



MARYLAND STATE ARTS COUNCIL

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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW POLL SHOWS STRONG PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS IN MARYLAND

BALTIMORE (February 4, 2014) — At 81%, Marylanders overwhelmingly agree that “a vibrant arts community makes Maryland a better place to live,” according to a new **statewide public opinion survey** released today by the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC). According to the poll results, two out of three Marylanders say the state should encourage and promote artistic expression and access to the arts, with top priorities for state support including art and creativity in communities, exposure to the arts in schools and opportunities for artists to be successful.

“The poll affirms that beyond valuing arts experiences, Marylanders envision the arts as a means of progress in education, community enhancement, cultural awareness and more,” said Hannah Byron, Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Film and the Arts at the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development. “The public perception that the arts are positioned to advance Maryland’s most pressing priorities is well-aligned with the Arts Council’s programs and strategic plan.” Released in October, the five-year plan is online at msac.org/publications.

Taken in consideration with the **\$1 billion annual economic impact** of the nonprofit arts industry and the 12,700 full-time equivalent jobs it supports, the findings of the statewide poll powerfully affirm that Maryland’s investment in the arts advances both economic growth and quality of life across the state.

Key data points from the survey include:

- **The public strongly believes that the State of Maryland should “encourage and promote artistic expression and access to the arts.”** Two-thirds of Marylanders (68%) think the State should play that role.
- **The public in Maryland places an extremely high priority on bringing children in contact with the arts.** 87% of Marylanders want art to be a core subject in school like science, technology, engineering and math.
- **Marylanders express a deep appreciation and pride for the presence of art and artists in their communities.** 86% would like Maryland to be known as a state where artists can be successful; and 72% said, “My life is made more interesting by the arts.”
- **The arts promote cultural connections.** 60% of Marylanders agree that “Artistic expression keeps me in touch with my cultural identity.”
- **Arts are a key asset in the workplace.** One-third or workers in Maryland feel they employ a creative discipline as part of their work.

- **Maryland has a strong artist presence.** A quarter of Marylanders consider themselves artists, with instrumental music being the most common pursuit of self-described artists (31%), followed by writing (15%) and dance (13%).

The statewide survey was conducted by [OpinionWorks](#), an Annapolis-based research and strategy firm. OpinionWorks conducted a telephone survey of 800 randomly selected Maryland adults from May 8-12, 2013 with a questionnaire that averaged 9 minutes in length. According to customary statistical standards, this statewide sample produces a margin of error of no more than $\pm 3.5\%$ at a 95% confidence level. This means that the true results would differ from the survey by no more than that amount in at least 19 out of 20 cases, if every adult resident of the state had been interviewed. To read the full report, visit msac.org/publications.

About the Maryland State Arts Council

The Maryland State Arts Council, an agency of the Maryland Department of Business & Economic Development, Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts, is dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. The mission of the council is to encourage and invest in the advancement of the arts for the people of Maryland. For more information about the Maryland State Arts Council, visit the MSAC web site at www.msac.org or call (410) 767-6555 or TTY 1-800-735-2258.

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