



Rhode Island Arts – Stories of Success with Government Investment

Gamm Theatre, Pawtucket, RI (www.gammtheatre.org)

When the Gamm Theatre moved to Pawtucket in 2003, becoming the lead tenant in a vacant Armory building in the center of downtown, they had two full time employees. Today, the organization employees 19 full time, has 55 people on the payroll, and serves over 30,000 audience members per year. Not only are they the only business that moved into this urban core and created jobs, they were named #35 of Providence Business News' 100 fastest growing companies in Rhode Island from 2006-2009.

Blackstone River Theatre, Cumberland, RI (www.riverfolk.org)

Blackstone River Theatre celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2010 as a pioneer in the arts in northern Rhode Island and a unique interpreter of the Blackstone Valley's cultural heritage. The John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission has called BRT "...the Corridor's premier institution for promoting the traditional arts." Averaging 100 concerts, classes and events each year, BRT was one of four northern R.I. arts groups to receive a \$25,000 federal stimulus grant to protect the position of the Executive Director. BRT hires more than 100 Rhode Island musicians and instructors each year and is a key player in the Town of Cumberland's Broad Street Revitalization Initiative.

Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School, East Providence, RI (www.rphil.org)

With a payroll of 325, the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School is the largest employer of musicians/music teachers in the region. Government support has helped the organization reach more than 150,000 Rhode Islanders each year. For this, the organization pays five times the amount they receive in state taxes (\$500,000 annually) and generates \$11 million in regional economic impact. While they bring high quality classical music experience and learning to constituents, bring life into our city center, generate cultural activity and vitality for the citizens of RI, they also plug school and municipal services by providing arts education to 3,500 school children throughout the state each year.

Alliance for Artists Communities, Providence, RI (www.artistcommunities.org)

In 2010, the NEA supported the Alliance of Artists Communities' annual conference - held in Providence, RI - with a \$10,000 grant. This seed funding for the conference had an outsized effect on the local economy: attendees stayed at local hotels, ate at local restaurants, and shopped at local merchants. Over \$300,000 was pumped into local businesses – multiplying the impact of the initial NEA funding thirty-fold!

Island Moving Co, Newport, RI (www.islandmovingco.org)

Island Moving Co.'s stimulus funding enabled us to hire a part time booking agent and increase hours of our part time staff. Through their work, the dance company has been able to increase its work in the schools, which in turn helps to employ our nine salaried dancers. This spring, the Company was invited to Florida to be part of an arts integration program in the Palm Beach elementary schools. For just \$5000 from the Department of Education's grant to the schools, four of our dancers worked intensively with 125 students over five days, creating performance from text written by the students and movement they created to illustrate their writing about "Parts of a Whole," exploring their roles in their families, their class and their community. Although the stimulus grant is exhausted, we continue to pay our staff at the levels made possible by that funding.