

DONA ANA ARTS COUNCIL TALKING POINTS

- The Dona Ana Arts Council has a forty year history in this community and is the umbrella organization for the visual and performing arts.
- DAAC is housed in the historic Rio Grande Theatre on Main Street. The theater is the oldest adobe theater in the southwest, has been recently renovated, is appraised at over 5 million dollars, seats 450 people and has state of the art sound and light systems.
- DAAC sponsors the Renaissance Arts Faire, ARTSHOP and children and youth productions at the Rio Grande and throughout the area
- DAAC acts as fiscal agent to nine independent arts organizations
- DACC founded eight visual and performing arts organizations
- The State of New Mexico, the City of Las Cruces and Dona Ana County are funding sources for DAAC as well as private foundations, businesses and general members.
- DAAC comes under the umbrella of the State of New Mexico (NM Arts/a Division of the Offices of Cultural Affairs).
- DAAC has four staff, over 200 volunteers and is governed by a Board of Directors of 23 people.

As Executive Director of DAAC, I would welcome you students and faculty to attend any of the hundreds of performances at the Rio Grande, the Black Box Theatre, the LC Community Theatre, and of course, the ASTC, and the Music Recital Hall right here on campus. When doing research, there is nothing like getting right in the midst of the art, talking to the producers, performers and those who maintain the venues. Getting first-hand information while out in the field is the best way to understand the successes and challenges of the performing and visual arts.

One of the most exciting venues for the future of the arts in Las Cruces is the new Arts Center which will take this campus to huge heights.

While there are many, many visual artists in this area, I would like to point out that not many of them are expecting to earn a living doing art. For a great number, art is an avocation, not a vocation, so they would not necessarily factor into an economic development arena.

We need to be cautious about our vision for this area. The comparison or desire to become another Santa Fe might not be everyone's idea. True, Santa Fe is a destination point for cultural tourism but it has become so gentrified, it is difficult to live and work in the city. We want to keep Las Cruces affordable for everyone in the fields of visual, literary and performing arts. We have much to be proud of and to celebrate.

