



Visual Art Society
BRYAN - COLLEGE STATION

July 14, 2022

Brazos Valley Art League, Inc.
dba Visual Art Society of Bryan-College Station
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Dear friends and art lovers:

I am writing to ask for your support to continue the **Aggieland Art Trail** and our volunteer mission of supporting art and artists in the Bryan-College Station area. The Aggieland Art Trail showcases the art of our community in a new, exciting, self-guided format. The Aggieland Art Trail was created in 2021 by members of the **Visual Art Society of B-CS**, a fifty-year-old, all volunteer, non-profit 501c3 organization.

An ACBV Annual Programing and Marketing Grant in 2020-21 jump-started the event which evolved into a map brochure and virtual guide to the local public art in our community. With the click of the QR code, guests can access information never before compiled about the public art at Texas A&M University, Veteran's Park and the cities of Bryan and College Station. Also included in the Aggieland Art Trail are 11 galleries and museums, 10 cafes including over 95 murals, statues and sculptures! There was a great response to the event in 2021 and our organization realizes the potential to build the local economy and art awareness by continuing to promote the art in our community through this vehicle.

Research shows that key decision-makers and leaders understand that the arts can be an important part of a city's economic development and growth strategy ([8 Ways the Arts Can Boost Your Local Economy](#), National League of Cities.) The Americans for the Arts publication, "[10 Reasons to Support the Arts in 2021](#)" on our next page, emphasizes the reasons why an investment in artists and art organizations is vital to a community and the nation, including: arts unify communities, strengthen the economy, spark creativity and generate revenue to local businesses.

We are asking for your sponsorship of the **Aggieland Art Trail** and our mission to support art and artists in our community. The brochure sample is included. Our hope is to print thousands of brochures and make them available at local hotels and businesses. If you are a supporter, you, your business or organization will be prominently listed. Please donate to this worthwhile cause.

To donate, go to [Aggielandarttrail.com](#) or [visualartsociety.org](#), click the DONATE link at the top of the main page or mail a check to the address above. Our first brochure printing is Oct. 19 (the day after [Brazos Valley Gives](#), so please donate soon to be included on the inaugural brochure. Donor names are updated on subsequent printings. If you have questions, please email us at [contact@visualartsociety.org](#) or call 979-464-9027. Please contact us if we can be of service to you. Thank you for your support as we continue to serve our community!

Sincerely,

Jami Bevens
President, Visual Art Society of Bryan-College Station



Top 10 Reasons to Support the Arts in 2022

The arts are fundamental to our humanity. They ennoble and inspire us—fostering creativity, empathy, and beauty. The arts also strengthen our communities socially, educationally, and economically—benefits that persist even during a pandemic that has been devastating to the arts. The following 10 reasons show why an investment in artists, creative workers, and arts organizations is vital to the nation’s post-pandemic healing and recovery.

1. **Arts unify communities.** 72% of Americans believe “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity” and 73% agree that the arts “helps me understand other cultures better”—a perspective observed across all demographic and economic categories.
2. **Arts improve individual well-being.** 81% of the population says the arts are a “positive experience in a troubled world,” 69% of the population believe the arts “lift me up beyond everyday experiences,” and 73% feel the arts give them “pure pleasure to experience and participate in.”
3. **Arts strengthen the economy.** The nation’s arts and culture sector—nonprofit, commercial, education—is an \$876.7 billion industry that supports 4.6 million jobs (2020). That is 4.2% of the nation’s economy—a larger share of GDP than powerhouse sectors such as agriculture, transportation, and utilities. The arts boast a \$33 billion international trade surplus (2019). The arts accelerate economic recovery: a growth in arts employment has a positive and causal effect on overall employment.
4. **Arts drive tourism and revenue to local businesses.** The *nonprofit* arts industry alone generates \$166.3 billion in economic activity annually—spending by organizations *and their audiences*—which supports 4.6 million jobs and generates \$27.5 billion in government revenue. Arts attendees spend \$31.47 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on items such as meals, parking, and lodging—vital income for local businesses. Arts travelers are ideal tourists, staying longer and spending more to seek out authentic culture experiences.
5. **Arts improve academic performance.** Students engaged in arts learning have higher GPAs, standardized test scores, and college-going rates as well as lower drop-out rates. These academic benefits are reaped by students across all socio-economic strata. Yet the Department of Education reports that access to arts education for students of color is significantly lower than for their white peers. 91% of Americans believe that arts are part of a well-rounded K-12 education.
6. **Arts spark creativity and innovation.** *Creativity* is among the top five applied skills sought by business leaders—per the Conference Board’s *Ready to Innovate* report—with 72% saying creativity is of “high importance” when hiring. Research on creativity shows that Nobel laureates in the sciences are 17 times more likely to be actively engaged as an *arts maker* than other scientists.
7. **Arts have social impact.** University of Pennsylvania researchers have demonstrated that a high concentration of the arts in a city leads to higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower poverty rates.
8. **Arts improve healthcare.** Nearly one-half of the nation’s healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and even staff. 78% deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.
9. **Arts for the health and well-being of our military.** The arts heal the mental, physical, and moral injuries of war for military servicemembers and Veterans, who rank the creative arts therapies in the top four (out of 40) interventions and treatments. Across the military continuum, the arts promote resilience during pre-deployment, deployment, and the reintegration of military servicemembers, Veterans, their families, and caregivers into communities.
10. **Arts Strengthen Mental Health.** The arts are an effective resource in reducing depression and anxiety and increasing life satisfaction. Just 30 minutes of active arts activities daily can combat the ill effects of isolation and loneliness associated with COVID-19.