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Arts Action Update from Arts Wisconsin - 5.26.2008

Tip of the week: sign up for the workshop, The Arts and Thriving Communities

STATE LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGNS START TO HEAT UP

Connect with candidates to include the arts and arts education in their plans for the future

The Presidential election may be getting all the press, but here in Wisconsin, we have important legislative races in 2008. Half of the State Senate and all 99 members of the Assembly are up for re-election this year. The November elections will feature a battle for both houses of the State Legislature, where Democrats control the Senate (17-6) and Republicans control the Assembly (52-47).

The campaigns are starting to swing into high gear as we head into summer. The primary election is Tuesday, September 9, and the general election is Tuesday, November 4.

In the Assembly, the outcomes in about a dozen of the 99 districts will determine which party has control. Democrats need to win three seats to gain control for the first time since 1994. In the Senate, the Republicans need to win 2 seats to control that house. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel recently published an [easy-to-read map](#) with information about the races expected to be targeted by both parties.

The outcome of the races will determine the work of the Legislature, and will inform the last two years of Gov. Doyle's second term.

What happens in the State Legislature affects you, your family, your work and your community in so many ways. In the realm of the arts and arts education, with the recent increased attention to the economic, educational and civic importance of the arts and culture in Wisconsin, it's more important than ever for arts advocates to make sure that legislative candidates, and the legislators themselves, know about what's happening in the arts

and arts education in their districts, and the importance of the arts locally, regionally and statewide.

Wisconsin's arts leaders should seize the opportunity to "infuse" the arts into the legislative campaigns, encouraging increased state investment in the arts, culture, creativity and innovation through the Wisconsin Arts Board's [New Economy Funding Initiative](#).

[Arts Wisconsin is leading the campaign to help local arts leaders tell their stories and make the case](#) to candidates and elected officials. Arts Wisconsin's *Legislative Action Center* provides easy-to-use, pro-active, up-to-date information and resources that make it easy for you to connect with your legislative candidates over the summer and into the fall. The information, which will include candidate surveys and specific talking points about the arts and arts education that you can discuss with candidates, is updated and expanded on a regular basis, so keep checking back and use all that we have to offer! Here are quick links to much of the information:

Advocacy resources:

- . [Arts Action Toolkit](#)
- . [The latest advocacy news and developments](#)
- . Wisconsin Arts Board's [New Economy Funding Initiative](#), a bold new vision for Wisconsin's future!
- . [56 cents-The Change Wisconsin Needs](#) campaign for the *New Economy Funding Initiative*. [Sign up today to show your support for increased state investment in the arts and arts education!](#) Campaign materials are continually added to the site, so check back often!

Elections and political news:

- . [Your current elected officials](#) and the [current state legislative leadership](#)
- . [2008 Presidential, Congressional, and State Legislative races](#)
- . [State Elections Board](#)
- . [WisPolitics.com](#)
- . [WisOpinion.com](#)
- . [The Wheeler Report](#) - daily news about politics in Wisconsin
- . [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) - state politics blog
- . [Wisconsin Vote](#) - Wisconsin Public Radio campaign website
- . [ArtsVote 2008](#) (Americans for the Arts' national campaign coverage)

Tip of the week: [sign up for the workshop, *Community Development: the arts as a key element in thriving communities*](#)

If you want to know more about leading the way in making your community an even better place to live, work and play? Don't miss ***Community Development: The arts as a key***

element in thriving communities, a dynamic 2-day workshop to be presented **July 23-24 at UW-Madison's School of the Arts in Rhinelander**. Everyone involved in the life of their community - artists, arts organization representatives, business owners, local government representatives, community members– should attend! This is your call to action and your chance to work directly with community development experts and long-time arts activists. Through individual consultation, study guides and interactive explorations, participants will learn best practices in addressing common challenges faced by communities throughout Wisconsin and the Midwest.

Arts Wisconsin resources for Wisconsin's arts leaders:

- . [Advocacy Do's and Don'ts](#)
- . [Helpful Hints](#) for contacting your legislators, making phone calls, writing letters or e-mails and testifying at public hearings.
- . [Tips for developing and keeping successful relationships](#) with legislators
- . Research and information
 - [Arts and Economic Prosperity III](#) - robust and useful research on the economic impact of Wisconsin's arts industry, from the Wisconsin Arts Board and the National Endowment for the Arts
 - [Wisconsin's 2008 Creative Industries](#) information (by State Legislative and Congressional Districts)
 - Americans for the Arts' [National Arts Policy Roundtable](#) report on the role of the arts in education for the 21st century workforce
- . 2007-2008 Legislature
 - [Session Calendar](#)
 - [Committee Calendar](#)
 - [Joint Finance Committee Contact List](#)

*Arts Action Alerts are services of Arts Wisconsin and its Legislative Action Center. Arts Wisconsin provides timely information and actions on arts, community and government issues throughout the year. **Please forward this email on to colleagues and peers who should have this information, so they can also stay in touch and involved.***

*If you are already a member of Arts Wisconsin, we appreciate your support and commitment. **If you are not currently a member, please join or renew your membership today so we can continue doing our advocacy, service and development work on your behalf.** And, many thanks for your good work and for speaking up for the arts in your community and statewide!*

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Arts Wisconsin P.O. Box 1054 Madison WI 53701 608-255 8316