



NEWS AND INFORMATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

01/22/2004

Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley to Receive the 2004 National Award for Local Arts Leadership

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors will honor **Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley** with the 2004 National Award for Local Arts Leadership. This award honors a public official who has demonstrated outstanding leadership in the advancement of the arts at the local level.

The award will be presented at the Mayors Arts Luncheon on Thursday, January 22 as part of the Conference of Mayors 72nd winter meeting which will take place at the Capital Hilton in Washington, D.C. The National Award for Local Arts Leadership is part of a series of Public Leadership in the Arts Awards given annually by Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors since 1997. In addition to Mayor O'Malley, recipients of the other awards are: **Governor Edward G. Rendell** of Pennsylvania for State Arts Leadership, actor and producer **Henry Winkler** for Legendary Artist Award, and singer **Tony Bennett** for Arts Legacy Award.

"Mayor O'Malley, a musician himself, truly understands the value of an arts education to a child's life and has made great strides in restoring the arts to Baltimore's schools," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "Moreover, as an elected official, he also understands the importance of using the arts to help enhance Baltimore's quality of life, while at the same time, realizing its economic potential."

"We're delighted to honor Mayor O'Malley for supporting the arts in schools," said Hempstead, NY Mayor and Conference President James Garner. "His leadership and vision have made a significant difference in the lives of the residents of his city—especially the children. Further, his work is an outstanding example to his fellow mayors of how the arts can be used to benefit a city economically."

Mayor Martin O'Malley has infused new energy into the arts community in Baltimore by instituting several arts enhancing initiatives and education programs. He elevated the city's local arts agency to a cabinet level position as part of the Office of Promotion and the Arts. He supported new Arts and Entertainment Districts and has urged city agencies to make them

work, particularly in the areas of new streetscape and redevelopment. He also created a Cultural Tourism Council linking the arts with tourism.

In 1999, he created the *Be Instrumental* initiative in order to refurbish Fine Arts Education programs in the Baltimore City Schools. Mayor O'Malley directed the campaign and was determined to provide all students in the school system with a high quality arts education. The *Be Instrumental* initiative resulted in: putting more than \$1.4 million worth of new musical instruments into the schools; raising \$400,000 to support new fine arts programs; hiring 100 new music and art teachers; and increasing the school based music and arts programs across the entire school system by 50%.

Mayor O'Malley has proposed future initiatives to increase funding to small community arts organizations, expand Baltimore's mural program, revise the city's percent for art and street performers ordinances, and redevelop commercial property to serve as artist studio and exhibition spaces.

"The arts are an important key to economic development. And in a city as vibrant, diverse, and historic as Baltimore, the ability to cultivate and leverage our cultural assets remains a primary mission. The impact of the arts yields extensive benefits to citizens and visitors, young and old, and has been a vital component in advancing the quality of life in our city," said Mayor O'Malley.

Previous mayoral winners of the National Award for Local Arts Leadership are Bart Peterson of Indianapolis (2003), Sharpe James of Newark (2002), Wellington Webb of Denver (2001), Vincent Cianci, Jr. of Providence (2000), Joseph Riley of Charleston, SC (1999), Marc Morial of New Orleans (1998), and Richard Daley of Chicago (1997).

Founded in 1933, the U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with a population of 30,000 or more. The primary roles of the Conference of Mayors are to: promote the development of effective national urban/suburban policy; strengthen federal-city relationships; ensure that federal policy meets urban needs; provide mayors with leadership and management tools; and create a forum in which mayors can share ideas and information.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

###