
News Releases

For more information, contact us:

Joel Fosha

Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

812-855-6508

foshaj@indiana.edu

National Arts Award Recognizes Work by Indiana University Center

[View the Indiana University Media Release](#) (November 24, 2009)

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. -- An Indiana University-based project focused on facilitating access to careers in the arts for people with disabilities was named in a national award presented to the Indiana Arts Commission for making the arts accessible and inclusive for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

The award recognizes ArtsWORK Indiana, a grassroots organization developed by state arts commission in partnership with the Center on Aging and Community, part of the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at IU Bloomington.

Rocco Landesman, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, announced last week that the Indiana Arts Commission is the recipient of the 2009 National Accessibility Leadership Award/grant. The award, sponsored by the NEA and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, was presented to the commission for leadership in making the arts fully inclusive throughout its organization, programming and state.

- ArtsWORK Indiana (AWI) emerged as an outcome of discussion round-tables and surveys from the 2004 Statewide Forum on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities. The group's mission is to facilitate access to careers in the arts for people with disabilities through awareness, education and encouragement.
- Among the activities recognized by the award is the creation of a comprehensive online resource on arts careers with an inclusive focus. The ArtsWORK Indiana Web site (<http://www.artsworkindiana.org>), developed by Jane Harlan-Simmons at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, provides information, listings of employment, internships and other arts opportunities, as well as an artist directory and discussion forums. As a nationally recognized model, AWI's Web site has been developed and managed by the Center on Aging and Community. The Indiana Institute has provided technical assistance to AWI since its inception.
- AWI invites guest speakers to monthly meetings to address topics such as marketing, artwork sales and funding opportunities. In the spring of 2009, AWI took its programs to six different areas of the state, partnering with arts organizations, disability service providers, colleges and community centers to hold free workshops.

"Since becoming chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, I have been talking about 'art works,'" Landesman said, "and the Indiana Arts Commission will help ensure even more opportunities for American artists in the three ways that I mean this phrase: artists of every background should have the opportunity to create new art works; they should participate in all the ways that art can work to expand us as human beings and knit together our communities; and perhaps most importantly, they should have the chance to be working artists who are part of this country's real economy."

The National Endowment for the Arts and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies established the National Accessibility Leadership Award in 2001. Since 2002, the award has provided a \$30,000 NEA competitive grant to the selected state or regional arts agency to advance its access work. With their award, the Indiana Arts Commission and AWI will expand support for artists with disabilities by offering grants for projects that will impact the artists' career development.

For more information, contact Jane Harlan-Simmons at jeharlan@indiana.edu or 812-855-6508. For more information about the Indiana Institute, visit www.iidc.indiana.edu.