



## NEWS AND INFORMATION

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

06/23/2008

### **Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors Present 2008 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards**

MIAMI, FL — Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors will present the **2008 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards** to **Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman, Missouri Governor Matt Blunt, singer/songwriter Gloria Estefan, and musician and producer Emilio Estefan, Jr.**

The awards honor elected officials and artists or arts organizations that have demonstrated outstanding leadership in the advancement of the arts and will be presented on Monday, June 23 at 9:00 a.m. as part of The United States Conference of Mayors' 76th annual meeting held this year in Miami, Florida. The awards have been given annually by Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors since 1997.

"Mayor Goodman's and Governor Blunt's support of the arts exemplify how investment in the arts translates into community growth, prosperity and vitality," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "Their leadership in the arts should be an inspiration to all public office figures. In addition, we are proud to honor Gloria and Emilio Estefan for their ability to transcend and bring together various cultures through the power of music."

"Every year, The U.S. Conference of Mayors recognizes the efforts of those who believe as much as we do, that the arts are the heart of our society. Arts and culture help shape a city's quality of life, but mayors also understand the connection between the arts and business and the arts' impact on the local economy," said Tom Cochran, executive director of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Following are brief descriptions of the 2008 Public Leadership recipients:

Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman will receive the 2008 National Award for Local Arts Leadership for championing the arts as a means to spurring downtown revitalization. He

ordered suspension and rewriting of zoning ordinances which previously prevented artist live/work sites downtown. Mayor Goodman brought forth a city Percent for the Arts ordinance and used his influence to make it law. Today, 1% of the city's capital construction budget will be spent on art, a stunning advance in a state which loathes taxes and government expenditures of all kinds.

Missouri Governor Matt Blunt will receive the 2008 National Award for State Arts Leadership for steadily increasing the annual appropriations for the arts in the state of Missouri. Under his leadership, state funding for the arts has gone up approximately 700%, bringing the Missouri Arts Council's current appropriation to a total of \$8.3 million. In three years, Governor Blunt's leadership has resulted in increasing Missouri's public funding for the arts from \$500,000 in 2005 to \$8.3 million in 2008. Since he first took office in 2005, close to 1,750 grants totaling approximately \$15 million have been awarded to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations throughout the state.

Gloria Estefan and Emilio Estefan, Jr. will each receive the National Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts for their contributions as artists and humanitarians and life-long support of music. Named the "Queen of Latin Pop," Gloria Estefan is among the top 100 best selling music artists, with over 90 million albums sold worldwide and 15.5 millions in the United States. With five Grammy Awards and several number one hits, she is the most successful crossover performer in Latin music to date. Married to Gloria, Emilio Estefan, Jr., is a Cuban-American of Lebanese ancestry, who is a musician and producer. Emilio has received five Grammy Awards, is a member of the Songwriters Hall of Fame, and serves on the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities., Jr. Estefan's first taste of celebrity came as a member of the Miami Sound Machine, a major international band that had several number one hit songs, including "Get on Your Feet" and "Conga."

**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](http://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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