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Knox County enjoys the benefits of being home to more than 50 non-profit arts, culture and heritage organizations. Non-profit arts and culture is an important industry whose positive impact on local education, tourism, quality of life, and economic development is key to the county's health and success.

Did you know that more people annually visit Knoxville's 20+ museums and historic homes than attend all UT home football games combined? Knox Countians love the performing arts as well, enjoying year round performances in one of our historic theatres, or festivals along Gay Street, in Market Square, Bearden, Vonore, Fountain City, Farragut, Strawberry Plains, or East Knoxville. A lively arts district flourishes in downtown Knoxville where there are more galleries, historic landmarks, museums, and theaters than any other mid-size city in the Southeast.

86% of East Tennesseans believe having arts and culture events in their communities make life better and when it comes to business, quality of life counts! A full 84% of business owners and white collar recruits around the country say they look for local arts activities for their families when considering relocation. The diversity and number of Knox County's arts and culture industry per capita is second to none. That is why we say the arts and culture industry is one of the county's most effective and consistent economic drivers.

After all, Knox County's arts and culture organizations comprise a 30 million dollar industry that employs more than 1,000 people full time. That's as many as KUB or TVA.

The spin-off in spending from their activities benefit restaurants, parking garages, suppliers, and contracted jobs and swells the County's sales tax and property tax collections. For example, the run of one theatre's musical in Knox County generated \$731,182 in dining, concessions, tickets, parking, gas, childcare, and more! Tourism income that these organizations help generate save every Knox County family \$313 in taxes each year by attracting more than \$500 million dollars to our county in the past year. Downtown Knoxville could appropriately be called the city the arts re-built since nearly 20 historic buildings within the central business improvement district have been redeveloped and animated by arts and culture uses. The arts and culture industry offers Knox County residents and visitors access to interesting and exciting activities every day of the week, every week of the year. It's easy to understand why, compared to the national average of 27 percent, a full 49 percent of Tennesseans say that arts and culture are important to their lives and we couldn't agree more!

No other industry partners with as many other sectors such as the Tourism and Sports Corporation, health care, leadership development programs, social service agencies, faith-based institutions, and above all schools, to reach into and serve the Knox County community. Our arts and culture organizations and museums are the guardians, proponents, and presenters of the archaeology of our region, the founding of our state, the history of our county.

By partnering with the Knox County School system, the organizations participating in Penny Performances deliver more than 100,000 hours of education to our county's children at no charge to the county, the school system, the parent, or the child. As a result of their work, Knox County's children who participate in arts and culture are better educated, score higher on standardized tests, and realize an increase of 400% in their creativity ratings.

We hope you and your family enjoy every Penny Performance! Thank you for your support!

Liza Zenni
Executive Director
Arts & Culture Alliance
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