

“The arts give us a new and different perspective on the world. Things are seen in full color instead of black and white.”

Dr. Carl Price, Immediate Past President,  
Springfield Regional Arts Council

Springfield continues to thrive as a creative community. It has a rich cultural life and deep cultural roots. Boasting hundreds of arts and cultural attractions from museums and live theatres to galleries and movie screens, the Springfield area continues to foster accessibility to arts and cultural activities for all residents and visitors. The arts in Springfield also have become a national template of success for effective collaboration. With public funding for arts and culture on a decline locally and nationally, but a noticeable increase and interest in arts and culture offerings, organizations have found ways to work together and look for unique funding opportunities. Organizations and artists also have taken steps to increase awareness regarding the impact of their services in other sectors in the community such as education, economic development, quality of life, civic engagement, and poverty.

## BLUE RIBBONS

### Collaborative Efforts

Collaboration continues to be a blue ribbon for Springfield and Greene County arts and cultural organizations since the 2005 *Community Focus* report. The establishment of the Arts Programming Sustainability Initiative (APSI) by the Community Foundation of the Ozarks in 2009 has led to numerous successful collaborative projects including:

- **2010** - Springfield being named the second community in the nation by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to work on a long-range plan for arts education with area arts organizations and the Springfield Public School District;
- **2010** - Development of the Cultural Investment Fund to help cover the down-payment costs associated with booking major performers, shows, or exhibits; and
- **2010-2011** – Continued success of “The 10 Weeks Festival” held each spring to highlight Springfield’s cultural offerings under one brand and raise money for arts in education and basic needs for children in Springfield Public Schools through the Care to Learn Fund.



*Flights of Fancy at Springfield-Branson National Airport, May 2010.*

IDEA Commons, is another product of community collaboration, bringing together corporations, the University, lofts, non-profits,

For the first time in the nation, three internationally renowned watercolor exhibits were on display in summer 2011 in partnership with the Springfield Art Museum, Springfield Regional Arts Council (SRAC), Missouri State University’s Brick City Gallery, and the Springfield-Branson National Airport’s Sky Gallery.

Missouri State University’s urban research park, the



retail space, and promoting arts and culture as an important component of business and innovation.

The establishment of the Springfield Theatre Alliance has resulted in a new publication of live theatres in Springfield and annual media announcements of the theatre seasons. Additionally, the partnership with the Downtown Springfield Association on a program called D-Tix offers limited day-of performance tickets to plays and musicals at half the box office price.

The SRAC, Urban Districts Alliance, and Springfield-Greene County Park Board provide cohesive information on arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities with a bi-annual printed publication as well as online at [springfielddarts.org](http://springfielddarts.org) and [itsalldowntown.com](http://itsalldowntown.com).

A red flag identified in the 2007 *Community Focus* report, shared human resources has continued to be a consistent way of cutting overhead costs for arts and culture organizations. The SRAC continues to share its finance director to serve as the fiscal agent for the following groups: Missouri Film Alliance of Springfield, First Friday Art Walk, Fresh Gallery, and the Missouri Literary Festival, among others. Shared resources also are available for arts organizations via The Creamery Arts Center, which was listed as a blue ribbon in the 2005 *Community Focus* report.

### Emerging Arts Organizations

With the presence of quality fine arts, music, theatre, and communication departments available at local universities, an increase in artists, new organizations, initiatives, and festivals interested in fostering local creative culture have emerged.

- Canvas
- Eclectic Endeavors
- LemonDrop
- Men’s Chorus of the Ozarks
- Missouri State University Gerontology Exhibition
- Moxie Cinema (established as a non-profit in 2010)
- Springfield Shakespeare Project
- TAG Magazine

### Tracking Economic and Educational Impact of Arts and Culture

Arts and culture organizations have been in need of accurate data that provides detail about the creative make-up of their city in terms of economic planning and development to make a strong



Art in the Park 2010, photo by Babs Bakie

Arts and Culture Snapshot				
	2003-04	2005-06	2007-08	2009-10
Arts and Cultural Organizations	43	50	56	64
Museums	3	7	9	9
Local Arts Festivals and Events**	12	19	56	43

\*\*Source: Springfield Regional Arts Council. (Note: 2009-2010 decreases in festivals/events most likely due to lack of funding and resources or combining of events to maximize benefits and attendance)

case for investing in arts and culture. The SRAC has taken strides, in partnership with the Missouri Arts Council and Americans for the Arts, to track more closely and consistently the impact of area artists and arts and cultural organizations. For 2009 and 2010, the SRAC has gathered data on attendance numbers, consumer spending, and employment.

Economic Impact of the Arts, Springfield, MO 2009 and 2010		
	2009	2010
Total Economic Impact (spending by organization and audiences, excluding admission)	\$11,448,122.00	\$16,323,833.00
Total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Jobs (FTE describes the total amount of labor employed)	346	431
Total Local and State Government Revenue Funds Generated (Revenue to local and state government from taxes, i.e. income, property or sales) as well as funds from license, utility, and filing fees.	\$1,224,903.00	\$2,054,028.00

Americans for the Arts Arts and Economic Prosperity Calculator

The SRAC, in partnership with the Lighthouse Child & Family Development Center, Missouri State University's Sociology Department, and Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation's (OACAC) Head Start, finished the first local study on the impact of arts in early childhood development. The results of the assessment suggested that children who participated in the



SRAC's Mini Monet program

arts education program showed improvement in fine motor skills, expressing ideas through language, cumulative development, and an appreciation of their own and others' artwork.

These studies help reveal the strong inter-relationships between arts and culture and economic development, education, quality of life, and minimizing poverty. Arts and culture also has been listed as

a key component in attracting and retaining young professionals. According to the recent findings in the Next Cities™ Dashboard Report commissioned by the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Springfield was ranked 17th out of 49 cities in the Mighty Micros category of the Next Cities™ List. Mighty Micros have city populations between 100,000 and 200,000 people. Next Cities™ are places with the assets and amenities that attract and keep a young educated workforce, which include bustling city centers and a vibrant art and music scene.

## RED FLAGS

### Audience Development\*

With a multitude of social networking options, Internet resources, and multiple cable and radio stations, the need for more effective marketing and tracking audience demographics is evident for arts and cultural organizations. Organizations are in search of new and more effective ways of cross-promoting and marketing their programs and events as well as finding the funds to do so. Specific ideas to combat this red flag are being discussed and have been identified in the new community strategic planning process.

Building an appreciation and understanding for arts and culture in area youth continues to be a challenge. Although 50 percent of arts and culture organizations reported offering free educational outreach to local and rural communities and schools during the SRAC's 2010 assessment, there needs to be a stronger emphasis on coordinating those efforts and funding regional outreach, a red flag in previous *Community Focus* reports. Current plans are underway for such coordination through the Arts Programming Sustainability Initiative (APSI), Springfield Public Schools, and the Springfield Regional Arts Council.

### Sustainable Funding\*

Despite the healthy attendance at artistic events and a positive increase in artists and organizations, the current economic climate and ever-changing cultural trends require concentration on sustainable funding for arts and cultural institutions. With only 23 percent of local arts and cultural organizations having an endowment, a collaborative development campaign is in process under the leadership of the SRAC. Also, the Community Foundation's Arts Programming Sustainability Initiative (APSI) continues to provide planned giving strategies through the newly established legacy society, Stand Up for the Arts.

A future public funding source for supporting arts and cultural organizations is also being explored through the community strategic planning process. Research conducted by the Arts, Culture and Tourism committee for the strategic planning process showed that 100 percent of the benchmark cities found in the Next Cities™ report that provided data had a local public funding model for arts and culture. This report listed Springfield as a second-tier city, which placed it in the top 50-74 percent range, for after-hours opportunities for young professionals.

### Organizational Capacity Building

There is a new focus on quality and consistent leadership amongst area arts and cultural organizations. It is difficult for small or developing arts organizations to find quality members for their operating Boards of Directors, which are necessary if organizations are to grow. Also, quality but inexpensive professional development opportunities, including management skills, grant writing, and effective fundraising tools need to be more available for arts and culture administrators.

It is also difficult for emerging and established professional artists, performers, and writers to make a full-time career in Springfield. Although university and college teaching opportunities do allow artists to support themselves while pursuing their art forms, on-going efforts need to be made to find paying jobs for the area's artists.

\* Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 Community Focus Report