



GREATER BUFFALO CULTURAL ALLIANCE

## GBCA MONTHLY BRIEF

January, 2014

### **Vision:**

The Greater Buffalo Cultural Alliance envisions a community that fully values arts and culture and the integral role we play in our region.

### **Mission:**

The mission of the Greater Buffalo Cultural Alliance is to work collectively to position arts, culture and creativity as critical **community assets** and **priority areas** for public and private investment and engagement.

### **NEXT MEETING**

#### **NEXT GBCA GENERAL MEETING – All Welcome**

February 20, 2014 at 5:30 – 7 pm

Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site

641 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14202

### **CURRENT ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Membership**

**Spread the word – make GBCA even stronger by helping to recruit new diverse member organizations!**

- The membership committee has established a community forum for GBCA internal use on Free Forums to easily identify and respond to contributed ideas from our partner organizations, members, friends, and allies. Stay tuned for username and password updates and become part of the conversation!
- GBCA is a proud supporter of the new Buffalo Tours Buffalo (BTB) initiative, which aims to promote under-the-radar arts, cultural, and tourist events; for more information, please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/BuffaloToursBuffalo>.

#### **Advocacy**

##### **Erie County Cultural Funding**

Many arts and cultural organization have benefited from operational funding from Erie County for the past three years. While we are all very grateful for the County's commitment to support a vibrant cultural community, we should not take future funding from the County for granted. County funding for arts and culture is determined on an annual basis, and therefore it is imperative that our outreach and advocacy to Erie County's elected officials not waiver and continues strongly throughout the year every year.

There are some very important steps each funded organization can and should take to help ensure that arts and cultural funding be included at current and even increased levels in future Erie County budgets. These include:

1. If you are receiving County funding in 2014, write a thank you note to the County Executive, Legislature Chair John Mills, Legislature Majority Leader Joseph Lorigo, Legislature Minority Leader Betty Jean Grant, and your district legislator. It is important to continually let them know how grateful your organization is for their support. It would also be good to mention in the letter how grateful you are with the County's decision to restore the 10% funding held back from the 2013 allocation.
2. Recognizing that there is a new majority in the County Legislature in 2014-2105 (John Mills is Chairman, Joseph Lorigo is the Majority Leader, and Betty Jean Grant is the new Minority Leader) and new Legislators (Pat Burke, Ted Morton, and a returning Barbara Miller-Williams), it is important to familiarize the new majority caucus with our organizations. Legislators may not be aware of what your organization does and why it is important to our community. So working through your own contacts, GBCA or ASI, reach out to Legislators – write to them, go see them at their offices, and invite them to visit your facility and your programs and events. They'll have an opportunity to learn firsthand about your mission and why it is so valuable to our community. We all know how impactful information can be when making difficult budget decisions. Don't wait until next year's budget is released in the fall to do this; as we mentioned advocacy and outreach are year-long efforts.
3. Attend and send a Board member to GBCA General meetings. An informed and united cultural community can have an impact but without a coordinated effort our effectiveness diminishes. The next meeting is **February 20, 2014**, 5:30 pm at the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site an Delaware Avenue in Buffalo.
4. Be certain to read all communications sent from GBCA and ASI and share them with other staff and Board members. They provide important updates and information which impact the cultural community.
5. It is important for as many cultural organizations as possible to attend County Budget meetings and hearings. An impressive turnout at these meeting won't go unnoticed by elected officials. GBCA and ASI provide sufficient notice to every organization of the dates and times for the important meetings. Having at least one representative from each organization is important, and not just when there is a crisis. During the 2013 budget process, representation from cultural organizations was very light.

#### More Resources:

**GBCA Steering Committee List** – use to see who is providing volunteer leadership for GBCA & feel free to reach out to these folks any time to learn more about GBCA.

**List of Erie County Legislators** – use to write letters and make appointments.