



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Americans for the Arts and the United States Conference of Mayors Present 2006 National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership to U.S. Representative Jim Leach

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America, in conjunction with the United States Conference of Mayors, today presented the 2006 National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership to U.S. Representative Jim Leach of Iowa. The award, which recognizes distinguished service on behalf of the arts, was presented at the 2006 Congressional Arts Breakfast on Capitol Hill. The breakfast, organized jointly with the Congressional Arts Caucus, kicks off Arts Advocacy Day.

Congressman Leach was selected for the Congressional Arts Leadership Award for his strong commitment to the arts. He has been a stalwart leader in advocating for increased public funding for the arts and humanities in America. As a longtime member of the Congressional Arts Caucus, he has consistently been one of five co-sponsors of an annual House floor amendment, which has successfully increased appropriation funding for the National Endowments of the Arts and the Humanities for the last several years. Mr. Leach has also co-sponsored legislation allowing artists to claim a fair-market value tax deduction when donating their work to charity, and supported the reauthorization of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

"Jim Leach exemplifies true bipartisan leadership in the arts," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "We are very pleased to honor and recognize his extraordinary dedication to advancing the arts for all Americans."

The National Award for Congressional 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. Earlier this year, the Local and State Arts Leadership Awards were presented to Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell and Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack, respectively.

The 2006 National Award for Excellence in Arts Programs for Youth was presented to New Orleans Center for Creative Arts | Riverfront.

"Access to the arts adds to our quality of life; and Rep. Leach has enhanced our lives through his support of the arts. His contributions to our nation's communities are immeasurable and we honor him for his vision," said United States Conference of Mayors President and Long Beach Mayor Beverly O'Neill.

Previous recipients of the National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership include Rep. Christopher Shays of Connecticut (2005), Rep. David Obey of Wisconsin (2004), Sen. Thad Cochran of Mississippi (2003), Rep. Steve Horn of California (2002), Rep. Norm Dicks of Washington (2001), Sen. Robert Bennett of Utah and Rep. Nancy Johnson of Connecticut (2000), Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and Rep. Mike Castle of Delaware (1999), Sen. Slade Gorton of Washington and Rep. Louise Slaughter of New York (1998), and Sen. James Jeffords of Vermont and Rep. Rick Lazio of New York (1997).

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.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.

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