Strengthening the Arts in Higher Education

Narric Rome
Americans for the Arts

Brea Heidelberg
Association of Arts Administration Educators

Stephanie Milling
Univ. of South Carolina, NDEO
Higher Education & the Arts

• U.S. House Committee action on Higher Ed Reauthorization of the “Higher Education Act”
• Second time issue brief on higher education
• Collaboration and information from:
  • Higher Education associations (Amer. Council on Education)
  • The Association of Arts Administration Educators
  • Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design (AICAD)
  • International Council of Fine Arts Deans (ICFAD)
  • Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP)
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• Urge Congress to:
  • Support the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program (PSLF).
  • Support affordability and accessibility of higher education.
  • Support financial aid that encourages students to pursue areas of interest.
  • Ensure for-profits are properly monitored.
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Number of college arts degrees conferred annually rose steadily from 75,000 to 139,000 from 1997 to 2013.
Percentages of Graduates Working in Fields Related to Study

91% of Master’s Level Graduates in Theatre
70% of Undergraduate Theatre Majors
83% of Master’s Level Studio Art Graduates
70% of Undergraduate Studio Art Majors

Comparatively: between 53%-56% of Non-Arts Graduates in Accounting, Mechanical Engineering, Biology, and Journalism
Debt Impact

35% of recent alumni...
14% of non-recent alumni...

Reported a “major impact” on career & education choices

Financial aid options need to increase, not decrease!
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The cost of an arts education: $$$

Music Performance education, for example:
1:1 instruction, facilities, production expenses
Importance of Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

- PSLF can help alleviate many of the ripple effects of the high costs associated with higher education:
  - The income-based payment plan can help borrowers who may otherwise feel forced to forgo life events
  - The requirement to work in public service can positively influence career choices
- In addition to helping borrowers, this incentive to work for 501(c)(3) and other nonprofit organizations can serve the larger arts ecosystem.
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Oversight of predatory institutions needs to increase, not decrease
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**Arts Students Learn Many Important Workplace Skills**

- Creativity
- Critical thinking & analysis
- Collaboration & Teamwork
- Improved work based on feedback from others
- Broad knowledge & education
- Leadership
- Research
- Persuasive Speaking & Clear Writing
- Project Management
- Technology
- Artistic technique
Entrepreneurship

16% have founded their own organization, compared to 4% of the general population.
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Self Employment and the Gig Economy

80% of arts alumni have been self-employed at some point in their careers.
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The Asks:

• Support the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program
• Making College Affordable
• Support financial aid that allows students to pursue interest and talent
• Ensure for-profits colleges are monitored
Susan A. Davis, California (Chairman)
Joe Courtney, Connecticut
Mark Takano, California
Pramila Jayapal, Washington
Josh Harder, California
Andy Levin, Michigan
Ilhan Omar, Minnesota
David J. Trone, Maryland
Susie Lee, Nevada
Lori Trahan, Massachusetts
Joaquin Castro, Texas
Raul M. Grijalva, Arizona
Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Suzanne Bonamici, Oregon
Alma Adams, North Carolina
Donald Norcross, New Jersey

Lloyd K. Smucker, Pennsylvania (Ranking Member)
Brett Guthrie, Kentucky
Glenn Grothman, Wisconsin
Elise M. Stefanik, New York
Jim Banks, Indiana
Mark Walker, North Carolina
James Comer, Kentucky
Ben Cline, Virginia
Russ Fulcher, Idaho
Steven C. Watkins, Jr., Kansas
Daniel Meuser, Pennsylvania
William R. Timmons, IV, SC
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<th><strong>Republicans (13):</strong></th>
<th><strong>Democrats (11):</strong></th>
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<td>Lamar Alexander, (Tennessee) Chair</td>
<td>Patty Murray (Washington), Ranking Member</td>
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