

# CREATE THE OTE 2024

with CT ARTS ALLIANCE

## 2024 LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE ARTS SURVEY

You Name: Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox

**What office and district are you a candidate for?**

Office: Senate                      District: 22

**1. Do you have a connection to the arts? If so, please share.**

My husband directs a chorus in Putnam County which my eldest daughter sings in, and both of my daughters play instruments and are very active in music. My great-granduncle Khaprumama Parvatkar was a well-known tabla player who counted Ravi Shankar among his students. While in Law School I formed an Indian Dance Troupe called the "Lawyers" that performed at Indian cultural nights at the University of Pennsylvania.

**2. Can you share an arts experience that has impacted your life or the lives of your family members?**

Two things come to mind—the first is the way that my grandmother came alive when performing in Marathi-language dramas in New York and New Jersey, which I think gave her a very important connection, as an immigrant, to her life in India. Second, it has been very gratifying to see my eldest daughter Ishika find her niche playing vibraphone in jazz band and singing with the Fairfield County Children's Choir, which has given her a real identity, and to see my younger daughter Aksita so excited to start learning the violin (which she starts today!).

**3. The Connecticut legislature hosts the Arts, Culture, and Tourism Caucus, a bipartisan group of legislators who champion state support for the arts community.**

***If elected (or re-elected), will you join (or rejoin) the Caucus?***

Yes

- 4. Studies have shown that arts and culture can deliver a 3 to 1 return on investment at a minimum if adequately funded. Despite this, Connecticut has historically under invested state funds in the arts and lags the rest of the nation in recognizing that arts generate tax revenue and support a thriving economy.**

***If elected (or re-elected), will you support increased investment of state funds in arts and culture?***

Yes, I will. Connecticut's arts and theater scene has thrived because of its strategic location between New York and Boston, which gives plentiful opportunities for Connecticut orchestras, theater companies, and music performances venues to work with some of the premier talent in the world. But there is much more that we can do. I'm particularly dedicated to working to renovate and preserve the Palace and Majestic Theaters in Bridgeport and to turn Downtown Bridgeport into a premier destination for the arts. I am acutely aware that ARPA funds that were slated to be allocated to arts organizations were instead reallocated. While many of those reallocations went to needy and deserving educational and non-profit organizations, I think the state owes it to arts institutions to correct this injustice and properly fund arts organizations.

- 5. Are there any other ways that you'd like to convey to voters how you have been supportive of the arts?**