

Candidate Views

Courtney Watson

County Council: District 1

1. What is your philosophy of public support for the arts? How will this be reflected in your policies and budgets?

Art and particularly public art should be an integral party of our community. I have reflected this view in my role as a Board of Education member by providing resources to support the top music education program in the state, as well as dance and visual arts programs that are models for other school systems. On the County Council, I supported a public arts component of the legislation that allows for the redevelopment of downtown Columbia.

2. National studies show that students who are involved in the arts have higher grades, score better on standardized tests (on average, they score 53 points higher on verbal SAT test scores and 37 points higher in math), have better attendance records, and are more active in community affairs than other students. The Maryland State Board of Education has adopted the goal that 100% of Maryland's students will participate in fine arts programs in order to meet the content and achievement standards established by the State. This goal places the arts – dance, music, theatre and visual arts – on the same level as other core subject areas including reading, math, science, and social studies. How will your administration support the achievement of this goal?

The Board of Education makes decisions regarding where subject matter falls in the priority of public education. However, the Howard County Board has typically supported fine arts to a degree that surpasses many counties in Maryland. My role as a County Council member is to continue to support the Board of Education's budget, while encouraging greater efficiencies, so that resources are available to continue the outstanding public education that our schools provide.

3. There are nearly 600 arts-related businesses in Howard County that employ 2,200 people . The non-profit arts sector alone, which is made up of 16 arts organizations, adds \$4.4 million to our local economy annually (\$3.1 million in direct revenues and \$1.3 million in secondary spending). How will your administration recognize and further this component of the county's economic development?

The public art that has been required in the redevelopment of downtown Columbia will help attract businesses to the county and will support our economic development efforts, and this will in turn support the arts community. Funds provided to HC Tourism Council will also help support bringing tourists to Howard County to patronize the arts community.

Robert Flannagan

County Council: District 1

1. What is your philosophy of public support for the arts? How will this be reflected in your policies and budgets?

During my tenure as Chairman of the Howard County Delegation to the House of Delegates, I was successful in leading the effort to obtain bonding authority necessary to fund the James Rouse Theatre at Wilde Lake High School. This a good example of government support for the arts that is affordable, practical and cost effective. This project was pragmatic, content neutral and had broad support in the Howard County Community. As such it reflects my philosophy of support for the arts.

2. National studies show that students who are involved in the arts have higher grades, score better on standardized tests (on average, they score 53 points higher on verbal SAT test scores and 37 points higher in math), have better attendance records, and are more active in community affairs than other students. The Maryland State Board of Education has adopted the goal that 100% of Maryland's students will participate in fine arts programs in order to meet the content and achievement standards established by the State. This goal places the arts – dance, music, theatre and visual arts – on the same level as other core subject areas including reading, math, science, and social studies. How will your administration support the achievement of this goal?

My experience with my children convinced me that engagement in the arts can be essential to many individuals reaching their full potential as students, citizens and individuals. Their opportunities to participate in the arts resulted from many devoted individuals in Howard County's private and public institutions including our school system. I am most grateful that all my children were provided meaningful exposure to the arts and would want to provide that opportunity to every Howard County child.

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Howard County's high quality of life is critical to its success in the competition to attract talented individuals and successful businesses. Quality of life encompasses a broad variety of factors. These definitely include the opportunity (i) to enjoy the arts (ii) to participate in the arts (iii) to volunteer, find employment and/or profit from the arts. My goal as a member of the County Council will be to promote and defend Howard County's quality of life in all its essential aspects.

Ken Ulman
County Executive

1. What is your philosophy of public support for the arts? How will this be reflected in your policies and budgets?

The arts community has been integral to creating and sustaining our strong quality of life in Howard County for decades. Local arts institutions and venues are invaluable to residents and put Howard County on the map regionally and nationally. Public funds should support the arts, and my commitment to supporting the arts has been reflected in my budget each year. I am proud that Americans for the Arts recognized our commitment to the arts with the National Award for County Arts Leadership and that we have expanded our commitment by incorporating public art requirements into the Downtown Columbia Master Plan.

2. National studies show that students who are involved in the arts have higher grades, score better on standardized tests (on average, they score 53 points higher on verbal SAT test scores and 37 points higher in math), have better attendance records, and are more active in community affairs than other students. The Maryland State Board of Education has adopted the goal that 100% of Maryland's students will participate in fine arts programs in order to meet the content and achievement standards established by the State. This goal places the arts – dance, music, theatre and visual arts – on the same level as other core subject areas including reading, math, science, and social studies. How will your administration support the achievement of this goal?

Arts education is crucial to helping students become well rounded individuals and an important part of what makes our schools the best in Maryland. Arts education not only enriches students with an appreciation for the arts, but also enhances academic success. Throughout my term, we made funding arts education a priority, both within the education budget and through the Arts Council and its Artists-in-Education program. Even in difficult financial times, we approved funding for the Centennial High School dance studio and maintained level funding for the Arts Council when most other areas of the County budget were cut.

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Our administration recognizes the important economic role the arts play. This is clearly reflected in our approach to the Downtown Columbia Master Plan. Enhancing art and cultural offerings and providing new spaces and opportunities for an active arts community are a few ways the Plan acknowledges the vital role arts will play in creating a vibrant Downtown. The arts are a significant sector of our local economy, and the economic power of the arts extends to secondary spending associated with the arts and to the way an active arts community helps create the sense of place that attracts major employers.

Jennifer Terrasa

Councilwoman, District 3

1. What is your philosophy of public support for the arts? How will this be reflected in your policies and budgets?

I am a major supporter of the arts. I believe that art is a vital component of any society and the work of artists should be highly valued. Over the last four years, I have fully supported every County arts budget and am committed to continue this in the future. In addition, we supported the arts through the Downtown Columbia Plan, establishing a Downtown Arts and Culture Commission, preserving Merriweather, and setting the way for a percent for art requirement for all Downtown projects.

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I agree that arts education can make a big difference in children's lives both culturally and academically, and I support the Maryland State Board of Education's goal. I will continue to fully support the County's education budget and will encourage the County Board of Education to fulfill the State's goal.

3. There are nearly 600 arts-related businesses in Howard County that employ 2200 people. The non-profit arts sector alone, which is made up of 16 arts organizations, add \$4.4 million to our local economy annually (\$3.1 million in direct revenues and \$1.3 million in secondary spending). How will your administration recognize and further this component of the county's economic development?

This past year during our work on Downtown redevelopment we required funds to be set aside to promote the arts in Town Center. This funding will support the work of many artists. Into the future, I will work with the County's Economic Development Authority to continue to strengthen the profile of arts related businesses and non-profits.