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The Arts Remain Vital to the Economy of Fairfield County, According to Analysis of Dun & Bradstreet Data

Norwalk, CT (July 24, 2014): A new research study, *Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts in Fairfield County*, published by Americans for the Arts, of which the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County is a member, uses statistical data to quantify the economic importance of the arts in Fairfield County, as well as throughout the country. The Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County, located in downtown Norwalk, previously worked with Americans For the Arts on the 2012 Arts & Economic Prosperity IV study. This study, published in July 2012, solidly identified the integral role the arts play in the Fairfield County economy: the arts generate \$130 million in economic activity, provide household income of \$88,292,000, and produce 10.5 million in local and state revenue.

Furthermore, Dun and Bradstreet identifies that the creative industries in Fairfield County include 4,423 nonprofit and for-profit businesses, employing over 15,000 people, comprising almost 5.8% of all businesses (significantly above the national average of 4.2%), according to the report. The findings are based on an analysis of Dun & Bradstreet data, the most comprehensive and trusted source for business information in the United States. The study was conducted by Americans for the Arts—the nation’s leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education—and includes analyses of 11,000 unique political and geographic regions in the U.S. The data are current as of January 2014.

“The Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County is thrilled to help get the word out about this study which drives home the financial significance of having arts and culture in your region,” says Kristen Runk, interim executive director of the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County. “Those of us involved in the sector have always known that respecting and supporting arts and culture in one’s community improves the quality of life from an educational, civic, and economic standpoint. The arts shouldn’t be a privilege but a necessity and this study is another step toward affirming that point.”

One of the remarkable national findings from the research, which dates back to 2004, is that arts businesses and employment have maintained this share of businesses and employment during the nations up and down economic cycles—demonstrating that the Creative Industries are as resilient and durable as other sectors of the economy. “The Creative Industries reports are powerful tools for understanding what a major force arts and culture businesses are for the economy—not only nationally, but also locally, in every community across our country,” says Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. Lynch further emphasizes that “...the arts are key drivers of the local economy,

new employers, jobs, and improvement of the quality of life through their work. The Creative Industries say one thing loud and clear: the arts mean business!”

“It comes as no surprise that Fairfield County ranks above the national average,” says John Vaccaro, CEO of Westport Resources. “This area is rich with artists, creative entrepreneurs, and innovative thinkers. Our business community understands the importance and strength of the creative efforts that affect us all and does what it can to support this industry.”

Arts businesses, and the creative people they employ, stimulate innovation, strengthen America's competitiveness in the global marketplace, and play an important role in building and sustaining economic vibrancy. The mission of the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County is to support these cultural organizations, artists and creative businesses, which make up this vital sector, by providing promotion, services, and advocacy. Fairfield County's premier arts & culture organization works to build partnerships in the arts and culture sector and the community at large, promote a unified arts and cultural brand for Fairfield County – FCBuzz.org; and to create a pro-active, unified voice for its constituency and the communities in which they live, work and play. For more information, visit www.culturalalliancefc.org or call 203-256-2329

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