

-What specific policies would you advocate for to support the arts and cultural sector in our state?

As a person who lived in the USSR where arts were heavily controlled by the state, I tend to shy away from the state “sponsorship” of anything, because the sponsor gets to choose what they sponsor. To keep the arts and the community free of such evil practices, I would support tax incentives for art education.

-How do you plan to ensure sustainable funding for nonprofit organizations for arts programs and initiatives?

As a person who established and runs a non-profit educational organization in MA, I can tell you that sustainable funding comes from interested stake-holders who support their programs of interest while utilizing the existing tax incentives to do so. Providing the public what they need and want is the key.

-How do you view the role of the arts in the state’s economic development?

As in the previous answer, if the type of Art is appealing to the masses, the economic forces of a free market will steer the ship in the right direction.

-What strategies would you implement to use the cultural sector as a driver of economic growth?

I will stay out of the way and keep the government away from those motivated individuals who wish to push their creativity, skills and passions forward. A free and uncensored platform for the arts.

-What are your views on arts education in schools? How would you ensure that arts education remains a priority in the state’s education system?

Art education is a key factor in the development of a well-rounded, free thinking individual. Thus, school education must include arts in their curriculum. School boards in conjunction with parent teacher organization should work in concert to establish viable curriculum suitable for all children. Collaboration is key.

-How do you plan to involve local communities in arts and cultural activities? What do you think could be done to better support local artists? And local nonprofits?

I can only lead by example and show what is near and dear to me. I would like to encourage artists to do more, to get out of their comfort zone, fundraise, organize community events and more to get their talents out there. There is no difference in arts and sciences, both must work to gain popularity and support.

-What measures would you take to make arts and culture more accessible to underserved communities?

Arts in Boston are pretty accessible if one chooses to look for arts. Artists must learn how to self-promote on social media platforms and to build-up interest in the communities. I am not sure who the underserved are in this day and age. I listen to opera and watch ballet, listen to poetry as well as painting classes for free on YouTube daily.

-What initiatives would you support to provide direct assistance to individual artists?

How do you plan to address the challenges faced by artists, such as affordable housing and workspace?

Other than tax incentives, I will not support any initiatives paid for by the state.

-What is your stance on public art projects and funding? How would you encourage the integration of public art into urban development projects?

I oppose state driven projects and integration in state facilities. I do believe that state property should be made available for arts free of charge.

-How do you plan to foster partnerships between the arts community and other sectors (e.g., business, education, tourism)? Can you provide examples of successful collaborations you've been involved in or supported?

I started and manage a non-profit career trade and technical school. I graduate between 500-600 students a year and set them on a course to success. In the process, I have developed meaningful partnerships with private donors and hundreds of employers. I can help facilitate the same for the arts community using my experience.

-How do you think the state legislature can better support the arts?

By leaving the arts free and clear of government influence. By making state land and buildings open to artists for displays and events in compliance with state law.

- What is your vision for the future of arts and culture in our community? How do you think we can achieve that vision together?
- Improved education in public high schools
- Allowing private school students to participate in public school initiatives
- Greater collaboration with school officials and parents to develop programs appealing to parents and students
- Public art displays and musical events in the common spaces and private homes
- Educating artists to learn the business side of art, fundraising classes, and organization of art collaboratives to name a few.