

# Useful Quotes for Arts Advocates

From the National Performing Arts Convention Website

[www.performingartsconvention.org](http://www.performingartsconvention.org)

**Advocacy Tip:** A quote from an elected official representing your district, your community's mayor, or a local business leader can be a smart, effective addition to the resources below. You can solicit such a quote, or if you are in the position to do so, draft a quote for that individual and then request permission to attribute it to them going forward.

## Business Leader Quotes on Skills for Work and Innovation

"It is in Apple's DNA that technology alone is not enough—it's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the results that make our heart sing."  
—Steve Jobs, in introducing the iPad 2 in 2011

"In my own philanthropy and business endeavors, I have seen the critical role that the arts play in stimulating creativity and in developing vital communities....the arts have a crucial impact on our economy and are an important catalyst for learning, discovery, and achievement in our country."  
—Paul G. Allen, Co-Founder, Microsoft

"CEOs identify creativity as the number one leadership competency of the successful enterprise of the future...the biggest challenge facing enterprises from here on will be the accelerating complexity and the velocity of a world that is operating as a massively interconnected system."  
—Frank Kern, senior vice president, IBM Global Business Services, on announcing the results of a 2010 study of more than 1,500 Chief Executive Officers from 60 countries and 33 industries worldwide

"The rapidly evolving global economy demands a dynamic and creative workforce. The arts and its related businesses are responsible for billions of dollars in cultural exports for this country. It is imperative that we continue to support the arts and arts education both on the national and local levels. The strength of every democracy is measured by its commitment to the arts."  
—Charles Segars, CEO of Ovation

"We need people who think with the creative side of their brains—people who have played in a band, who have painted...it enhances symbiotic thinking capabilities, not always thinking in the same paradigm, learning how to kick-start a new idea, or how to get a job done better, less expensively."  
—Annette Byrd, GlaxoSmithKline

"A broad education in the arts helps give children a better understanding of their world... We need students who are culturally literate as well as math and science literate."  
—Paul Ostergard, Vice President, Citicorp

"Arts education aids students in skills needed in the workplace: flexibility, the ability to solve problems and communicate, the ability to learn new skills, to be creative and innovative, and to strive for excellence."  
—Joseph M. Calahan, Director of Cooperate Communications, Xerox Corporation

“GE hires a lot of engineers. We want young people who can do more than add up a string of numbers and write a coherent sentence. They must be able to solve problems, communicate ideas and be sensitive to the world around them. Participation in the arts is one of the best ways to develop these abilities.”  
– Clifford V. Smith, *President of the General Electric Foundation*

"I believe that creativity will be the currency of the 21st century."  
– Gerald Gordon, *Ph.D., President/CEO, Fairfax County (Virginia) Economic Development Authority*

“Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn’t really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That’s because they were able to connect experiences they’ve had and synthesize new things. And the reason they were able to do that was that they’ve had more experiences or they have thought more about their experiences than other people. Unfortunately, that’s too rare a commodity. A lot of people in our industry haven’t had very diverse experiences. So they don’t have lots of dots to connect, and they end up with very linear solution without a broad perspective on the problem. The broader one’s understanding of the human experience, the better design we will have.”

–Steve Jobs

## **Arts Education Essential to Complete Education for the Whole Child**

“I believe arts education in music, theater, dance, and the visual arts is one of the most creative ways we have to find the gold that is buried just beneath the surface. They (children) have an enthusiasm for life a spark of creativity, and vivid imaginations that need training – training that prepares them to become confident young men and women.”  
– Richard W. Riley, *Former US Secretary of Education*

“An elementary school that treats the arts as the province of a few gifted children, or views them only as recreation and entertainment, is a school that needs an infusion of soul. That arts are an essential element of education, just like reading, writing, and arithmetic.”  
–William Bennett, *Former US Secretary of Education*

“The arts are an essential element of education, just like reading, writing, and arithmetic...music, dance, painting, and theater are all keys that unlock profound human understanding and accomplishment.”  
–William Bennett, *Former US Secretary of Education*

"The future belongs to young people with an education and the imagination to create."  
–President Barack Obama

"In the push for quality math, science, technical, humanities, and other programs, please be sure that the arts are not ignored or pushed to one side. Provide your political support for the total curriculum. The arts enrich all of us."  
–Dr. Richard Miller, *Executive Director American Association of School Administrators*

". . . the arts have been an inseparable part of the human journey; indeed, we depend on the arts to carry us toward the fullness of our humanity. We value them for themselves, and because we do, we believe knowing and practicing them is fundamental to the healthy development of our children's minds and spirits. That is why, in any civilization - ours included - the arts are inseparable from the very meaning of the term 'education.' We know from long experience that no one can claim to be truly educated who lacks basic knowledge and skills in the arts."  
–National Standards for Arts Education

## **Cultural Heritage and the Arts as Essential to Society**

"In the third year of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln ordered work to go ahead on the completion of the dome of the Capitol. When critics protested the diversion of labor and money from the prosecution of the war, Lincoln said, 'If people see the capitol going on, it is a sign that we intend this Union shall go on.' Franklin Roosevelt recalled this story in 1941 when, with the world in the blaze of war, he dedicated the National Gallery in Washington. And John Kennedy recalled both these stories when he asked for public support for the arts in 1962. Lincoln and Roosevelt, Kennedy said, 'understood that the life of the arts, far from being an interruption, a distraction, in the life of the nation, is very close to the center of a nation's purpose- and is a test of the quality of a nation's civilization.'"  
—Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

"The Arts and Sciences, essential to the prosperity of the State and to the ornament of human life, have a primary claim to the encouragement of every lover of his country and mankind."  
—George Washington

"I must study politics and war, that my sons may study mathematics and philosophy...in order to give their children the right to study painting, poetry, music and architecture."  
—John Q. Adams

"Art is a nation's most precious heritage. For it is in our works of art that we reveal to ourselves and to others the inner vision which guides us as a nation. And where there is no vision, the people perish."  
—Lyndon Johnson, on signing into existence the National Endowment on the Arts

"Life without industry is guilt; industry without art is brutality."  
—John Rushkin

"Aeschylus and Plato are remembered today long after the triumphs of Imperial Athens are gone. Dante outlived the ambitions of thirteenth century Florence. Goethe stands serenely above the politics of Germany, and I am certain that after the dust of centuries has passed over cities, we too will be remembered not for victories or defeats in battle or in politics, but for our contribution to the human spirit."  
—John F. Kennedy

"The creative arts are the measure and reflection of our civilization. They offer many children an opportunity to see life with a larger perspective...The moral values we treasure are reflected in the beauty and truth that is emotionally transmitted through the arts. The arts say something about us to future generations."  
—Ann P. Kahn, Former President of The National PTA

"The greatest wealth of this nation is not only the mergers of giant corporations or the possibility of further globalization of the infrastructure of the world. In the United States, our greatest single source of wealth is the minds and talent of our young people. Not to use it is stupid - to waste it is a crime."  
—Isaac Stern, renowned musician

## **Innovation and the Arts (also see business leader quotes above)**

"Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere."  
—Albert Einstein

"Pyramids, cathedrals, and rockets exist not because of geometry, theories of structures, or thermodynamics, but because they were first a picture-- literally a vision--in the minds of those who built them. Society is where it is today because people had the perception; the images and the imagination; the creativity that the Arts provide, to make the world the place we live in today."  
—Eugene Ferguson, Historian

"The innovative cities of the coming age will develop a creative union of technology, arts and civics."  
–*Sir Peter Hall, renowned geographer and authority on the economic, demographic, cultural and management issues facing cities*

"The arts significantly boost student achievement, reduce discipline problems, and increase the odds students will go on to graduate from college. As First Lady Michelle Obama sums up, both she and the President believe 'strongly that arts education is essential for building innovative thinkers who will be our nation's leaders for tomorrow.'"  
–*Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education*

## Humanity and Arts and Culture

"If you have only two pennies, spend the first on bread and the other on hyacinths for your soul."  
–*Arab Proverb*

"Art is fundamental, unique to each of us...Even in difficult economic times - especially in difficult economic times - the arts are essential."  
–*Maria Shriver, Award-Winning Journalist and Author*

"The arts are not a frill. The arts are a response to our individuality and our nature, and help to shape our identity. What is there that can transcend deep difference and stubborn divisions? The arts. They have a wonderful universality. Art has the potential to unify. It can speak in many languages without a translator. The arts do not discriminate. The arts can lift us up."  
–*Former Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan*

"How can we turn our back on an endeavor which increases our children's cultural intelligence, heightens individual sensitivity and deepens our collective sense of humanity? I suggest to you that we cannot."  
–*Alec Baldwin at Arts Advocacy Day 1997*

## Music Education Quotes

"Music is a more potent instrument than any other for education, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul."  
– *Plato*

"Whoever has skill in music is of good temperament and fitted for all things. We must teach music in schools."  
– *Martin Luther*

"Music education opens doors that help children pass from school into the world around them – a world of work, culture, intellectual activity, and human involvement. The future of our nation depends on providing our children with a complete education that includes music."  
– *Gerald Ford, Former President of the United States*

“Music is about communication, creativity, and cooperation, and by studying music in schools, students have the opportunity to build on these skills, enrich their lives, and experience the world from a new perspective.”  
– Bill Clinton, *Former President of the United States*

“Our schools tend to refine intellects but neglect to discipline emotions.  
For anyone to grow up complete, music is imperative.”  
– Paul Harvey, *Broadcaster/Commentator*

“Music gives us a language that cuts across the disciplines, helps us to see connections and brings a more coherent meaning to our world.”  
– Ernest Boyer, *President, Carnegie Foundation*

## **Science and Arts**

“Man is unique not because he does science, and he is unique not because he does art, but because science and art equally are expressions of his marvelous plasticity of mind.”  
--Jacob Bronowski, *scientist, formerly of the Salk Institute*

## **Arts and Culture Strengthening Communities**

“The arts are the best insurance policy a city can take on itself.”  
–Woody Dumas, *former Mayor of Baton Rouge*

"Politicians don't bring people together. Artists do."  
–Richard Daley, *Former Mayor of Chicago*

*With thanks to Gully Stanford, formerly of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts,  
who initiated this compendium of quotes.*

*Please note that your suggestions are most welcome for this evolving list.  
Please submit ideas to [dmontgomery.artsculture\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:dmontgomery.artsculture@gmail.com)*