

“Over the last three decades, involvement in civic associations, participation in public affairs, membership in churches and social clubs and unions, time spent with family and friends and neighbors, philanthropic giving, (and) even simple trust in other people...all have fallen by 25 to 50 percent” (Putnam, 2003, p. 4). The loss of social connectedness has been shown to have measurable effects on our society. Robert Putnam (n.d.) developed measures of social capital based on the premise that how people interact with their community (attend meetings, volunteer, serve on committees, vote, have friends over to their home, belong to a church, etc.) has demonstrable effects on other social and economic outcomes. Strong evidence exists that where social capital is high, educational performance, child welfare, even general health, are also high. Conversely, violent crime is low.

The mission of community and cultural arts centers is to build, serve, and sustain all types and sizes of communities by providing opportunities for people to share experiences, traditions, and identity. One way to build social capital is through membership and participation in community groups like these.

CULTURAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

“Unlike arts organizations, whose core mission typically is oriented toward creating and presenting high-quality artworks for their intrinsic value, cultural heritage [cultural arts] organizations often explicitly describe their purpose as using diverse expressive forms to directly benefit youth, the elderly, immigrants, ethnic groups, neighborhoods, towns, and cities” (Rosenstein, 2006, p.3). These cultural arts

organizations can be classified into three broad groups, organizations where the purpose is:

- Increasing cultural, ethnic, and folk understanding using a variety of expressive forms (61%)
- Producing culturally based fairs, festivals, parades, and other celebrations (25%)
- Presenting, promoting, and training communities using primarily artistic cultural activities (14%)

In Rosenstein’s study (2006), specific ethnic and cultural affiliation was related to the types of cultural activities (arts, festivals, languages, multiple activities, other) offered:

- Arts activities were predominant at organizations affiliated with African-American (41% of all activities), Hispanic (36%), and multi-ethnic (45%) cultures
- Cultural organizations based on European heritage produced festivals (28%) more often than the other activities examined
- Centers affiliated with those of Asian/Pacific Islander descent offered language programs (33%) more often than any other type of activity
- Multiple or other types of activities, such as historical or religious activities, occurred most often in organizations focused on Middle Eastern (31%) and Native American (33%) culture

From a financial perspective, the cultural arts organizations included in Rosenstein’s study (2006) typically received less revenue than other arts organizations; an average of \$525,000 per year for cultural arts as compared to an average of \$842,000 per year for other arts. In addition, approximately 60% of the organizations

operated on a budget of less than \$100,000, while only 4% maintained budgets of more than two (2) million dollars (Rosenstein, 2006).

Recent data from the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) show that there were 4,776 non-profit cultural arts organizations in the United States as of August 2016, which represent 15% of all arts, culture and humanities nonprofits (NCCS, 2016). In Texas there are currently 109,797 registered nonprofit public charities. Of those, 7,214 list their major purpose as Arts/Culture/ Humanities. 14% of organizations in that category are considered cultural organizations. Bexar County has a slightly higher percentage with 16% while Bandera, Comal, and Kendall counties come in at 12%, 10%, and 13% respectively (see Table 1 at end of brief)(NCCS, 2016).

STRENGTHS OF COMMUNITY/CULTURAL ARTS PROGRAMS

Both cultural arts and community organizations have the ability to positively affect the cultural vitality of neighborhoods and communities. In 2008, as part of its Arts and Culture Indicators Project (ACIP), the Urban Institute (n.d.) ranked 100 metropolitan areas for indicators of cultural vitality. Table 2 (at end of brief) provides those rankings for San Antonio, with comparisons using metropolitan Texas cities and the cities who received the highest ranking of one (1). More recently, a study by Creative Cities International, LLC (2011), ranked 35 U.S. cities on civic vitality (See Table 3).

Demographic research and surveys looked at cultural institutions, cultural resources, projects, public spaces, events and parks to make an assessment on what individuals value and compares cities that are established as culturally viable (Creative Cities International, LLC, 2011).

Cultural arts and community centers also have the ability to build social capital, the supply of combined social networks used to solve common challenges. Community and cultural arts centers that utilize social capital for beneficial purposes thrive and become focal points of the community.

Two approaches exist to positively implement social capital. Bridging merges people from varying positions and backgrounds and may also provide external information and resources to disadvantaged communities. On the other hand, bonding strengthens the existing community identity. It seeks to uplift those in underprivileged neighborhoods from the challenges of day to day living (Harvard Kennedy School, n.d.). Many cultural and community centers provide opportunities for both bridging and bonding.

All social impact studies find a consistent set of positive neighborhood effects associated with community arts and culture by:

- Bridging long-term barriers of class and ethnicity as well as age and gender
- Fostering social and institutional connections both within and between neighborhoods
- Animating public spaces and creating physical amenities
- Stimulating community capacity-building and economic well-being

(Stern & Seifert, 2008)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

Community development corporations (CDC's) recently evolved as a unique way to improve urban communities by using multiple arenas. "These groups are nonprofit, community-controlled real estate development organizations dedicated to the revitalization of poor neighborhoods. They undertake physical revitalization as well as economic development, social services, and organizing and advocacy activities" (Walker, 2002, p1). The National Community Development Initiative conducted 10 years of research on CDCs in 23 American cities, including San Antonio. It concluded that the CDCs influenced neighborhood markets (by increasing residential property values), responded to neighborhood problems, and began to develop comprehensive approaches to improving the community during the 1990's (Walker, 2002).

The RAND Corporation (2007), in a recent study of 10 major cities, cites three major conditions

that appear to “foster high levels of cultural support” including:

- Organizational support – either one large, multi-functional agency providing a range of services or a combination of public and private agencies
- Integration of the Arts with economic development – may include tourism, community revitalization, film production
- Collaborative relationships among Arts organizations – may include joint marketing, fundraising efforts, controlling production costs

LOCAL CULTURE AND TOURISM

Cultural identity, heritage and historic sites attract travelers to spend time and money in a local area over a period of time because of events related to culture. According to Americans for the Arts (n.d.), cultural arts tourists:

- Spend more than other travelers
- Are more likely to stay in overnight lodging
- Are more likely to spend \$1,000 or more during their stay
- Travel longer than other travelers

Many people involve themselves in cultural events when they arrive at their destination and claim that they would have traveled elsewhere if the event were not happening. Cultural events allow local businesses such as restaurants, hotels, retail stores and parking garages to flourish when tourists are present, aggregately stimulating the economy.

In total, culture organizations in the United States help support a \$135.2 billion dollar industry, create 4.1 million jobs and generate 22.3 billion in government revenue every year (Americans for the Arts, n.d.).

In San Antonio, rich culture and tourism help to support the local economy. The arts sector produced \$4.6 billion in local revenue and increased employment by 11.6 percent over the past nine years (City of San Antonio, 2015).

CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ARTS IN THE SAN ANTONIO REGION

A partial listing of current community cultural arts organizations in San Antonio and its surrounding counties includes:

- Artpace, Inc. (n.d.) – *Art education and exhibitions*
- Arts San Antonio (2013) – *Performing/visual arts and community education*
- Barshop Jewish Community Center (n.d.) – *Art events and community programs*
- Carver Community Cultural Center (n.d.) – *African-American arts, performance, community outreach, and education programs*
- Centro Cultural Aztlan (n.d.) – *Cultural awareness through local art*
- Ella Austin Community Center (2015) – *Social and family services*
- Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center (n.d.) – *Multidisciplinary Latino art and culture*
- San Anto Cultural Arts (n.d.) – *Community based newspaper and mural/public art programs*
- Say Si (2015) – *Art education and career preparation for youth*
- Southwest School of Art (2013) – *Advancement of visual arts through classes and exhibitions*
- Urban 15 (2014) – *Education programs in dance, music and visual arts*

BENEFITS OF CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ARTS

- Cultural engagement contributes to the quality of life by stimulating local community participation and increasing a variety of values such as social inclusion and neighborhood revitalization (Stern & Seifert, 2008).
- Community identity is strengthened by the integration of arts and cultural resources with civic institutions (American Planning Association, 2011).
- There is a connection between community culture and child welfare. Low income groups with high cultural participation were more than twice as likely to have very low

truancy and delinquency as other low-income neighborhoods (Stern & Seifert, 2008).

- Community centers engage minority and low-income children that may otherwise be vulnerable to drug addiction and violence (Zakaras & Lowell, 2008).
- A strong relationship exists between the presence of cultural resources in the community and lower levels of social stress in children (Schleter, 2011).
- Community based organizations that implement out of school time (OST) programs introduce professionals to students and improve art education in under-privileged urban school districts (Bodilly, Augustine & Zakaras, 2008).
- There are lower incidents of racial and ethnic harassment in communities that offer a multitude of cultural art opportunities (Schleter, 2011).

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Table 1 REGISTERED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AS OF AUGUST 2016						
	US	TX	Bexar	Bandera	Comal	Kendall
Total Nonprofit Public Charities (PC)	1,581,445	109,797	5,843	165	706	341
Arts/Culture/Humanities (PC)	118,498	7,214	416	8	61	23
Arts, Cultural Orgs – Multipurpose	4,776	245	9	-	1	-
Cultural, Ethnic Awareness	13,043	762	57	1	5	3
Folk Arts	517	23	2	-	-	-

(NCCS, 2016)

Table 2 U.S. METROPOLITAN AREA RANKINGS ON CULTURAL VITALITY INDICATORS (2008)									
		<i>Other Texas</i>			<i>Cities with #1 Rankings</i>				
	San Antonio	Austin	Dallas	Houston	Los Angeles	Honolulu	New York	San Francisco	Wash. D.C.
Most Arts establishments per 1,000 population	58	16	88	90	1	17	7	9	32
Most Arts employment as share of total employment	53	32	79	65	6	1	2	4	37
Most Arts Non-Profit Organizations	38	28	9	12	2	39	1	4	3
Most Non-Profit festivals, fairs, and parades per 1,000 capita	78	30	75	83	46	10	12	1	6
Most Non-Profit Art expenses	71	64	43	35	18	8	4	5	1
Most Non-Profit Arts Contributions per 1,000 capita	68	60	38	41	14	8	3	2	1
Most artist jobs per 1,000 capita	72	9	47	75	1	16	3	4	11

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