

For immediate release:

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## Did you know: May 12-19 is Creative Economy Week, all over Wisconsin!

op-ed by Jerry Deschane, Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities, and Anne Katz, Director, Arts Wisconsin

The third annual *Creative Economy Week*, hosted in partnership by Arts Wisconsin and the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, shines a spotlight on economic opportunities, civic vitality and engagement through the arts, and the arts as an investment for Wisconsin.

Kicking off on Saturday, May 12, *Creative Economy Week* ends with the statewide Downtown Open House on Saturday, May 19.

*Creative Economy Week* is a great way to celebrate the blossoming creative economy movement in Wisconsin, through social media and interaction across the state, and to share the ways in which the arts play a vital role in our economy, communities, and everyday lives.

Communities around the state are celebrating *Creative Economy Week* with programs and promotion. Here's how we are celebrating:

- **The spotlight is on arts centers throughout the state.** The League's *May Municipalities* magazine features arts centers and other arts programs around Wisconsin, and we'll be sharing images and info on social media throughout the week.
- **A statewide proclamation** supported by cities and villages across Wisconsin (if your municipality hasn't signed on yet, there's still time to do so!).
- **Social media shout-outs and shares...**as much as we can generate!

In addition, we'll be releasing *21st Century Wisconsin*, a report that provides a snapshot and shines a spotlight on our state's abundant creative resources – people, organizations, businesses and communities.

The creative economy is a sector ripe for investment to move Wisconsin forward, through:

- Jobs, workforce development, and economic vitality: growing and sustaining prosperity in every Wisconsin community
- Educational advancement, skills training, and improved academic performance: preparing all of our children for the 21st century world and workforce
- Civic engagement and community connections: bringing people together for understanding and service
- True prosperity and opportunity: advancing healthy, vibrant, livable communities and enriching the lives of everyone, everywhere in Wisconsin. Investment in the creative sector means more vibrant, attractive and livable communities.

Investment in the arts, creativity and education is directly tied to Wisconsin's local, regional, and statewide success:

- Arts and cultural experiences account for a significant number of small businesses that help stimulate the economy through tourism and neighborhood development, as well as creating community assets that improve quality of life measures that businesses and their employee's value. This in turn helps to incubate and grow additional businesses, broadens the tax base, and attracts tourists.
- The nonprofit arts and cultural sector in Wisconsin generates \$535 million in economic activity, \$65 million in local and state revenue, \$479 million in resident income, and employs nearly 52,000 full-time jobs among 9,100 businesses. Creative development is evident and growing in every corner of the state.
- According to Dun & Bradstreet, Wisconsin's creative sector currently encompasses almost 10,000 businesses and employs nearly 43,000 people in full-time jobs - mostly with small, entrepreneurial companies. There's great potential for growth in sustainable, community-based jobs and businesses in this sector.
- The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) have announced that \$763.6 billion of current-dollar GDP in 2015 was attributable to arts and culture. Wisconsin's economic impact was a whopping \$9.1 billion. The Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account is the first federal effort to provide in-depth analysis of the arts and cultural sector's contributions to current-dollar gross domestic product (GDP) as a measure of the final dollar value of all goods and services produced in the United States.



To succeed in the creative economy takes a sense of common purpose and goals, persistence, focus, leadership, planning combined with flexibility, big-picture thinking, a can-do attitude, and the ability to admit and learn from challenges and celebrate big and small successes.

***We'll end with a call to action:*** The League of Municipalities and Arts Wisconsin know that creativity, innovation, imagination and entrepreneurship are the hallmarks of the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy at home and around the world., and that coordinated, pro-active asset-based development vision and action are the way to future growth and stability. Wisconsin, let's seize the day and use investment in the arts and creativity to drive economic, educational and civic success.

More info at [www.artswisconsin.org](http://www.artswisconsin.org) and [www.lwm-info.org](http://www.lwm-info.org).

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