

The Current State of The Arts in Tooele

"The arts are not a frill. The arts are a response to our individuality and our nature, and help to shape our identity. What is there that can transcend deep difference and stubborn divisions? The arts. They have a wonderful



universality. Art has the potential to unify. It can speak in many languages without a translator. The arts do not discriminate. The arts can lift us up."

-Former Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan



The Arts and Culture sector is one of the largest drivers of economic development in the United States. It enhances the quality of life in communities and is one of the highest measurements businesses use when gauging development trends - only behind skilled labor. Event-related spending by arts audiences pumps vital revenue into restaurants, hotels, retail stores, and other local merchants. This is not just from local audiences, but non-local audiences as well. The arts and culture sector is the cornerstone of tourism in communities.

The arts also have the power to strengthen the social fabric that unites our communities together. According to the Arts and Economic Prosperity 5 study conducted by Americans for the Arts: 63% of those surveyed believe that "the arts lift them up beyond everyday experiences"; 64% feel "pure pleasure to experience and participate in the arts"; 73% say the arts are a "positive experience in a troubled world"; and 87% believe the arts are important to quality of life.

Recent world events aside, the arts are thriving. In 2015 alone, one valley over, Salt Lake City saw 7,398,371 people attend art events. Spending on average \$26.25 on local

services (excluding admission). This led to \$13,080,000 directly to the local economy.

Now, Tooele is not Salt Lake City. However, it is extremely close in proximity and growing. With a new highway being proposed that will cut travel times to the Salt Lake Valley, Tooele has no year-round live theatre to capitalize on this kind of growth and possibility of increased arts tourism. In fact, according to Americans for The Arts, 68% of tourism in the U.S. is driven by art and tourists that travel for art spend 2x more than other tourists do.

More than just the economy, Tooele is currently not experiencing the full effects that local art has on youth development and the community as a whole. According to Americans for the Arts, youth who engage in art-related programs are: 2X as likely to graduate college, 5x less likely to drop out, and 78% more likely to vote. Communities see a 5% drop in neighborhood crime and community members were 1.6X more likely to report they felt connected to their neighbors. The arts unite generations, reduces fear and empowers citizens.

Tooele needs a year-round company to help advocate for the arts and provide opportunities for community members to share their craft. It also needs this to utilize the tourism opportunity cultural organizations provide. We contacted one of two of Utah's only professional theaters, the Utah Shakespeare Festival to inquire about audience members from Tooele County. Even though it's a six hour drive away, over 700 of our community members travel down to Cedar City every single summer.



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How We Can Help

"Pyramids, cathedrals, and rockets exist not because of geometry, theories of structures, or thermodynamics, but because they were first a picture-- literally a vision--in the minds of those who built them. Society is where it is today because people had the perception; the images and the imagination; the creativity that the Arts provide, to make the world the place we live in today."

-Eugene Ferguson, Historian

The mission of Tooele Valley Theatre is to provide a safe environment for the artists of Tooele Valley to have these enriching theatrical experiences and to inspire, educate and entertain our audiences. Our vision is to ensure year round opportunities for the artists of the Tooele Valley to express their creativity, enrich local audiences and raise awareness for the arts in our hometown.

All four members of our board grew up in Tooele and have been large participants in the arts for a long while. We saw first hand the unfortunately small level of arts attendance to local productions. One of our aims in providing a year-round season is to keep live theatre in the minds of community members. To establish a consistent opportunity for families and individuals to have live theatrical experiences. We will also be advocating for the arts through social media campaigns that show the impacts arts can have on a community.

Another reason for our year-round season is to help foster a community of artists in the valley. Allowing individuals multiple opportunities to share their craft throughout the year. To give visual artists opportunities in scenic design, prop creation, lighting design, and costume design. To give performance artists opportunities in acting, singing and dancing. To give leaders opportunities in Directing or Stage Management. A future goal might be to offer a grant program to allow young artists opportunities to produce and direct a show sponsored by our organization. We want to bring people to these opportunities. In turn, raising art

attendance and involvement in the valley.

As part of this advocacy for the arts, we also want to collaborate with as many local artists and art groups as we can. Some examples would be providing chances for local artists to sell or display creations outside of our shows or allowing local performance groups chances to perform before our summer productions as a greenshow. Uniting the art community of Tooele will hopefully help the arts as a whole.

The arts are incredibly vital for the human experience. They satisfy a need for expression and catharsis. It's a food for the soul that you can't get anywhere else. We want to do all the heavy lifting so the artists of Tooele can learn, create and share their craft. We want to help artists do what they do best.

