

Michigan Cultural Institutions Unite to Promote the Importance of Arts and Culture Funding

August 26, 2020

With the upcoming state budget discussions looming, the Cultural Advocacy Network of Michigan (CAN) has been actively advocating the past few weeks. You will be proud to note that libraries have been amplifying their voices, sharing the importance of state aid to libraries and their contribution to our communities.

CAN is a relatively new advocacy organization of statewide associations that represent the full breadth of cultural interests in each of our communities, including libraries, arts organizations, festivals, historical societies, museums and historic preservation.

A series of hour-long regional meetings (by Zoom) took place with legislators from the Southwest Region, Wayne County, Oakland County, Midland/Saginaw Counties, Kent County, Clinton/Eaton/Ingham/Jackson Counties, Genesee/Bay Counties, and Macomb County and many MLA members took part. The meetings gave our arts/cultural and library leaders in each of these regions an opportunity to meet their legislators and share how COVID-19 has impacted libraries, communities, and the services they provide. It also gave them a chance to share the importance of state funding from a number of sources including State Aid for Libraries from the Library of Michigan, grants through the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, and promotion of state historic preservation tax credits.

Special shout-out to our library members from those regions that took time to participate and share their thoughts:

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Miriam Andrus, Grace A. Dow Memorial Library, Midland

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Scott Duimstra, Capital Area District Library

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Julie Farkas, Novi Public Library

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Randy Goble, Kent District Library

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Jenny Marr, Ferndale Area District Library

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Larry Neal, Clinton-Macomb Public Library

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Cathy Russ, Troy Public Library

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Kay Schwartz, Flint Public Library

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Kristin Shelley, East Lansing Public Library

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Jason Shoup, Jackson District Library

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Ryan Wieber, Kalamazoo Public Library

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Representation from the Dearborn Public Library