations committee to ensure that resources are provided for the Arts and culture venues. I would also work to educate the public about the economic benefits from these venues to help gain more public support for the arts and culture.

5. 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?

Your answer: Yes