



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Aaron L. Myers II, Executive Director
November 17th, 2025

The following is a summary of the agency's activities and operations.

1. Staff Updates

CAH will welcome Indya Wright as our new Communication's Director December 1st. Ms Wright comes to us from the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs, where she has done great work coordinating the communications efforts for over 10 agencies.

I, along with David Markey, travelled to Omaha, Nebraska last week to attend the NASAA Executive & Deputy Director Summit. This was an opportunity to reflect on the previous year's work, hear solutions that have been proposed and implemented by other state art agencies, and how they may impact work we do at CAH. I was most excited to learn more about how agencies are embracing Art Rx (Arts on Prescriptions programs). This is a program that works along with health insurance companies and Medicaid to provide universal art experiences as prescriptions for patience, where states (like Massachusetts) who already provide this, have seen reported decreases in anxiety and depression symptoms, and an increase in self-reported creativity.

We closed out the summit with the announcement that CAH/Washington DC will be hosting the larger convening in 2026. It will be an opportunity to bring state art agency directors, deputies, staff and boards/commissions to Washington DC to introduce them to our unique and diverse arts ecosystem here, along with providing a space for them to strategize with one another and to advocate directly to their federal representatives here at the Capitol. This will have a positive economic impact upon our hotels, restaurants and service industry here in DC.

2. Budget

Last week, the Budget office announced the Agency's MARC (Maximum Allowable Request Ceiling) for FY27 will be \$44,352,000 (this budget amount excludes any fund balance) a cumulative decrease of \$402.34K. The team is working now to learn how this number will impact our programs and focuses as we develop the agency's Personnel and Non-Personnel budgets.

3. Grants

Our Grants team is preparing for the Annual Grants Revamp meeting this Friday, November 21st. The meeting is where the Grants team and Commissioners will present and discuss potential changes to the grants process based on the community feedback collected throughout the year.

Large Capital Projects Grant:

This grant is currently open and applications are due on Wednesday, December 17th at 10:00pm If you have any questions about the Large Capitol Projects grant program please contact our Senior Grants Officer Terrell Johnson at Terrell.Johnson@dc.gov

Small Capital Projects Grant:

The Grants team will present their funding recommendations and hold a vote during today's meeting.

4. Events

This month has seen a flurry of activities, and we encourage our commissioners and staff to follow and keep tabs on the agency's social media, e-blasts and website. Today we will have a Commissioner and Staff social upstairs at Bluejacket, Tuesday Novemebr 18th we will host "Exhibiting Art in Washington DC' in our I (Eye) Street Gallery SE, and Thursday we will have our FY26 Grantee Welcome Reception where grantees will have the opportunity to attend the Umbrella Art Fair Friend and Family Reception that will also be happening on the 5th floor. Friday 11/21 and Saturday 11/22, we will host panels at Umbrella Art Fair "How Can DC use Art as a Lever for Economic Development" and the Collector's Stage: Creating Value and Legacy.

I would like to take this time to thank the staff, and events team, for working so hard to ensure we create the space for community to come together, network, learn, and have exposure. The theme of this fiscal year is "Life Beyond Grantmaking" and we could not do this work, to advocate on behalf of the arts ecosystem in Washington DC without the phenomenal staff at CAH.