

## **Communications strategies:**

### **To support funding for the arts in Ketchikan, FY2003-2004**

In the face of economic challenges, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough proposed a budget for FY2003-2004 that would have completely eliminated Borough funding for the Ketchikan Area Arts & Humanities Council and First City Players (a cut of \$21,600 for each organization.) The local arts community responded with an advocacy campaign aimed at conveying the impact that a strong arts community has on Ketchikan's economy and quality of life. The Borough Assembly reinstated arts funding for FY2003-2004, and continues to recognize the important role that the arts play in Ketchikan, even for those who are not directly involved in the programs and services that these non-profit organizations provide.

### **Organizational strengths and internal tools:**

- Existing strength of programs and services
- Broad community participation and support
- Talking points
  - Emphasizing two messages:
    - The role the arts play in quality of life (individual and community)
    - The role the arts play in the economy (individual and community)
  - Providing both facts and anecdotes in support of central messages
  - Setting tone: thanks for past support, please continue making investment
- Advocacy plan (see KAAHC Board advocacy worksheet)
  - Who is the best person of the KAAHC and FCP board members and supporters to talk to each of the Borough Assembly members?
  - Letters to the editor from arts supporters across the community
  - Public comment at Assembly meetings and budget work sessions
- Tips on writing letters to the editor

### **Communications with Assembly members and Borough staff:**

- Initial funding request, including flyer on "Arts and Economic Impact"
- Conversations between arts supporters and individual Assembly members
- Follow-up letter to individual Assembly members from Board Chair, with insert of Chamber of Commerce resolution in support of funding for the arts
- Strong attendance at Assembly meetings and work sessions.
  - Turn it into a party – festival t-shirts, costumes, kilts, sandwiches and snacks, "Art Matters" fans and buttons, sketch pads, etc.
  - Brief public comment by designated representatives. Limit podium time to under 5 minutes, out of respect for the work on the Assembly's agenda. (The speaker usually asks people to stand or raise their hands if they are there in support of the arts.)
- Thank you letters to Assembly members and staff following funding decision
- Inclusion of Assembly members and Borough management on the KAAHC mailing list. They receive monthly newsletters, invitations to gallery receptions, calls for artists, and other regular correspondence, so that they hear about many arts events and programs throughout the year.

### **Communications with arts supporters**

- Calls for action via:
  - Email announcements from the Chairs of the Boards
  - Flyers/Announcements of upcoming Borough budget work sessions. Available and distributed at arts events – performances, gallery openings, Art Walks, etc – wherever a crowd is already gathering for art.
- Identifying key supporters who could speak about different facets of the impact of the arts in their lives, and requesting letters of support to Assembly members and letters to the editor.

### **Communications with the public / Demonstrations of broad public support:**

- Chamber of Commerce resolution
- Submission of article to *Mirror Images* (a free local paper, no longer in circulation)
- Letters to the editor
- Public comment at Assembly meetings

### **Other related tools and strategies:**

- “Art Matters” campaign materials from the Alaska State Council on the Arts (flyers and pins)
- 2001 Arts & Economic impact survey, which collected data in Ketchikan
- Candidate forums in Arts Council newsletter
- Acknowledgement of Borough funding in event programs, curtain speeches, posters, and anywhere donors and supporters are recognized.