

The logo for 'Arts Build' features the word 'ARTS' in a bold, black, sans-serif font, followed by the word 'Build' in a yellow, cursive script font. The background of the entire page is a vibrant collage of geometric shapes, including stars and triangles, in various shades of blue, pink, and purple. Some areas have a white background with a light blue polka-dot pattern. A white rectangular border frames the central text.

ARTS *Build*

**CHATTANOOGA -
HAMILTON COUNTY**

ARTS

**VOTING
GUIDE**

INTRODUCTION

According to the Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 6 facilitated by Americans for the Arts, the Tennessee Arts Commission, and ArtsBuild, nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Hamilton County in a typical year generate almost \$200 million in economic impact, and the local arts and culture sector employs more than 3,000 full-time employees.

For more than 50 years, ArtsBuild has generated support for the arts. As the City of Chattanooga's official designated arts agency (Ordinance 9365; Amended Ordinance 13654), ArtsBuild serves as a partner and carries out the functions of a local arts agency. Our mission is building stronger communities through the arts. In the following survey responses, we invite you to see how local City of Chattanooga candidates for Mayor and City Council plan to engage the arts and culture sector and how the arts have impacted their lives and community. We are excited to share the survey results with the broader arts community!

ABOUT ARTSBUILD

At ArtsBuild, our mission is **building stronger communities through the arts.**

We strive to fulfill our mission by:
Partnering - collaborating to reach creative solutions

Advocating - articulating the role of the arts in building lives and communities

Connecting - providing arts opportunities for all

Educating - cultivating creativity to enhance personal and academic growth

Advancing - strengthening the economic environment

Supporting - generating resources to support arts and cultural experiences



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www.ArtsBuild.com

CHATTANOOGA MAYORAL RACE

TIM KELLY

<https://www.kellyforcha.com/>

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

As a musician, I am fan of all Chattanooga's live music events and have been a supporter of Nightfall for decades now. I am a frequent patron of the arts in various forms in Chattanooga, but Nightfall will always be my favorite.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

As I mentioned, I consider the arts to be essential to what makes Chattanooga special and different. I also think exposing children to the arts is key to fostering their creativity, which is crucial for their pedagogical development.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

There are too many to list here, but the best example I can give is our commitment to supporting our local creatives ability to support themselves through their work, exemplified by the creation of the city's first Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy. I have said many times that there are no great cities without great arts. I want to not only encourage more participation in the arts broadly but to ensure that creative professionals can afford to live and enjoy their lives in Chattanooga.

TIM KELLY

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

We live in a sales-tax driven state, and the arts bring a lot of money to Chattanooga through tourism. The continued development of our artistic ecosystem also creates an increasingly appealing quality of life for our residents.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

We will continue to work closely with our philanthropic partners to make sure underserved populations are not only included but amplified.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

Funding will always be the primary challenge for our arts and culture nonprofits, and city government will continue to support the arts to make sure they remain a vibrant part of our culture.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Absolutely. While I'm mayor, city government will always support the arts where we're able, as you know. We will also continue to support organizations in their work to win available grants and non-profit funding opportunities.

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

I consider the arts to be a crucial part of human culture as they are the seat of our creativity. As they have enriched my life tremendously, I have worked very hard to support the arts in various nonprofit roles in Chattanooga before being Mayor. In my role as Mayor, I will continue to support the Arts as one of the essential elements of what makes Chattanooga special.

**CHATTANOOGA
CITY COUNCIL RACE
DISTRICT 5**

CANDIDATES:

**DENNIS
CLARK**

DennisClark.org

**CORY
HALL**

Coryhalldistrict5@gmail.com

**ISIAH
HESTER**

IsiahHester.com

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5

DENNIS CLARK

DennisClark.org

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

The arts have had a profound impact on my life. As a classically trained violist from 5th grade through my sophomore year of college, the arts were where I discovered my creative voice and learned to think outside the box. Music taught me discipline, teamwork, and how to express myself in ways that words could not. The experience of performing, collaborating with other musicians, and interpreting complex pieces of music nurtured my ability to approach challenges with innovation and empathy.

These experiences have shaped my unwavering support for the arts and culture sector. I understand firsthand the transformative power the arts have in enriching lives, fostering creativity, and building community. As an elected official, I will prioritize investments in arts education, support nonprofit arts organizations, and advocate for policies that ensure all residents—especially our youth—have access to the arts.

I firmly believe that the arts are not just a cultural asset but an economic driver and a way to bring people together across divides. My background fuels my commitment to creating opportunities for the arts to thrive in our city, ensuring that creativity and culture remain integral to our community's growth and success.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

Unfortunately, there aren't many arts and cultural events currently taking place in District 5, as it is primarily a residential area. However, I hope to change that by advocating for more arts and entertainment opportunities and venues in our district. I believe the arts should be accessible to everyone, no matter where they live, and I'm committed to fostering an environment where creativity and culture can thrive right here in District 5.

As for some of my favorite arts and cultural events around Chattanooga, I love live music events like those at the Velvet Chair and performances at the Chattanooga Theatre Center, where plays and musicals showcase incredible local talent. I was even in Show Choir at the Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences, so performing arts hold a special place in my heart. I also enjoy community-focused events like wine festivals, Oktoberfest, and Main 24, which highlights so many arts and cultural opportunities in the city.

DENNIS CLARK

Bringing that same vibrancy to District 5 is one of my goals. I envision creating spaces and opportunities where families and neighbors can enjoy the arts, whether it's through festivals, performances, or public art installations. Arts and culture are not just about entertainment—they're about building a stronger, more connected community.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Nonprofit arts and culture organizations play a vital role in the development and well-being of our local community. They serve as a bridge that connects people across diverse backgrounds, fostering understanding, inclusion, and unity. Through their programs and initiatives, these organizations provide opportunities for creative expression, education, and collaboration, which enrich our cultural fabric and build a sense of shared identity.

These organizations also contribute significantly to the local economy by creating jobs, attracting tourism, and supporting small businesses. In addition, they inspire creativity and innovation, which are essential for a thriving and forward-thinking community. The arts have the power to address social issues, promote mental health, and strengthen emotional well-being by offering spaces for reflection, healing, and inspiration.

As someone who benefited from arts education and found my creative voice through the arts, I understand firsthand the transformative power they have on individuals and communities. That's why I firmly support nonprofit arts and culture organizations. They are more than just entertainment; they are catalysts for economic growth, social cohesion, and personal development, making them indispensable to our community's overall development and quality of life.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I strongly believe in the power of arts to transform lives and communities, which is why I am committed to policies and initiatives that strengthen the nonprofit arts and culture sector in our area. One of my priorities is to increase access to arts education in schools by advocating for the return of bands and orchestras as early as elementary school. Early exposure to music and the arts not only nurtures creativity but also helps students develop critical thinking, teamwork, and discipline.

In collaboration with our local school board member, I have already supported initiatives to provide instruments to students who might not otherwise have the means to participate in band or orchestra. By helping to remove financial barriers, we ensure that more children have the opportunity to explore their talents and develop a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

DENNIS CLARK

Looking ahead, I plan to champion public-private partnerships that fund arts programs in schools and community spaces. I also want to encourage grants and funding opportunities for nonprofit arts organizations to expand their reach and offer more programming in underserved areas like District 5. My goal is to make the arts more accessible to everyone, recognizing their importance in fostering personal growth, community pride, and economic vitality.

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

Supporting nonprofit arts and culture organizations is vital to local economic development, as these organizations create jobs, attract tourism, and drive spending in our community. Arts events bring visitors who dine at local restaurants, stay in hotels, and shop at nearby businesses, creating a ripple effect that benefits the entire local economy. Beyond economic impact, arts and culture enhance the quality of life for Chattanooga-Hamilton County residents by fostering creativity, building community pride, and providing opportunities for education and engagement. A vibrant arts scene makes our community more attractive to families, businesses, and visitors, while also giving residents meaningful ways to connect and thrive.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

Ensuring underserved and marginalized groups have access to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations is a cause that is deeply personal to me. Growing up, the arts gave me a voice and an outlet that shaped who I am today, and I believe everyone deserves that opportunity. To increase access, I would advocate for more arts programming in schools, starting as early as elementary, to reach children who might not otherwise have exposure. I would also work to bring arts events and cultural venues directly into underserved neighborhoods, like those in District 5, so residents don't have to travel far to participate. Partnerships with local organizations and grants to support free or low-cost events and transportation to existing arts programs are also key strategies I would champion. Access to the arts shouldn't be a privilege—it should be a right for everyone in our community.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

One of the primary challenges nonprofit arts and culture organizations face is the perception that investing in the arts is a luxury rather than a necessity, especially when weighed against pressing community needs like homelessness,

DENNIS CLARK

infrastructure, and public safety. Many people undervalue the transformative impact the arts have on economic growth, community cohesion, and quality of life. I believe we can achieve a balance—making meaningful financial investments in the arts while addressing essential community needs. Local government can play a pivotal role by creating dedicated funding streams for arts initiatives that don't pull from critical resources for housing or public services. Offering matching grants or tax incentives for organizations that engage underserved populations and contribute to workforce development can also help bridge the gap. Additionally, we can advocate for public-private partnerships to expand arts programming, leveraging community support without placing the entire financial burden on local government. By elevating the arts as an integral part of a thriving community, we can address these challenges and foster a more well-rounded city.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Absolutely, increased funding for nonprofit arts and culture organizations can significantly impact the vitality and growth of our local community. The arts not only enhance our quality of life but also drive economic development, attract tourism, and create jobs. They bring people together, foster creativity, and serve as a vehicle for education and cultural exchange. By investing in the arts, we strengthen the social fabric of our community while also building a more robust local economy.

When it comes to funding, I believe a diverse mix of sources is most critical. Public funding, whether through local government budgets, grants, or state and federal programs, is foundational. It signals the community's commitment to supporting the arts and provides stability for organizations to plan long-term. Private donations, corporate sponsorships, and foundation grants are equally important, as they allow for more flexible and innovative programming. Finally, dedicated funding streams, such as a percentage of hotel/motel taxes or public-private partnerships, can provide a sustainable revenue source to ensure arts and culture thrive without competing with essential services. By tapping into all these resources, we can ensure that the arts remain accessible, vibrant, and integral to our community's growth.

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5

CORY HALL

Coryhalldistrict5@gmail.com

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

On a major scale. Musicians and music lovers fill my family. I have close friends in the music industry as well the art community. I can remember a time when multiple high school bands were at capacity. My goal is to provide the necessary support to get programs further established or to their former glory.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

The biggest cultural event in our district is the Brainerd High School Alumni Weekend. I love the Girls Inc programs, the summer camps throughout the district. Anything enriching for the youth and not on their phones. I love the art that gets done by Public Art Chattanooga as well.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

The importance of nonprofit arts and culture organizations play a pivotal role in the development of or community in many ways. It creates opportunities, provides entertainment, and gives people positive experiences in the community.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I plan to support Reach One Teach One, Outdoor Chattanooga, Girls Inc, Public Art Chatt and ANYONE who is about the service of the people.

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

Cultural activities attract tourism which in turn generate revenue, improve quality of life and attract more youth into more enriched lives.

CORY HALL

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

Monthly and Quarterly district meetings with said programs to keep everyone informed on what programs are available and direct lines of contact to programs . More engaging activities with youth. Transportation provided programs for youth as well as elders.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

Lack of funding. Make make positive changes to effectively address the needs of the art community.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Increase funding will definitely impact the community . I think all sources of funding are critical and should be looked into with equal consideration

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5

ISIAH HESTER

IsiahHester.com

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

The arts have made an indelible impression to find made. I enjoy the arts and I asked others to support the arts.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

I enjoy our our annual Washington Hills festival. It includes live music, arts and crafts. I attend the annual Kwanzaa event in which highlights principles African decants should guide their lives.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

The nonprofit organization are driving forces behind the overall development of arts in our community.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I supported the funding of Arts in the Miller Park.

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

Arts enhance blighted areas of our city. In time these beautification projects change the projectory of our neighborhood. This attracts investors and developers who will add economic growth to the community.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

I would support the funding of projects in which would enhance our community's iregards of economic status of the people.

ISIAH HESTER

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

Funding of nonprofits is the greatest challenge for those organizations. Local government must help fund and facilitate funding for organizations in which are dedicated to the arts.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Yes, federal, state, and local governments must aid in this endeavor

**CHATTANOOGA
CITY COUNCIL RACE
DISTRICT 6**

CANDIDATES:

**JENNI
BERZ**

JenniBerz.com

**JENNIFER
GREGORY**

<https://www.jengregoryfor6.com>

**MARK
HOLLAND**

markholland.vote

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6

**JENNI
BERZ**
JenniBerz.com

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

I grew up surrounded by incredible art, a collection that my mother and stepfather and my father and stepmother curated for over 40 years. From a young age, I learned the value of art and how it reflects what's important to you, and how it can influence your environment and emotions. A community that embraces arts and culture is richer and healthier. As a city council member, I aim to foster an environment that enhances and sustains the wellbeing of all people.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

I love seeing the art that has emerged over the years in the form of wraps on power boxes, murals on buildings (ex. Chattanooga Spay and Neuter Clinic), art around neighborhoods (ex. Brainerd Hills, Barger Academy, Chattanooga Airport, Family Justice Center, Missionary Ridge Tunnels - formerly in D6) At the Family Justice Center, art is used to create a welcoming and safe environment for victims of domestic violence. I have also enjoyed and supported the Midtown Festivals that have developed in recent years.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

They play a vital role in enhancing the cultural vibrancy of a community by offering opportunities for education and expression, while also promoting the socialization of diverse groups and cultures. Additionally, they positively impact the economy by attracting tourism, creating jobs, and supporting local businesses. In addition, nonprofit arts and culture organizations help to build a strong, cohesive community by enhancing social connection and quality of life.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I will continue to support the MidTown Festivals and collaborate with organizations such as MidTown Connect and the Family Justice Center to promote initiatives that encourage public-private partnerships and strengthen the nonprofit arts and culture sector in District 6.

JENNI BERZ

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

Nonprofit arts and culture organizations employ artists, administrators, educators and support staff, directly contributing to the local workforce. Additionally, arts events and festivals attract visitors from outside the area, boosting the local economy and tax revenue through restaurant, hotel and retail sales.

Support contributes to enhanced quality of life by providing opportunities for personal enrichment, expression, and social connection. The arts bring together people from diverse backgrounds and allow them to connect across cultural and socioeconomic divides.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

I will support initiatives that enhance access to art spaces within communities via district schools and community centers. I will also advocate for the expansion of programs through organizations like the Public Library, which provides tickets to the symphony for library cardholders. Lastly, I will promote public-private partnerships to foster the long-term growth of the arts sector in Chattanooga.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

Local government plays a vital role in fostering dynamic partnerships between the arts sector and essential community stakeholders, such as businesses, schools, and healthcare providers. By advocating for this collaborative network, stakeholders can unlock the full potential of the arts, enriching our community while driving innovation and support across all sectors.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Yes. Strong corporate sponsorships and public-private partnerships are critical for funding. These sources provide essential financial support and foster beneficial relationships between businesses and the community. Working with corporate partners helps align projects with corporate responsibility objectives and positively impacts the vitality and growth of local communities.

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6

**JENNIFER
GREGORY**

www.jengregoryfor6.com

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

I am a former dancer and dance teacher. I spent my formative years in high school and college dancing everything from modern, jazz, bellydance, hip hop, to even half time dance team. I loved the expression and outlet it created for my own life and for others.

I taught dance classes at Barking Legs Theater for many years, and loved seeing students find their voice and expression through dance. It was more than just a workout, it was a creative outlet. Some of my students were residents in the Dodds Ave area nearby, and seeing their faces light up during session was worth every minute spent with them. Whether you're dancing in your living room, at a club, or for performance, movement of the body like that is good for mental well being and for physical health.

I enjoy sharing with visitors to Chattanooga and Clients not from this area that we are a city that proudly supports the arts in a healthy way. Chattanooga is certainly a better city for the rich arts culture we have.

While I don't see myself dancing on the dias anytime soon if elected, I do want to continue the City's involvement in supporting our arts culture in as many ways as possible. I have experience in the non-profit sector, having founded several over the years. I understand many of the challenges NPOs face in maintaining funding, programs, volunteers and support to enrich the city's cultural landscape.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

I love seeing some of the public pieces along Brainerd Road, and admire them on a daily basis. I appreciate that we exhibit and support local Chattanooga artists at the airport, and admire that work every time I fly in and out of CHA. While ETC theater is no longer in District 6, I supported their mission for many years with my sister on their board of directors and attended many shows.

JENNIFER GREGORY

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Chattanooga's long history of supporting the arts community has drawn so much culture to this city over the years. We are a better and more diverse Chattanooga because of that draw. Regardless of whether it's dance, visual arts, or music, our city benefits from the enrichment of the arts culture here. Every citizen of the city participates in the arts in some way or another, passively or actively.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I've founded a 501c3 for musical artists, and understand the importance of funding the arts.

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

I've lived in Chattanooga long enough to see many programs bring artists to the city from major metro areas, and many of them are still part of our community today. It's created a more diverse labor force in the city, encouraged thoughtful engagement with the arts, and certainly made all of our lives better. Cross collaborative projects are some of my favorite to see happening, Chattanooga does that very well.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

Two ways: take the art directly to the community, and create grant programs or assistance that is readily accessible to foster inclusion and participation.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

I wouldn't assume to know everything about what specific NPOs face in our community. However I have founded two 501c3s and understand the uphill push that includes being underfunded, understaffed, and competing for small portions of granting dollars.

JENNIFER GREGORY

What I do know and have heard from many citizens of this city is that they feel much of the arts culture feels inaccessible or only for a select socioeconomic class. Local government can ensure budget discussions that provide opportunities for everyone from all socioeconomic groups to participate in our vibrant arts culture.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Yes I do

JENNIFER GREGORY

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6

**MARK
HOLLAND**

markholland.vote

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

The arts have always played a meaningful role in my life, inspiring creativity and bringing people together in ways that nothing else can. Whether it's enjoying a local performance, experiencing the talent of entrepreneurs at the Kitchen Incubator, or even seeing how art transforms a public space, I've witnessed how the arts spark connection, joy, and growth in our community. They make us think, feel, and see the world—and each other—differently.

Over the years, I've had the privilege of helping entrepreneurs and small businesses in our community, and I've seen firsthand how creative expression and the arts are powerful drivers of growth and opportunity. The arts don't just enrich our lives—they create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, and give people a sense of purpose and belonging.

As a City Council member, I would carry these experiences with me, working to ensure the arts are a priority in our city. I believe in supporting policies and partnerships that make the arts accessible to everyone, especially in underserved communities. The arts are a vital part of building a stronger, more vibrant Chattanooga, and I am committed to championing initiatives that help this sector flourish for generations to come.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

One of my favorite aspects of our district is how we celebrate the arts and culture through events and programs that bring people together. At the Kitchen Incubator of Chattanooga (KIC), we hosted 19 food truck events last year, including six KIC NIGHT events where local musicians performed, creating an incredible atmosphere for the community. Our annual Food Truck Festival is another highlight, featuring two to three talented acts on stage that showcase the vibrant artistry we have right here in our district.

We recently completed a patio remodel at KIC, which now includes a stage where we've already had the pleasure of featuring local artists. It's exciting to see how this new space is being used to elevate creativity and provide more opportunities for artists to connect with the community. Additionally, as a board member of MidTown Connect, I'm proud to have been part of the City Trunk or Treat Fall Festival last year, where a local artist performed on stage, adding a wonderful artistic element to the event.

MARK HOLLAND

Last year, we were fortunate to receive a grant that helped us bring even more local artists to the stage here in District #6. These events are just the beginning, and I am committed to finding ways to bring even more arts and cultural opportunities to our district, ensuring that they remain accessible and inclusive for everyone.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Nonprofit arts and culture organizations are the heart and soul of our community. They do so much more than showcase talent—they create spaces where people connect, share stories, and celebrate what makes our city unique. These organizations bring life to our neighborhoods, foster creativity, and provide opportunities for learning and growth for people of all ages. I've seen firsthand how the arts can transform a space and bring people together. At the Kitchen Incubator of Chattanooga, hosting events with local artists and musicians has made a huge difference—not just in creating memorable experiences, but in strengthening our community bonds. These organizations also play a big role in our local economy, supporting jobs, small businesses, and tourism while shining a spotlight on the incredible talent we have here. But what I value most is how they make everyone feel included. The arts have a way of reaching across differences and inspiring dialogue, and that's something our world needs more of. They help us see new perspectives and remind us that we're all connected.

As a City Council member, I'll continue to champion nonprofit arts organizations because they don't just improve our city—they make it feel like home. Supporting the arts means investing in our people, our neighborhoods, and our shared future. That's a vision I'm excited to be part of.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

Supporting the nonprofit arts and culture sector in Chattanooga is something I'm passionate about because I've seen how the arts bring our community together and make our city vibrant. One of the initiatives I've been involved in is creating spaces for local artists to share their talents. At the Kitchen Incubator of Chattanooga, we recently remodeled our patio to include a stage, where we've hosted musicians and artists at events like KIC NIGHT and our annual Food Truck Festival. These efforts not only showcase local talent but also create opportunities for our community to experience and celebrate the arts right here in District #6.

I've also worked with Midtown Connect to bring family-friendly arts and culture events to our district, like the Truck or Treat Fall Festival, where we highlighted local artists as part of the celebration. Last year, we secured a grant that allowed us to bring even more artists to the stage, and I'm committed to finding similar funding opportunities to keep these programs growing.

MARK HOLLAND

Looking forward, I plan to advocate for policies that provide more funding and resources to arts organizations, particularly those serving underrepresented communities. This includes grants for public art projects, supporting arts education in schools, and creating more spaces for performances and exhibitions across Chattanooga. I also want to explore partnerships with local businesses to integrate arts into community development projects, ensuring that the arts remain a central part of our city's growth.

Chattanooga has such a rich arts and culture scene, and I'm dedicated to supporting it so that every resident has access to the beauty and inspiration the arts bring to our lives. Together, we can continue to make the arts a cornerstone of what makes our city great.

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

Supporting nonprofit arts and culture organizations isn't just about funding events or programs—it's about investing in the heart of our community. Here in Chattanooga, I've seen how the arts breathe life into our neighborhoods, create opportunities, and make our city a destination for people near and far.

From an economic perspective, the arts are a powerhouse. They provide jobs for artists, performers, and technical staff while supporting small businesses like caterers, printers, and local shops. Events like our Food Truck Festival and KIC NIGHT at the Kitchen Incubator bring people together, generate foot traffic for local vendors, and show visitors the creativity and talent that makes Chattanooga special. These events turn into experiences that draw tourists, encourage repeat visits, and leave a lasting impression of our city as a place filled with culture and innovation.

But beyond the dollars and jobs, the arts enhance our quality of life in ways that are harder to measure but deeply felt. The arts bring joy, spark conversations, and build bridges between people of all backgrounds. They provide a space where we can connect, express ourselves, and feel like we're part of something bigger. Whether it's a child seeing their first play, a family enjoying live music on a summer evening, or an entrepreneur showcasing their talent at a local event, the arts create moments that matter.

For Chattanooga and Hamilton County, supporting the arts means building a community where people want to live, work, and raise their families. It's about more than beautifying a space or hosting an event—it's about creating a sense of belonging and pride in our city. That's why I believe so strongly in continuing to champion and grow our nonprofit arts sector—it's an investment in our people, our stories, and our future.

MARK HOLLAND

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

To increase access for underserved and marginalized groups, I would advocate for funding and grants that support free or low-cost arts programs in underserved areas. I would also encourage partnerships between nonprofit arts organizations and schools, community centers, and local businesses to bring arts programs directly to these communities. Additionally, I'd work to create more accessible spaces for performances and workshops and support transportation initiatives to help residents reach arts and cultural events across Chattanooga. Everyone deserves to experience the transformative power of the arts, and I'm committed to breaking down barriers to make that happen.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

The primary challenges faced by nonprofit arts and culture organizations include limited funding, lack of access to affordable spaces, and the struggle to reach underserved communities. Additionally, many organizations face difficulties in gaining visibility and sustaining long-term support for their programs.

Local government can address these challenges by increasing grant opportunities and offering tax incentives for businesses that sponsor arts programs. It can also provide funding for the development and maintenance of affordable venues and shared spaces for performances and workshops. Supporting initiatives that promote arts education in schools and partnerships between nonprofits and local organizations can expand access and engagement. Finally, creating marketing campaigns to highlight the importance of the arts can help attract both funding and participation, ensuring these organizations thrive and continue to enrich our community.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Absolutely, I believe increased funding for nonprofit arts and culture organizations can have a huge impact on the vitality and growth of our community. The arts bring people together, create jobs, and give our city its unique identity. In Chattanooga, we've seen how events that highlight local artists and performers can breathe life into our neighborhoods, attract visitors, and foster pride in our community. When we invest in the arts, we're not just supporting creativity—we're building a stronger, more connected, and thriving city.

As for funding, I think a combination of sources is critical. Local government funding is essential for foundational support, but private partnerships and corporate sponsorships can provide

the extra boost to expand programs and reach more people. Grants, both local and national, are also key to funding specific projects. Additionally, I'd love to see more community-driven initiatives, like donor campaigns or small contributions, that allow everyone to feel a sense of ownership and pride in supporting the arts. When we come together to support the arts, the entire community benefits.

MARK HOLLAND

**CHATTANOOGA
CITY COUNCIL RACE
DISTRICT 7**

CANDIDATES:

**RAQUETTA
DOTLEY**

www.raquettadotley.com

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 7

RAQUETTA DOTLEY

www.raquettadotley.com

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

The arts significantly shaped my adolescence, from 6th grade through my high school graduation, as I participated in the band at both Orchard Knob Middle School under the direction of Mr. Greg Bagby and Brainerd High School under the direction of Mrs. Tracy Hill-Frazier. My instrument of choice was the flute, and during my last year of high school marching season, I played the piccolo. Being in the band helped me stay focused and engaged in school, and I deeply valued the camaraderie of friends—many of whom remain in my life today.

Learning to play an instrument requires skill, persistence, and a passion for excellence—qualities that continue to guide me in my role as a City Council representative and as a dedicated supporter of the arts.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

There are so many, but I'll try to name a few! The artwork on Oakland Avenue in Alton Park is stunning—roughly two blocks of paintings by different artists that serve as a beautiful asset to the community. The sculpture at Blue Goose Hollow is another favorite; its vibrant colors make it truly stand out. I also love the "power box" paintings at various intersections—they add creativity and character to our public spaces.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Nonprofit arts and culture organizations are the backbone of the arts in our community. They serve as a vital convenor of artists, residents, and shared experiences that bring joy and connection. Beyond enrichment, these organizations play a major role in fostering both social and economic capital. They provide platforms for artistic expression, create opportunities for education and engagement, and help preserve cultural heritage. Additionally, they contribute to economic growth by attracting tourism, supporting local businesses, and creating jobs. Their impact extends far beyond the arts—they help build a more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient community.

RAQUETTA DOTLEY

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

The city has an internal arts department dedicated to managing and maintaining city-owned assets. However, it's equally important to make significant investments in the arts as we strive to inspire the next generation. I have supported the city's investment in ArtsBuild's Imagine program and will continue to advocate for additional funding and support for arts programming. Strengthening the nonprofit arts and culture sector is essential for fostering creativity, education, and community engagement.

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

Supporting nonprofit arts and culture organizations significantly contributes to local economic development in Chattanooga-Hamilton County. In 2023, tourism in Hamilton County generated approximately \$1.7 billion in travel spending, underscoring the area's appeal as a destination. VISITCHATTANOOGA.COM

Investments in the arts attract visitors, boosting local businesses such as restaurants, hotels, and retail shops. Visitor spending directly supported 12,770 jobs in Hamilton County, highlighting the arts' role in job creation. VISITCHATTANOOGA.COM

Beyond economic benefits, support for the arts enhances residents' quality of life. Programs like ArtsBuild's Imagine initiative and public art projects, such as those on Oakland Avenue and the power box paintings, create vibrant, inclusive spaces that foster community pride and engagement. The presence of arts and culture inspires creativity, provides educational opportunities, and contributes to the well-being of individuals across all ages. By continuing to invest in nonprofit arts organizations, we ensure a more dynamic, connected, and thriving community for generations to come.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

I have and will continue to be committed to expanding access to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations by partnering with neighborhood associations, residential complexes, local businesses, and community-based nonprofits. I have worked with ArtsBuild to bring programming to Mary Walker Towers, a senior living facility, and with RISE Chattanooga to host a national recording artist in a community park. Additionally, I collaborate with local schools, community centers, and other nonprofits to bring arts programming directly into neighborhoods.

RAQUETTA DOTLEY

By eliminating barriers like cost and transportation, we can ensure that all residents have access to meaningful artistic experiences. I will continue advocating for funding and partnerships that make the arts more inclusive and accessible to everyone in our community.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

Primary challenges faced by nonprofit arts and culture organizations include limited funding, particularly for local artists, and the lack of arts programming in public schools, especially at the middle school level. It is essential to support local artists across various disciplines to ensure a well-rounded and diverse arts landscape in Chattanooga. Local artists not only enrich our culture but also contribute to the city's economic development, creating jobs and attracting tourism.

In addition to funding, public schools often lack the resources to provide comprehensive arts education, which is critical to the development of young minds. Research shows that arts education helps improve cognitive abilities, enhances creativity, and supports social and emotional growth. Students engaged in the arts perform better academically, are more likely to graduate, and develop critical thinking skills that benefit them in all aspects of life.

Local government can address these challenges by increasing funding for the arts, specifically targeting support for local artists and school-based programs. Additionally, offering public space for exhibitions, performances, and workshops would create more opportunities for artists to showcase their work and for students to engage with the arts outside of the classroom. These investments not only help local artists but also enrich the educational experience for young people, fostering creativity and critical thinking in our community.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Yes, increased funding for nonprofit arts and culture organizations can significantly impact the vitality and growth of our local community. Arts support drives economic development, fosters creativity, and strengthens social connections. Funding from local government, private philanthropy, and corporate sponsorships is essential. Local government investments ensure sustainability, while private and corporate contributions help expand outreach and support underserved communities. By boosting funding, we can empower local artists, enhance educational opportunities, and enrich the overall cultural landscape of Chattanooga-Hamilton County.

**CHATTANOOGA
CITY COUNCIL RACE
DISTRICT 8**

CANDIDATES:

**ANNA
GOLLADAY**

www.annagolladay.com

**MARVENE
NOEL**

marvenenoel.com

**DOLL
SANDRIDGE**

[https://www.facebook.com/
profile.php?id=61569480122309](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61569480122309)

**KELVIN
SCOTT**

Kelvinscottdistrict8.com

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 8

ANNA GOLLADAY

www.annagolladay.com

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

I received my undergraduate degree in Graphic Design and Illustration from a liberal arts college in West Virginia. Since then, I've consistently worked in the arts for almost 30 years. The arts are not only important in my life, but are central to my very identity. I have a passion for arts education and for affording opportunities to all, regardless of privilege.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

Residing in District 8, I spend much of my time at Montague Park and the Sculpture Fields. This area blends the best of the outdoors with the creativity of others - it is one of my favorite places to spend time. District 8 is also the home to the Bessie Smith Cultural Center, Arts Build, ClearStory Arts, and Stove Works - all organizations that put the talent and gifts of our community on display in dynamic and important ways.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Pablo Picasso said "Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." When we are stuck in the mundane and everyday-ness of our schedules, it is art that breaks us out. How many times have you heard a song that snaps you into a memory, or noticed a piece of public art that creates curiosity? Our community is richer because of the ways the arts influence it.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I am graduate of the Holmberg Arts Leadership Institute. Because of this participation, I understand all the ways that we are able to advocate for the arts. I have a custom Tennessee license plate and am an avid theater goer. I have participated in events at The Chatterbox. I support all our galleries, art installations and pride myself on being both a monetary and physical supporter of nonprofit arts in Chattanooga.

ANNA GOLLADAY

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

So many of the local artist in Chattanooga are have multiple jobs that are worked to sustain their livelihood. Most of the ones I know personally would love nothing more than for their work to be their sole source of income. Contributing our dollars to our local arts community allows our dollars to circulate more than they would if we purchased a piece of artwork, knitted item or household item from a big box store. The circulation of those dollars within the community create and ecostructure of success and care for those who are called to create. These creators then pour back into the neighborhoods that support them creating cycles of sustainability that benefit us all.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

it is important that the city and county provide the necessary resources to our nonprofit arts and cultural organizations in order for them to serve the community. This is especially important for underserved and marginalized groups. We must encourage the creation of arts organizations of color and share insights with practitioners, policymakers, funders, and industry leaders to support equitable and sustainable improvements across the arts ecosystem.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

Communication, funding, and opportunity. I truly believe that the arts can facilitate engagements that amplify the voices of all, and that these experiences can build trust and collaboration across disciplines in Chattanooga. Local government must provide as many of these opportunities for engagement as possible.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Funding is an absolute necessity. The arts create jobs and and economic ecosystem of imagination and energy within our city. While funding is naturally solicited from foundations and private donors who feel a strong affinity to the arts, the city budget should equally reflect the ways that Chattanooga promises to lift up those who create.

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 8

**MARVENE
NOEL**

marvenenoel.com

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

The art scene in Chattanooga, Tennessee, has profoundly impacted my life, shaping my perspective, creativity, and appreciation for community expression. From the striking murals that color the city's streets to the inspiring installations along the Riverwalk, Chattanooga's vibrant art culture has been a constant source of inspiration. The Hunter Museum of American Art, Sculpture Fields at Montague Park, and the countless local galleries have exposed me to diverse artistic voices, deepening my appreciation for both traditional and contemporary works.

Beyond aesthetics, the city's art has provided a sense of connection, bringing people together, sparking conversations, and fostering a shared sense of identity. Whether it's a live performance at the Tivoli Theatre or the handcrafted pieces at the Chattanooga Market, the creativity surrounding me has encouraged self-expression in my life. Chattanooga's dedication to public art and cultural enrichment has not only beautified the city but also enriched my experiences, leaving a lasting impression on how I view the world.

I am proud of the Berke administration and their focus they put on art and I plan to lead in the same way.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

When you look at District 8 you have installations on Glass St, art on MLK blvd, artwork on the AT&T building, the Montague Park statues, and the statues on the riverfront. Walking or driving by these spaces shows the rich history of this district. When it comes to District 8 we see our local artists in spaces within the downtown area such as Four Bridges and within the community centers, outside of that they are usually incorporated in our Glass Street celebrations and Orchard Knob festivals.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

For me there has not been a lot of proposals over the last two years. What I will say is that I continue to offer art as a beautification method for this city. I will continue to vote in support of the education programs and will be willing to sign off or help to recruit grants into the city of Chattanooga.

MARVENE NOEL

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 8

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Economic Growth & Tourism:

Organizations like the Hunter Museum of American Art, Chattanooga Theatre Centre, and the Association for Visual Arts (AVA) attract visitors and create jobs. Festivals such as the 4 Bridges Arts Festival and the Chattanooga Film Festival bring in tourists who support local businesses, restaurants, and hotels.

Community Engagement & Social Impact:

Art bridges divides and fosters inclusivity. Programs like Splash Youth Arts Workshop and Mark Making provide creative outlets for underserved communities, using art as a tool for education, personal growth, and empowerment.

Education & Youth Development:

Nonprofits like Songbirds Foundation and Scenic City Clay Arts offer hands-on workshops, after-school programs, and mentorship opportunities that nurture young talent, teach valuable skills, and encourage lifelong appreciation for the arts.

Public Art & City Identity:

Organizations like River City Company and Public Art Chattanooga contribute to Chattanooga's identity by funding murals, sculptures, and performance spaces that enhance public spaces and make art accessible to all. The Sculpture Fields at Montague Park is a great example of a nonprofit transforming a space into a cultural landmark.

Mental Health & Well-Being:

Engaging in the arts has been proven to reduce stress and improve mental health. Programs like Art120 and the Chattanooga Writers' Guild provide creative outlets that promote emotional well-being and self-expression.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage:

Nonprofits help preserve Chattanooga's rich history, ensuring that cultural stories, music, and traditions continue to thrive. Groups like the Bessie Smith Cultural Center celebrate African American heritage, while initiatives like Jazzanooga keep local musical traditions alive.

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

Everyone wants to live somewhere that they can post on their social media. I see the city of Chattanooga as that place but we must maintain the pace and not let up. When you see art there is a chance to tell a story. When you attend the duck tours in downtown they always point out two things: The Choo Choo and the Eiffel Tower at the Westin. Why is that important, art is the identity of Chattanooga. I talked about it above but the fact is art creates jobs because companies want to move in places where their employees want to live.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

We want to keep utilizing the Community Centers and offering classes to the youth. We also want to continue providing transportation to the riverwalk Hunter Museum, and Montague Park and show children what art is. I will always vote yes on youth development.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

Staff shortage, audience engagement, and ensuring each year that the administration sees art as a priority. We always need to come to the table and ensure that we are moving Chattanooga forward. Feel free to always reach out and have a candid conversation on the direction you would like the city to go in.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Public Funding and Private are the nonprofit validity test. The more funding that we put into the arts the more companies will want to incorporate around us.

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 8

**DOLL
SANDRIDGE**

[https://www.facebook.com/
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**ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW
HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR
LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK
YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR
SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT
ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN
YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED
OFFICIAL?**

Music was my sanctuary. Growing up in a non-traditional household, I found refuge in the arts. At just 8 years old, I began composing music on my grandparents' piano, pouring my heart into every note. As I grew, so did my passion for creative expression. I devoured every opportunity to hone my craft, studying four instruments - the alto sax, cello, oboe, and harp - and performing in numerous choirs, bands, orchestras, and musicals at CSLA and CSAS.

The arts weren't just a hobby; they were my therapy, my voice, my lifeline. They helped me navigate the complexities of my childhood and find strength in vulnerability. Today, my reverence for the arts remains unwavering, and I'm dedicated to sharing their transformative power with others.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

I really enjoy the shows out on at the Barking Legs Theater by Dexter Bell and Friends.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Nonprofit arts and culture organizations are the heartbeat of our community, bringing people together, preserving our heritage, and inspiring creativity. They provide a platform for marginalized voices, drive economic growth, and enrich our lives. I firmly believe that these organizations are essential to building a vibrant, inclusive, and compassionate community.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I plan on donating a portion of my salary directly to non-profits in my district. I believe in leading by example by show people the importance for giving back and protecting the organizations that are the hearts and souls of our communtiy.

DOLL SANDRIDGE

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

I'm dedicated to leading by example and giving back to our community. As a public servant, I plan to donate a portion of my salary to local nonprofits in our district. By doing so, I aim to demonstrate the importance of supporting the organizations that are the heart and soul of our community. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of our neighbors and ensure that our community remains a vibrant and compassionate place for all.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

I'm committed to empowering our community by leveraging our local community centers. I plan to host interest meetings, bringing together residents and nonprofits to foster connections and spark engagement. By meeting people where they are, we can ignite passion and encourage involvement. My goal is to help individuals discover the wealth of community resources available and unlock their potential to make a meaningful impact.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

Nonprofit arts and culture organizations face challenges like funding constraints, accessibility barriers, and limited visibility. Local government can help by increasing funding, providing resources and support, and enhancing accessibility and visibility through inclusive policies, marketing collaborations, and arts-friendly policies.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Yes, I believe increased funding for nonprofit arts and culture organizations can significantly impact the vitality and growth of our local community. Funding from local government, private foundations, corporate sponsorships, and individual donations are critical sources. Additionally, exploring alternative funding models, such as public-private partnerships and crowdfunding, can also help sustain and grow these organizations.

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 8

**KELVIN
SCOTT**

Kelvinscottdistrict8.com

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

I think the arts has played a major role in African American history. I love the Bessie Smith Culture Center.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

The statue on the walnut bridge.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

It is a great opportunity for the community to learn how the Arts and Culture has impacted their lives.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I have supported the Bessie Smith and Hunter Museum.

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

The arts and culture gives an opportunity to young and up coming arts to be able reach their dreams and make a living as well.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

By finding ways to work with the city to give funding to help support the arts.

KELVIN SCOTT

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

Getting the community to change their mindset on how they view the arts and culture.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Yes. When you invest into another person's dream you are investing into the future.

**CHATTANOOGA
CITY COUNCIL RACE
DISTRICT 9**

CANDIDATES:

**RON
ELLIOTT**

ronelliott.com

**EVELINA
KERTAY**

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CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 9

**RON
ELLIOTT**

ronelliott.com

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

Music has always been a big part of my life. As a child, my mom was a music executive. I saw firsthand how the arts can inspire, create opportunity, and bring people together. That experience has shaped my deep appreciation for the nonprofit arts and culture sector.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

While we do not have as many as I'd like in District 9, the one that stands out and is my favorite is the Glass Street Block Parties hosted by Bohemian Village. Additionally, I always enjoy the shows at Barking Legs.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Nonprofit arts and culture organizations are facilitators that spread and deepen arts and culture in our communities. They're vital to our community's development, providing spaces for creativity and education while bringing people together across backgrounds. They enrich our city's identity, support local artists, and offer opportunities—especially for young people—to engage with the arts.

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I want to see the arts intertwined in our city fabric. For example, having artwork in city infrastructure, painting murals in neighborhoods, and curating more culturally diverse events. Also, if elected, I'd champion funding and policies that make the arts accessible to everyone.

RON ELLIOTT

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

I feel like it can have an incredible impact on our economy, but there are not enough leaders intentional about incorporating it. It can create jobs, attract tourism, and drive business to restaurants, shops, and hotels. A thriving arts scene makes Chattanooga a more attractive place to live and visit, strengthening our creative economy and enhancing our city's reputation. Beyond economics, these organizations improve residents' quality of life by fostering community pride, providing accessible cultural experiences, and offering creative outlets that bring people together.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

I would advocate for increased funding and partnerships that bring arts programs directly into underserved neighborhoods, schools, and community centers. Additionally, I'd work to expand free and low-cost events, transportation options, and outreach efforts so that everyone in Chattanooga can experience the benefits of arts and culture.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

I think lack of funding is one of, if not the, main challenges nonprofit arts organizations face. Local government needs to be more intentional in prioritizing arts and culture. The city can do its part by increasing funding, but we should also partner with our local philanthropic community to expand our impact.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

Yes. There's a balance between government agencies' funding as well as our foundation and philanthropic spaces' contributions.

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 9

EVELINA KERTAY

https://evelinairenk.wixsite.com/home?fbclid=IwY2xjawlGiSRleHRuA2FlbQlXMAABHXFMcyHezJDj-NHEd2d8FNEyt18-XF3uYkPrvjwsmqXdB6VekM29paehYA_aem_VPKXkXN4dVLs_ZEDWLX0BQ

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW HAVE THE ARTS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN YOUR ROLE AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL?

Art has been a great inspiration for me politically and personally. Artists like Diego Rivera have helped inspire my dedication to labor. Musicians, like Run the Jewels, have kept me distracted during long back back-breaking shifts. Writing poetry and taking

part in brass band when I was a young person helped inspire me to become who I was meant to be. My mother's quilting business supported me throughout childhood. I want the power that arts can bring available to every young person in this city

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, OR PROGRAMS THAT TAKE PLACE IN YOUR DISTRICT?

Many of the events that take place at Barking Legs Theatre are some of my favorite. From regular musicians, to jazz nights, to collaboration with other community groups I have grown up going to events at Barking legs and they are an honored institution in our community.

Additionally, while not limited to district 9. The public guerilla art by Art For All Peoples has brightened up the life of many streets in District 9 and even given me a good laugh.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Arts are a fundamental good to the human soul. The less we listen to music, enjoy a play, watch a movie, admire a painting, dance with friends, read poetry the weaker our souls become. Modern capitalist society increasingly looks at these as leisure activities to be minimized, and instead to focus on building our net worth. This is hogwash. I want ours to be a community that drinks deeply from the cup of life that only the muses can provide. And I will do whatever I can to support it and non profit arts and culture are an important part of this

EVELINA KERTAY

WHAT SPECIFIC POLICIES OR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU SUPPORTED, OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO SUPPORT, THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR IN OUR AREA?

I think building new and expanding current programs of direct grants to musicians, artists, and arts organizations would be a fantastic way to spur on the development of our next generation of artists.

I also would love to collaborate with local art's industry workers, or their unions like IATSE on putting together public arts and performances.

IN YOUR VIEW, HOW DOES THE SUPPORT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING JOB CREATION AND TOURISM? HOW DOES SUPPORT CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY?

From Riverbend, to Nightfall, to the Hunter Museum to more, arts and culture organizations are a huge aspect in Chattanooga's growing tourism industry which comprises an increasing percentage of Chattanooga Jobs.

As long as this stays balanced with the needs of Chattanooga locals, this can be a fantastic boon for creation of good jobs.

UNDERSERVED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WOULD YOU INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS PROGRAMS?

Marginalized people simultaneously have less access to public art programs, and see themselves and their issues less often represented in art.

I think expanding funding for arts programs in our local community centers is one great way to serve these communities. But also reaching out to organizations representing these communities and collaborating with them is important.

Also focusing on Spanish language arts would be important for me.

WHAT DO YOU IDENTIFY AS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES FACED BY NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY?

While I don't claim to have a great knowledge on specifically the arts sector, I have worked in the non profit industry. And funding is always a primary issue. And I would make it a focus to collaborate with arts and culture organizations to pursue this funding either from the city government itself or connecting them with state and federal opportunities.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INCREASED FUNDING FOR NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPACT THE VITALITY AND GROWTH OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY? WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING DO YOU THINK ARE MOST CRITICAL?

I believe that increased funding for non profit arts and cultures organizations can be a great boon to the community.

I think direct expenditures are a worthwhile investment from the city. So I would focus on public funding. While private funding is an option, it often comes with stipulations and censorship. And I think public funding creates a unique opportunity to give all artists a chance to express themselves

EVELINA KERTAY