

Jerry Yoshitomi's letter of support for Ventura County Arts Council and the Artists in Community Partnerships Grants Program

I am pleased to write this letter in support of the Ventura County Arts Council and their Artists in Community Partnerships Grants Program. It is my feeling that it is a very worthwhile project that will benefit not only the arts community but the community at large as well by addressing and solving some of our community's most pressing issues. They'll be selecting and working with our County's best artists to create remarkable work and participant experiences. With this grants program, they bridge the 'intrinsic vs. instrumental' arts impact divide. Their work is a model that should be emulated by arts councils throughout the country.

I became acquainted with the VCAC five years ago when I moved to Ventura County. The VCAC was among a number of arts surprises I've experienced since moving to this County on the central California Coast. They've been able to accomplish here, very quickly, work that hasn't yet matured in many other California communities. I've been impressed by the quality of people involved with and the work of the Ventura County Arts Council. I was a member of the faculty for several countywide technical assistance conferences and saw first hand the impact of their collaborations with the Ventura City Department of Cultural Affairs. The VCAC enjoys an excellent reputation among the county's arts community leaders and are thought of very highly by both individuals and arts organizations. Without a doubt, they are a key contributor to the arts on the central California Coast.

I'm pleased to offer my support to VCAC Executive Director, Margaret Travers as they were developing their innovative new grants program, I was pleased to do so as their aims were directly in line with my long held position that the arts change communities. They're taking the bold position that the arts have a direct impact on community lives. It was apparent that they understood the fundamental focus of The James Irvine Foundation's investment in Ventura County. Their position, as well as the impact that will result from their work, will be a bell-weather for the work of public arts agencies for years to come.

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