

Attention constituents of the Mississippi Arts Commission:

Many of you have voiced concerns recently over our current economic environment. I have heard about the issues facing your organizations, your budget shortfalls, and the worry in your voice for the future of not only your organizations and projects, but the future of the arts in our beloved state. We at the Mississippi Arts Commission are ready to lead the charge in ensuring a bright tomorrow for our state's artistic and cultural treasures. This is not the first time we have dealt with disaster, but thankfully, we have learned valuable lessons in recovery and renewal that can assist us all during these turbulent times.

Below you will find the information we have to date on recovery and stimulus resources. The information and landscape change daily, and we pledge to keep you informed as quickly as details become available.

The National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) has received a \$50 million appropriation through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) for projects that focus on preservation of jobs in the arts. As mandated by ARRA, 60% will be administered directly through the NEA, with the remaining 40% to be distributed by state arts agencies and regional arts organizations through competitive and qualitative review.

The National Endowment of the Arts Recovery Act Grants

All applicants must be previous NEA award recipients from the past four years.

The NEA has programs, guidelines and applications on their website:

<http://www.nea.gov/recovery/index.html> Application deadline: April 2, 2009

We have contacted all eligible organizations (as provided to us by the NEA) who may apply for this funding. If you have questions about this process, eligibility, or applications please contact the NEA: <http://www.nea.gov/recovery/nea-recovery-act-contacts.html>

Mississippi Arts Commission Recovery Initiative Grants

MAC's portion of ARRA funding will be approximately \$300,000. We are currently creating grant guidelines and details, which need to be approved by the Governor's office and the NEA before any public announcements can be made. Email updates will be sent as soon as the information is posted on the MAC website: <http://www.arts.state.ms.us/>

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies has compiled a number of expanded opportunities that could be available to artists and arts organizations:

<http://www.nasaa-arts.org/nasaanews/stimulus-opportunities.shtml>

Most funding will be delivered through a combination of federal and state opportunities; please contact individual programs for assistance.

There has never been a more important time for us to speak with clarity about the importance of the arts in our state and in our lives. I urge you to join us for MAC's Day at the Capitol: March 24, 2009 from 9:00AM-12:00PM on the First Floor Rotunda of the State Capitol. Now more than ever, elected officials and policy makers need to hear from those of us who vote and take to heart the value of the arts in the lives of all Mississippians; in education, economic development, workforce development, and the day-to-day joy of living.

Sincerely,

Malcolm White
Executive Director
Mississippi Arts Commission