



November 22, 2021

Dear Arts Action Fund Member,

As 2021 draws to a close, we want to remember the resiliency of the arts community this year and to share how you can keep the momentum going next year with a [Year-End contribution to the Arts Action Fund and its Political Action Committee \(PAC\)](#). We are invested in helping the arts community recover financially from this awful COVID-19 pandemic and educating elected leaders on the importance of the arts in our lives, schools, and communities.

When the pandemic shut the country down last year, we developed a technical assistance program to assist artists and arts organizations. We also bolstered our lobbying activities to Congress to specifically include economic relief and eligibility support for gig artists, arts entrepreneurs, and nonprofit, governmental, and commercial arts groups. Your donations to the Arts Action Fund supported **Office Hours with Nina**, our most needed and popular program conducted every week on Zoom. **At no cost to participants**, we have helped thousands of artists and arts groups secure billions of dollars in federal, state, and local aid to help pay the rent, stay afloat, and begin reviving their businesses. I want to share with you some of the **heartfelt testimonials in these participants' own words**:



Office Hours with Nina has been one of our most popular programs since April 2020. With your generous support, we will continue to provide this service in 2022.



Lisa Chang, Finance Manager at Theatre Memphis, TN, “Without Nina’s representation, we would have never been heard. She is THE voice for the arts. As the saying goes, knowledge is power. The knowledge gained through Office Hours with Nina has been priceless. Sharing our experiences has bonded us as a family during this time of uncertainty and frustration. If it weren’t for Nina’s updates on the **Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG)**, the silence would have been deafening. Through these office hours, we discovered we could apply for the **Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC)**. Thank you so very much for your passion for the arts! You are our guardian angel.”





Meryl Ann Butler, Artist and Educator in Virginia Beach, VA, “I couldn’t have survived the pandemic without Nina! As a direct result of attending Office Hours with Nina I have been able to cover my expenses while I pivot toward a new, online version of my business. Perhaps even more valuable, I have used what I learned to help about a dozen other artist friends who were SURE they qualified for nothing at all --- but they also obtained various types of funding. Altogether, with federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (**PUA**), Paycheck Protection Plan (**PPP**), Emergency Injury Disaster Loan (**EIDL**), and other grants, my group and I have received over a quarter million dollars! Nina is so patient and good at explaining, I hope when we have dealt with the fallout of the pandemic emergency, she can offer us a course in additional day-to-day financial and legal aspects of running an arts business, that would be SO valuable!”



Jodi Kaplan, Talent Representative, NY, NY, “The Office Hours with Nina are indispensable to the success of professionals in the field who are handling their own businesses. Those of us who do not have large legal and accounting teams are completely reliant on Nina’s expertise. Nina’s generosity with her time and advice are so helpful - she talked me through successfully receiving a second **PPP** loan, getting forgiveness on my first and second **PPP** loans, ensuring that there is no overlap with **PUA** and **PPP**, and getting awarded a **SVOG** grant.”



Kathleen Spehar, Executive Director of Tallahassee County’s Council on Culture & Arts, FL, “Nina and Morgan are rock stars that have created an accessible, empowering space for all the players in our industry to grow from. It’s a weekly reality check that shows me how artists work, think, discuss business practices, and share knowledge for grant opportunities at places like the National Endowment for the Arts (**NEA**). For our city and county leadership, we’ve been armed with facts and wording to make the case for including the arts in all local and state block grant funding for our community. Our advocacy has allowed local **CARES** and **American Rescue Plan (ARP)** stimulus grant programs to include the arts. These weekly sessions affirm how much support artists need to make smart choices for their businesses, and how small businesses/organizations nurture the heart and soul of this country.”



Arts Action Fund's Advocacy Impact in 2021

Along with the victories we helped make possible for individual artists and arts organizations, we also made great legislative strides in Congress and in the White House. **At the beginning of 2021, we urged the Biden Administration to fervently support the arts with a petition signed by thousands of Arts Action Fund Members.**



President Biden signing the American Rescue Plan into law at the Oval Office.

Within the first 12 months of **President Biden** taking office, the White House advanced several financial investments to support the arts:

- All three federal grantmaking cultural agencies received a second allocation from the **American Rescue Plan** to provide COVID-19 relief to local, state, and national organizations across the country with the National Endowment for the Arts (**NEA**) and National Endowment for the Humanities (**NEH**) at **\$135 million each** and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (**IMLS**) at **\$200 million**.
- The Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (**SVOG**) program within the Small Business Administration received an **additional \$1.25 billion**. The program was also assigned high level political appointees to help expedite getting the money out faster to performing arts organizations and venues, talent representatives and producers, movie theaters, and those museums with fixed seating auditoriums.
- After four years of the Trump Administration attempting to zero out the **NEA** and **NEH**, the Biden Administration immediately reversed course and proposed a **budget increase to \$201 million** for FY 2022.



Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez attends the Española: 100% New Mexico Mural Project celebration.

On the congressional front, Freshman **Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez** (D-NM), along with **Rep. Jay Obernolte** (R-CA) introduced a bipartisan bill in October, entitled “**Creative Economy Revitalization Act**” (**CERA**). This bill would invest in jobs for artists and other creative workers, in support of local economies harmed by COVID-19. **CERA** would authorize **\$300 million** through a grant program at the U.S. Department of Labor, in coordination with the **NEA**. These grants would go to local, state, tribal, and workforce agencies, as well as public and private nonprofit entities, to support

business initiatives to employ creative workers. **The bill is endorsed by the Arts Action Fund** and over 175 organizations and unions, representing arts and culture workers across the country.

What's Our Plan for 2022?

As we move into the 2022 mid-term election year, we're building on our legislative successes in Congress and our COVID-19 relief technical assistance through **Office Hours with Nina** on Zoom to provide you with the following:

- Produce a new arts webinar series with expert certified public accountants and attorneys on the **Fundamentals of Best Business and Advocacy Practices**.
- Update our customized one-pager **State Voter Factsheets** to educate arts advocates, like you, on the most up-to-date voting rules, regulations, and deadlines to make your vote count. Following the 2020 election, many states adopted sweeping election law changes.
- Mobilize our grassroots arts advocates to help pass increased funding and policies for the arts, arts education, a jobs bill, and a deadline extension to the SVOG program, also known as the **Save Our Stages Extension Act**.
- Provide you with **up-to-the-minute breaking news** through e-blasts, social media, easy-to-use tools to contact Congress, and dynamic web content.
- Update our annual customized **State Arts Factsheets** with the newest facts and figures to arm you with the strongest research-based talking points for the arts.
- Produce our biennial **2022 Congressional Arts Report Card** that provides you with scored information on how your Senators and Members of Congress are voting on key arts-related legislation.
- Make **Arts Action Fund Political Action Committee (PAC)** financial contributions to federal pro-arts candidates running for election in 2022 based on either an incumbent's Congressional Arts Report Card voting record or a new candidate's answers to our arts questionnaire.

[Will you make a year-end contribution to the Arts Action Fund and its PAC?](#)

Without your investment in us, this work would not be possible. With your support, we helped thousands of artists and arts groups secure federal COVID-19 relief funds. We also built a strong pro-arts Congress. But with every election, we need to raise more money for the Arts Action Fund and its PAC to help support pro-arts candidates financially in their election efforts. You can help us keep the momentum going. **Your generosity during this holiday season is so very appreciated.**



Nina Ozlu Tunceli
Executive Director