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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**THE CULTURAL ALLIANCE OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY &
THE CULTURAL ALLIANCE OF WESTERN CONNECTICUT
TO COLLABORATE WITH AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS, AND CONNECTICUT'S
OFFICE OF THE ARTS,
IN NEW NATIONAL ARTS ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY**

"In my own philanthropy and business endeavors, I have seen the critical role that the arts play in stimulating creativity and in developing vital communities....the arts have a crucial impact on our economy and are an important catalyst for learning, discovery, and achievement in our country."

–Paul G. Allen, Co-Founder, Microsoft

DANBURY/NORWALK (November 17, 2015) –The Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County and the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut are thrilled to announce that they will be collaborating to assist Americans for the Arts with its latest national economic impact study, Arts & Economic Prosperity V. Americans for the Arts is the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America; its mission is to serve, advance, and lead the network of organizations and individuals who cultivate, promote, sustain, and support the full spectrum of arts in America.

This important research project, for which data collection will begin in January of 2016 throughout Fairfield County, will quantify the economic impact of the arts and culture industry in Fairfield County, providing valuable information on how many jobs and how much revenue the industry generates in our area. Americans for the Arts has conducted similar economic impact studies in more than 250 U.S. communities.

Spinnaker Real Estate Partners, located in Norwalk, has stepped up with funding for the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County's participation with American for the Arts for this important project. "Spinnaker Real Estate Partners is proud to be a sponsor of

the Americans for the Arts' Arts & Economic Prosperity V Study. The arts and cultural offerings in Fairfield County greatly contribute to strengthening local communities through meaningful economic development," stated Kim Morque, President of Spinnaker Real Estate Partners. "Investing in this important study will help demonstrate the vital role of the arts and cultural organizations that make Fairfield County a great place to call home."

In Addition, both Cultural Alliance's are grateful to the Connecticut Office of the Arts' participation as a statewide study partner, as it allowed the organizations to join the study at a reduced rate. Additional funders are sought to insure that this study be as thorough and inclusive as possible.

A diversity of arts and culture organizations from the towns supported by the two Alliances covering all of Fairfield County will participate in the project, collecting intercept surveys at various public events. The survey is a simple one-page anonymous questionnaire that takes less than two minutes to complete. Information gathered will be aggregated with studies done in 150 other communities and regions across the country. The project's final report will be available in June of 2017 and will include aggregate data supplied by participating organizations on revenues, expenses, attendance, staff size, volunteerism, and in-kind support.

"We're excited by the opportunity to once again participate in Americans for the Arts' national effort to document the arts and culture industry's impact in contributing to a robust economy. From creating jobs to generating revenue to supporting tourism, arts and culture is a cornerstone of a vibrant community." said Angela Whitford, Executive Director at the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County. Towns served by the organization include: Bridgeport, Darien, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, Monroe, New Canaan, Norwalk, Shelton, Stamford, Stratford, Trumbull, Weston, Westport, and Wilton.

Lisa Scails, Executive Director of the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, adds, "We understand the importance of ongoing documentation of the tangible ways by which arts and culture impact and underpin a community's economic climate, growth, and sustainability. Through this collaborative undertaking, we'll be able to better serve all of our stakeholders. I look forward to working closely with Angela to produce not just a document, but rather a living, breathing, working one." Towns served by the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut include Danbury, Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield, and Sherman.

The previous study, Arts & Economic Prosperity IV, also included the participation of both Alliances. The results, which were revealed in June of 2012, unequivocally demonstrated that the arts are big business. Nationally, the arts and culture industry is a powerful economic engine, generating \$135 billion dollars of economic activity, supporting 4.1 million full time jobs, generating \$22.2 billion in revenue to local, state and federal governments every year —a yield well beyond their collective \$4 billion in arts allocations.

Findings for Fairfield County included in that document show that there is \$130 million in economic activity created by arts & cultural organizations, supporting over 4,000 jobs annually. In addition, arts & cultural organizations generated an additional \$10.5 million in local and state government revenue, during the time period of the

previous study. Plus, visitors to Fairfield County spent an excess of \$25 per cultural event they attended – above the price of the ticket.

For more information, contact Angela Whitford, Executive Director of the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County, at (203) 256-2329, by email at Angela@CulturalAllianceFC.org or visit www.culturalalliancefc.org If located in northern Fairfield County, call Lisa Scails, Executive Director of the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, at (203) 798-0760, by email at lscails@cawct.org, or go to www.artswesternct.org

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The mission of the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County, based in Norwalk, Connecticut, provides leadership to the cultural organizations, artists, individuals and creative businesses, which make up the vital arts and culture sector, by providing marketing, professional services, and advocacy. The Alliance works to build partnerships with the community at large, promote a unified arts and cultural brand for Fairfield County – FCBuzz.org, and to create a unified voice for its constituency and the communities in which they live, work and play.

The Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, with offices at 287 Main Street, Danbury, Connecticut, is a leader in supporting a vibrant arts and culture community in Northern Fairfield and Southern Litchfield Counties. The Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, a 501c-3, works to ensure better access to arts and culture for all residents and visitors in Greater Danbury. It is supported by public and private funding, corporate sponsors, and by its 185 members including more than 55 arts, history, and cultural organizations.



Department of Economic and
Community Development

Office of the Arts



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