



**CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
SEATTLE MAYOR GREG NICKELS, ACTRESS KERRY WASHINGTON  
HILL HARPER RECEIVE 2009 PUBLIC LEADERSHIP IN THE ARTS AWARDS**

Washington, DC — January 19, 2009 — Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors will present the 2009 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards to **California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels**, actress and activist **Kerry Washington**, and actor and activist **Hill Harper**.

The awards honor elected officials and artists or arts organizations that have demonstrated outstanding leadership in the advancement of the arts. The awards will be presented on Monday, January 19 at 1:30 pm as part of The United States Conference of Mayors' 77<sup>th</sup> annual winter meeting in Washington, DC. The awards have been given annually by Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors since 1997.

“Mayor Nickels’ and Governor Schwarzenegger’s unparalleled commitment to supporting arts and arts education programs exemplifies how investment in the arts translates into community growth, economic prosperity, and student achievement,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “Their leadership in the arts should be an inspiration to all those serving in public office. We are also proud to recognize Kerry Washington and Hill Harper; actors whose dedicated advocacy for the arts and education is truly extraordinary.”

"Mayors have long recognized the importance of supporting the arts in their communities. By presenting these awards as the country transitions to a new Administration, we hope to raise the need for a higher profile for the arts within our federal government." Said Manny Diaz, Mayor of Miami and USCM President.

Following are brief descriptions of the 2009 Public Leadership in the Arts Award recipients:

**California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger** will receive the *2009 Award for State Arts Leadership* for championing support for arts education in California. In 2006, he sponsored legislation that included \$105 million in on-going funding for arts and music education and a \$500 million one-time block grant for arts/music/physical education equipment and supplies for the students of California. This generous funding allows students in California to receive the high-quality arts education and access to the arts.

**Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels** will receive the *2009 Award for Local Arts Leadership* for his dedicated arts leadership in the city. Upon taking office in 2002, Mayor Nickels reorganized the

Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs as executive department within the mayor's office and has appointed high-profile commissioners to lead the city's vibrant arts community. And in 2008 he granted the Office a \$1 million budget increase. He has also supported \$20.6 million in City Capital Cultural Investments. A strong proponent of arts education, Mayor Nickels provided seed investment in a groundbreaking Arts Education Partnership Initiative with Seattle Public Schools to restore arts education in the classroom.

**Kerry Washington** will receive the *2009 Award for Artist-Citizen*. She is an acclaimed stage, television and screen actress, and dedicated advocate for the arts and arts education. No stranger to Capitol Hill, where she has testified before Congress as a member of the Americans for the Arts Artists Committee, Washington is being honored for her commitment to arts funding through her advocacy work and other activities in promoting the arts.

**Hill Harper** will receive the *2009 Award for Artist-Citizen*. He is an accomplished film, television and stage actor and currently stars on CBS's *CSI: NY*. Through his political activism, volunteer work and philanthropic endeavors, Harper is a tireless advocate for empowering youth to succeed and recognize the values of a strong public education.

To view a list of previous award winners, please visit:

[http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/news/annual\\_awards/public\\_leadership/default.asp](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/news/annual_awards/public_leadership/default.asp).

*Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, it has a record of 49 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).*

*The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor. Additional information is available at [www.USMayors.org](http://www.USMayors.org).*

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