

**NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
for the ARTS**

 **arts.gov**



# Why Arts, Culture and Design?



**Illuminate** Bring new attention to or elevate key community assets and issues, voices of residents, local history, or cultural infrastructure



**Energize** Inject new or additional energy, resources, activity, people, or enthusiasm into a place, community issue, or local economy



**Imagine** Envision new possibilities for a community or place - a new future, a new way of overcoming a challenge, or approaching problem-solving



**Connect** Bring together communities, people, places, and economic opportunity via physical spaces or new relationships



# Creative Placemaking – NEA Our Town Program

Integration of arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities by advancing local economic, physical and/or social outcomes

Partnership between local/tribal government + nonprofit





asset based





cross-sector  
partnerships





community  
engagement



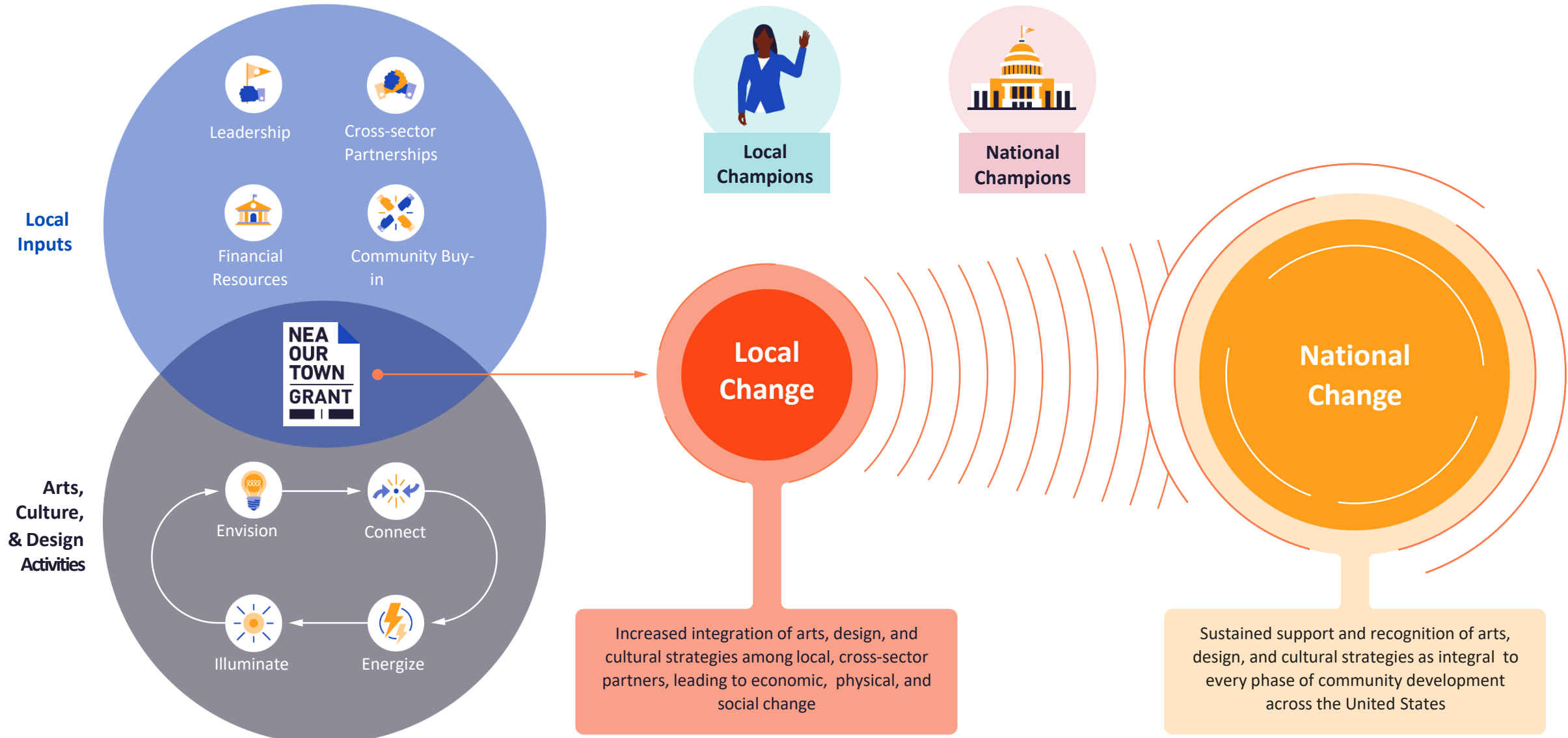


artists,  
designers,  
culture bearers



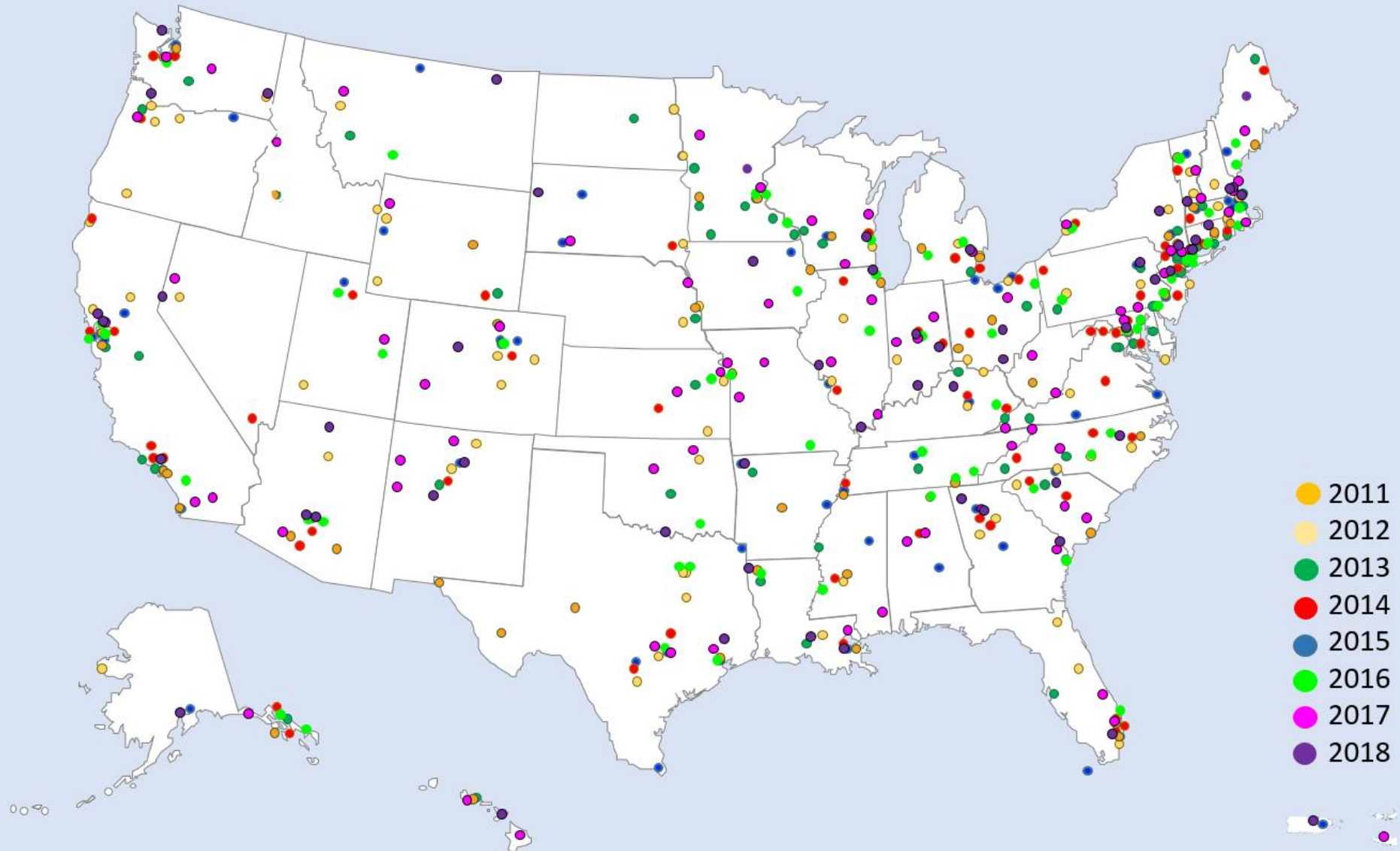
# Our Town Theory of Change

**PROBLEM STATEMENT:** American communities everywhere face a distinctive set of local economic, physical, and/or social challenges. Yet community leaders are often unaware of solutions that stem from the successful adoption and integration of arts, design, and cultural strategies.





# NEA Our Town Communities







**My Pool, My City  
Forklift Danceworks  
Austin, TX**

Photo by Lynn Lane





**Artist Space and Pow Wow Grounds  
Thunder Valley CDC  
Pine Ridge Reservation, SD**

Courtesy of Thunder Valley CDC





**The Public's Art  
Fulton County Arts Council  
GA**

Photo courtesy of Fulton County

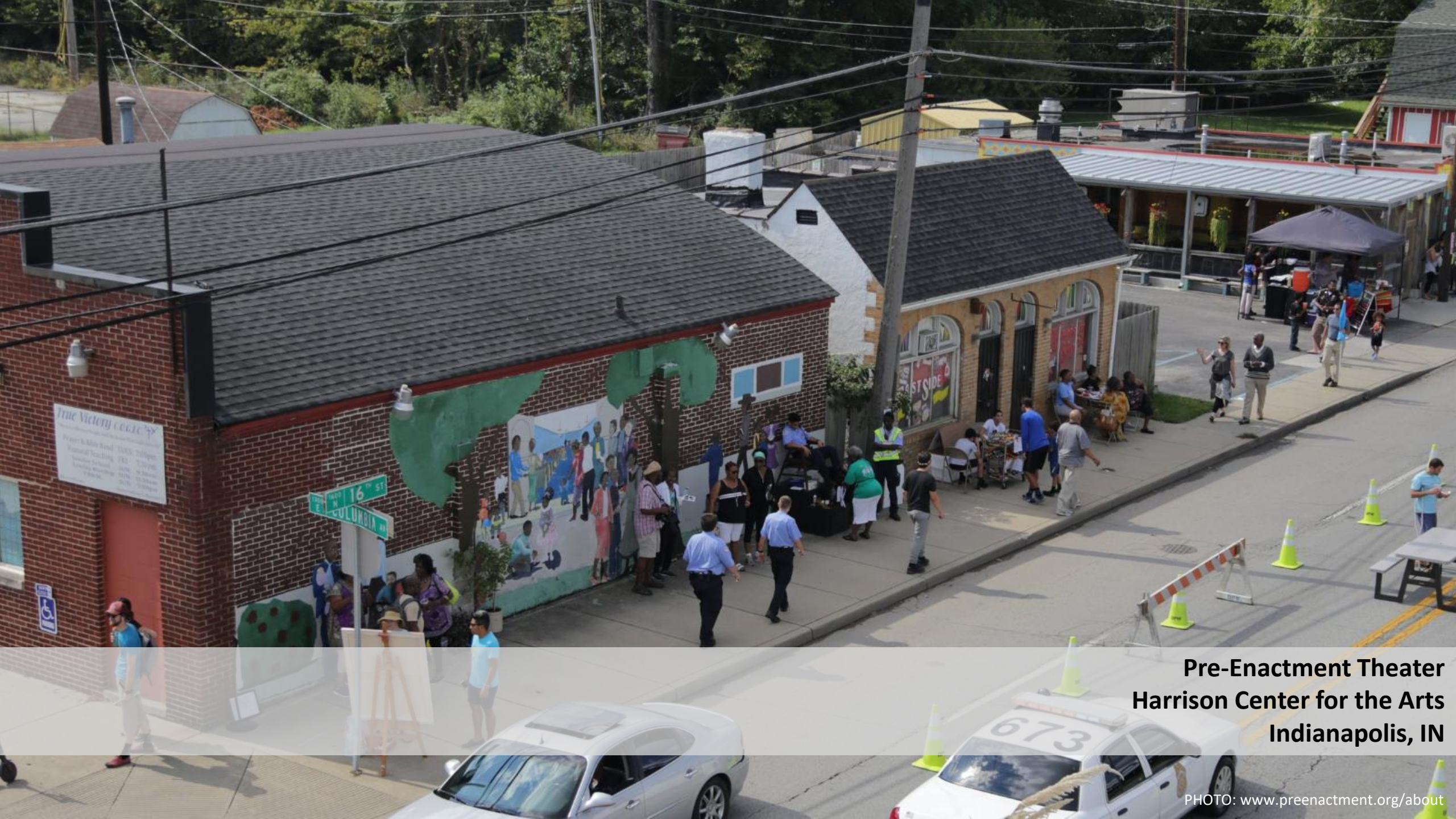




**Somos Oasis**  
**Kounkuey Design Initiative +Desert Recreation District**  
**Oasis, CA**

Photo courtesy of Kounkuey Design





**Pre-Enactment Theater  
Harrison Center for the Arts  
Indianapolis, IN**

PHOTO: [www.preenactment.org/about](http://www.preenactment.org/about)





**Rural and Proud  
Epicenter  
Green River, UT**



PHOTOS: John Colombo, Courtesy of GPAC



**Welcoming Pittsburgh  
Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council  
Pittsburgh, PA**



# Knowledge Building





# CREATIVE COUNTIES PLACEMAKING CHALLENGE:

Building Arts-Driven Community and  
Economic Development Solutions



NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION  
*of* COUNTIES





# RURAL VOICES

**RURAL PLACEMAKING: MAKING THE MOST OF CREATIVITY IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

## RURAL VOICES

Dear Friends

2

**Illuminate, Connect, Energize, and Imagine: The Arts in Rural America**  
The National Endowment for the Arts offers funding and technical assistance for organizations providing access to the creative arts.

4

**A Tool for Economic Development in the Mississippi Delta**  
The Delta Center's Placemaking Initiative encourages communities to engage local assets with the region's arts and culture sectors.

8

**Housing Developers Come Together with Arts Groups and Artists**  
An expert shares rural economic developers' best practices for planning with artists, cultural districts, and economically vibrant.

12

**Bridging Boundaries: Contributing to Quality of Life on the Reservation**  
A collaborative project developing community culture and the economic foundation in the context of a tribal development project.

16

**Kentucky Communities Use Their Creative Assets**  
The making of dreams is inspiring what is abundant in rural Kentucky: a strong sense of place, vibrant people, and creative economic strategies.

20

**Placemaking Grants Support Rural Communities**  
The recent American Planning Foundation's National Rural and Small Town Development Grant in Illinois, which will implement and evaluate placemaking initiatives during summer and fall 2017.

24

HAC Facts

27



4

**Illuminate, Connect, Energize, and Imagine: The Arts in Rural America**



12

**Housing Developers Come Together with Arts Groups and Artists**



20

**Kentucky Communities Use Their Creative Assets**



## RURAL VOICES

The first edition of Rural Voices Magazine was published in the fall of 1995. After 23 years, the magazine has held true to one basic premise – a platform for ‘voices’ across the United States to share, learn, and improve our rural communities. High-profile contributors include 6 U.S. Senators, 10 members of Congress and numerous cabinet officials and governors.

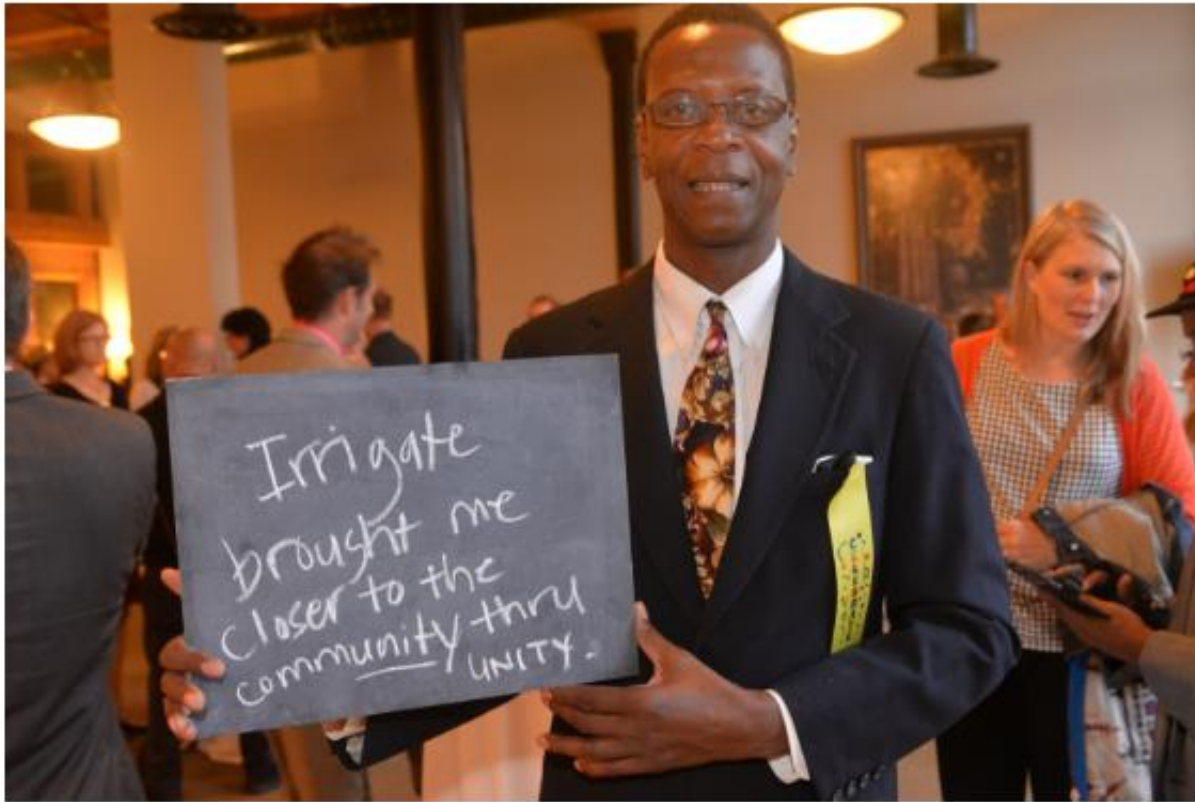
The Summer 2017 edition was dedicated to Rural Placemaking, in conjunction with the NEA Our Town Knowledge-Building Grant-funded Rural Placemaking partnership project with [bc]. The publication included contributions from the NEA's Jen Hughes, Chris Masingill, Chairman of the Delta Regional Authority, Bob Reeder of Rural LISC, Joseph Kunkel, Executive Director of the Sustainable Native Communities Collaborative, Sandi Curd, and Promise Zone Coordinator for the Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation. The publication also included an overview of the Rural Placemaking Program, featuring the two organizations working locally that were selected to receive technical assistance through the Request for Proposals Process.

To read the full issue, please visit <http://www.ruralhome.org/storage/documents/rural-voices/rv-summer-2017.pdf>





## Community Development Practitioner Training



*Celebrations at the closing of Irrigate, a 3-year artist-led creative placemaking partnership between Springboard for the Arts, the City of St. Paul, TC-LISC, and Artplace. Photo: Sean Smuda.*

This training is designed **for organizers and community development professionals in civic sectors** such as transportation, planning, and economic development who are interested in addressing community challenges and strengthening places by implementing local artist-centered creative placemaking programs. Learn how to support and train artists and develop customized programming suited to your context. We will also visit local creative placemaking efforts in action. To leverage this training and kickstart momentum in your community, we encourage sending "teams" of 2-4 leaders from multiple organizations if possible.

**Aug 22-24 Community Development Practitioner Training in Lanesboro, MN**

**LOCATION:** Lanesboro Community Memorial Center, 202 Parkway Ave S Lanesboro, MN 55949  
-Regular pricing: \$1200  
-Registration closes August 15

**Aug 22-24 Community Development Practitioner Training in Lanesboro, MN**



GO

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## Creative Placemaking on Vacant Properties: Lessons Learned from Four Cities

This newly released report offers practical guidance for communities curious about how to leverage the power of creative placemaking to transform vacant properties. Download today!

[Download the report](#)



## LET'S COLLABORATE TOWARD THE FUTURE OF OUR RURAL PLACES.

JOIN US FOR THE 2019  
RURAL GENERATION  
SUMMIT

Pop Luck potluck at [The Coleman Center for the Arts](#), York,




ART OF THE RURAL





Jen Hughes  
Director of Design and Creative Placemaking  
[hughesj@arts.gov](mailto:hughesj@arts.gov)





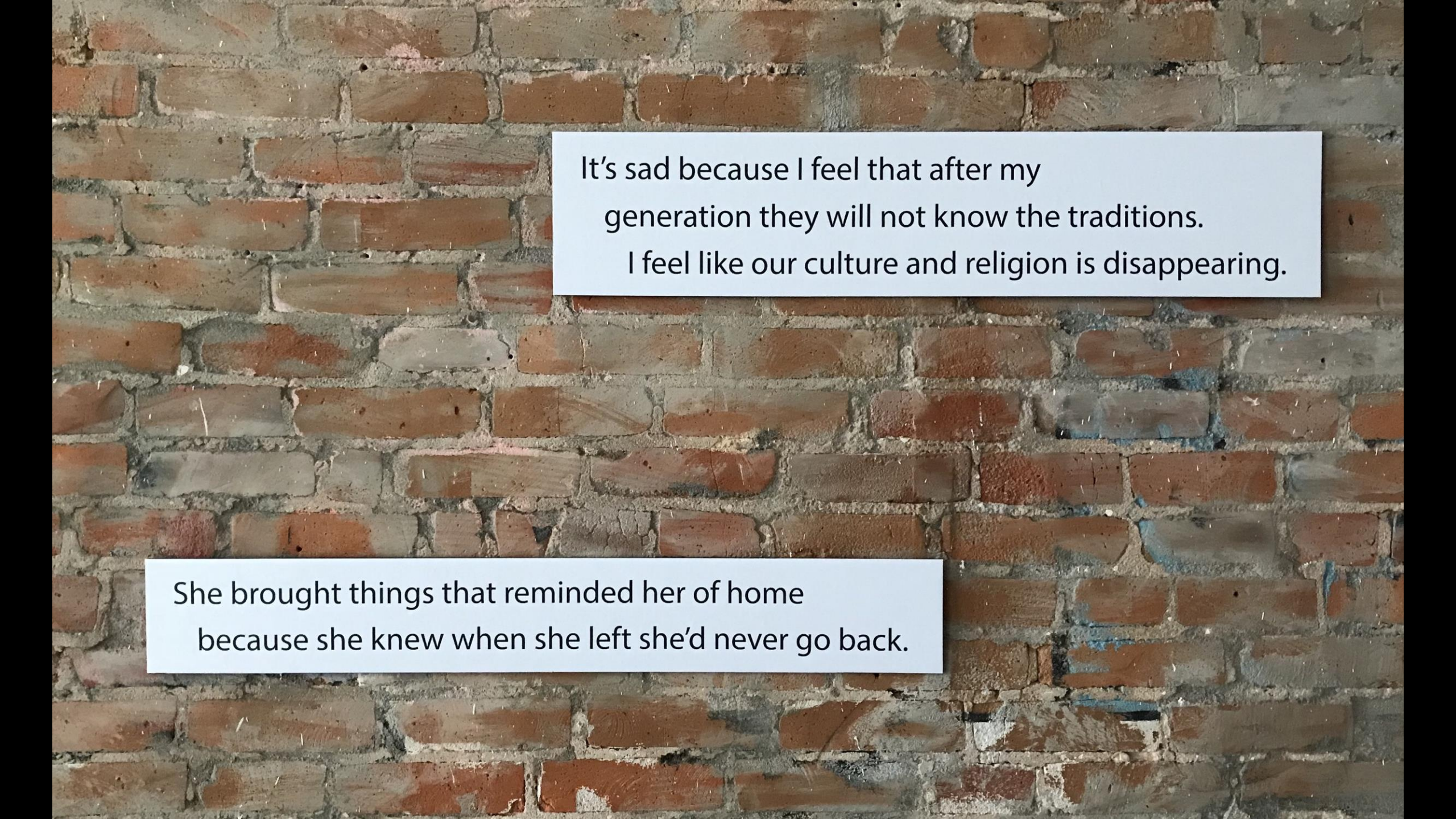
Art of the Rural is a collaborative organization with a mission to advance rural culture and quality of life through relationships and knowledge building that connect communities, cultivate dialogue, and forward rural-urban exchange.

Through local, regional, and national projects we seek to embody the value, diversity, and nuance of rural America and inspire lasting connections to its people and places.







A close-up photograph of a brick wall. The bricks are reddish-brown and arranged in a traditional running bond pattern. The mortar is a light grey color. Two white rectangular text boxes are overlaid on the image. The top box is positioned in the upper right quadrant, and the bottom box is in the lower left quadrant. Both boxes contain black text.

It's sad because I feel that after my  
generation they will not know the traditions.  
I feel like our culture and religion is disappearing.

She brought things that reminded her of home  
because she knew when she left she'd never go back.















## LET'S COLLABORATE TOWARD THE FUTURE OF OUR RURAL PLACES.

JOIN US FOR THE 2019  
RURAL GENERATION  
SUMMIT

Pop Luck potluck at [The Coleman Center for the Arts](#), York,  
Alabama; Photo: Nathan Purath



Rural communities and regions must offer the economic, social, cultural and environmental attributes necessary to support citizens and leaders in their places.

Rural places need an **economy** sufficiently vibrant to provide the income necessary;  
a diverse, dynamic and inclusive **culture**;  
and a human **ecosystem** which offers opportunities for personal expression and active community engagement.



Wednesday, November 9, 2016:

## A new context for creative placemaking

- Increased visibility of rural America in the media
- Desire for projects that find common ground and collective impact
- Continued expansion of creative placemaking knowledge/resources
- Emergence of outreach programs by support structures that had previously not engaged rural communities



# At 40,000 Feet: Rural Creative Placemaking futures

- Direct engagement and immersion with rural places, projects, and regions
  - comparative learning, network convergence and exchange
- Increased communication of the value, diversity, and nuance of rural places
  - to the stakeholders, funders, local government
  - urban/suburban neighbors
- Alignment of policy, practice, research, and philanthropy
- Collaborative efforts to steward these futures, gather the field, and share knowledge and networks



# Rural Generation

CULTURE - EQUITY - IMPACT

2019 SUMMIT | MISSISSIPPI | MAY 22-24

[artoftherural.org](http://artoftherural.org)

[ruralgeneration.org](http://ruralgeneration.org)





We believe-

that with the right approach, the same tools and capacities artists use to make art can be utilized to transform systems and improve the impacts of government and community-driven efforts and programs.





## OUR VALUES

...we commit to racial justice, institutional change, and system transformation.

...we commit to hosting and supporting practices of inclusion.

...we use the term artist expansively to include those who think of themselves as artists, designers, culture-makers, and heritage holders.



If you are working towards impact,  
the people you hope to impact  
must be the authors of any vision for change.

And,  
they must be co-designers and co-leaders of  
any strategies to accomplish that impact.



Competencies we work on  
include:



# Inclusive & Equitable Public Engagement

who is at the table? who needs to be at the table?  
who sets the table?

and bodies of practice around

Invitation, hosting and guesting, coming and going



partnership practice across fields and sectors  
(translation, communication, collaboration)



# authentic listening

within the partnership and beyond it:  
who do we need to listen to  
for the work to be successful,  
what does listening look and feel like to us,  
what do we need to do to earn the right to listen,  
what promises do we make when we listen?



expanding artist awareness of own assets  
in the context of community collaborations



expanding potential of non-arts system partners  
to imagine a broader array  
of process and output options  
when they collaborate with artists



supporting non-arts organizations  
in evolving institutional practices  
that may make these collaborations more possible



at the local public and non profit ecosystem level,  
advocating for  
arts-based community led transformation  
being a powerful contributor  
to social justice and public good movements



- 1- Inclusive & equitable public engagement
- 2- partnership practice across fields and sectors
- 3- authentic listening
- 4- expanding artist awareness of own assets
- 5- expanding potential of non-arts system partners
- 6- supporting non-arts organizations in evolving  
institutional practices
- 7- advocating for arts-based community led  
transformation



## Articulating a spectrum of art-making in relation to impulse, intentions, process, and impact

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**Studio Practice:** Artists make their own work and engage with residents as an audience.

**Social Practice:** Artists work with residents on an artist-led vision in ways that may include research, process, and/or content with an intention of local impact outside traditional audience experience.

**Civic Practice:** Artists collaborate and co-design with community partners and local residents around a community defined aspiration, challenge or vision.



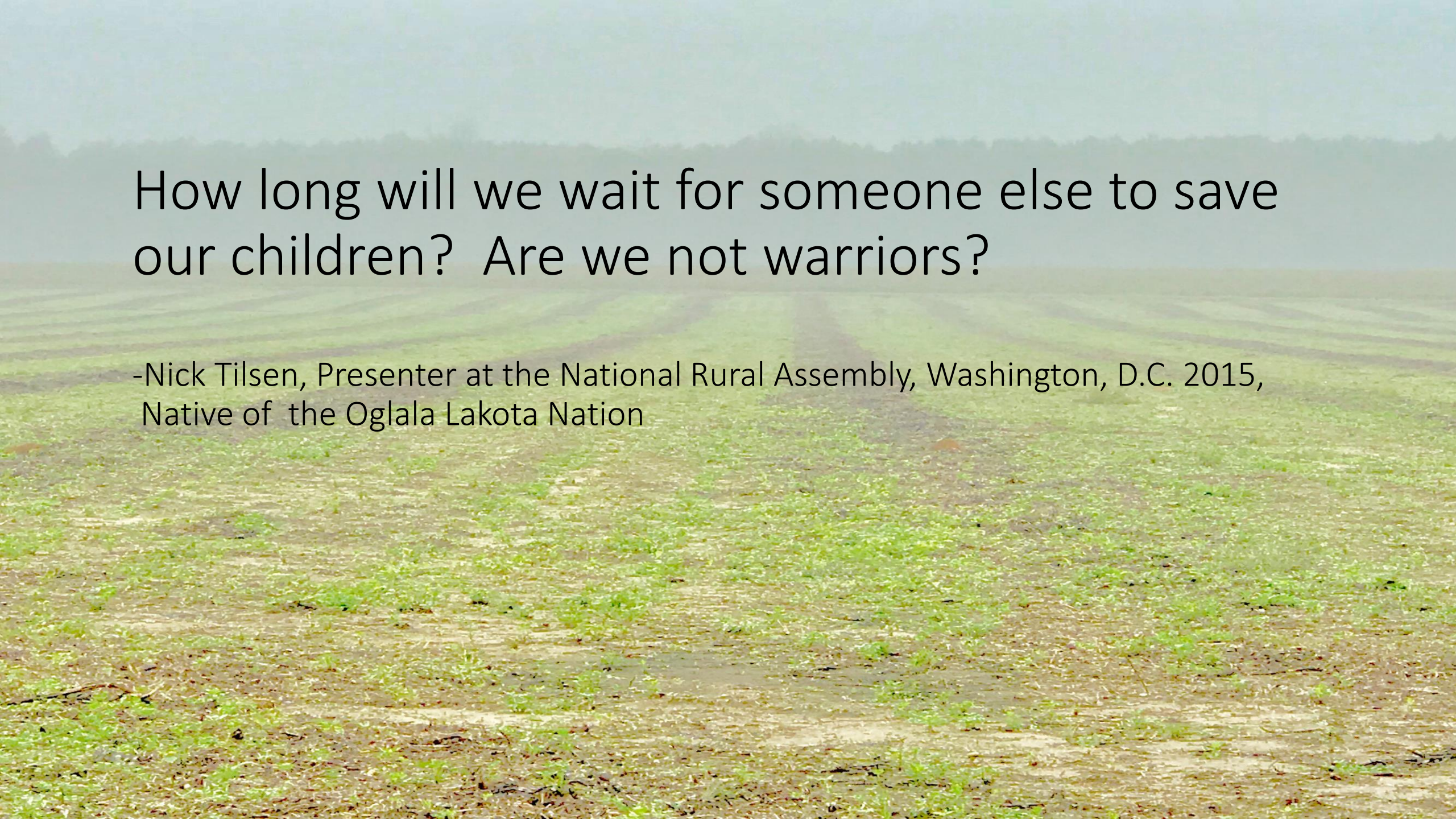
• • •

[Michael.rohd@gmail.com](mailto:Michael.rohd@gmail.com)

[sojourntheatre.org](http://sojourntheatre.org)

[thecpcp.org](http://thecpcp.org)



The background of the slide is a photograph of a vast, open landscape. In the foreground, there is a dirt path or field with sparse green grass and patches of brown earth. The middle ground shows rolling hills covered in similar vegetation. The background is a hazy, distant horizon under a pale, overcast sky. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

# How long will we wait for someone else to save our children? Are we not warriors?

-Nick Tilsen, Presenter at the National Rural Assembly, Washington, D.C. 2015,  
Native of the Oglala Lakota Nation





# The Art of Community: Rural SC





# The Art of Community: Rural SC

A New Approach





## The Art of Community: Rural SC

An initiative  
South Carolina Arts  
with support  
USDA Rural Development



### The Art of Community: Rural SC

As part of its mission to help create a thriving arts and culture environment for South Carolina, the South Carolina Arts Commission launched a new initiative, *The Art of Community: Rural SC* in 2016.

This pilot project advances the Commission's commitment to rural development through arts, culture and creative placemaking. It has been supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development. A milestone in the early development of this initiative was becoming an official partner with the S.C. Promise Zone in 2015. This designation applies to six rural South Carolina counties: Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper.

**Purpose:** A community process to create a new framework for engagement, learning and action in rural communities resulting in new relationships between people and place.

**Questions:** What makes rural places unique? What characteristics define each place? And how can those characteristics serve as the basis for new ideas and ways to celebrate these six small communities in South Carolina Promise Zone? Who leads change in each rural community and how can "the table" be enlarged for more voices heard?

**The Art of Community: Rural SC** creates a way to support new leadership, generate energy and motivate action in South Carolina's rural regions. Its primary objectives:

1. To create pride of place and learn together
2. To build new relationships with South Carolinians living in rural communities
3. To inspire new community building using arts and culture
4. To fuel local action with new resources
5. To identify people and businesses that make up the "creative economy"
6. To provide new opportunities for engagement with Young Voices, the Next Generation of leaders, entrepreneurs and makers

Through a guided exploration of each county's natural, built and human assets, the program hosts gatherings, consider what's possible within each community's cultural context and physical landscape. While the discussion include what "has been," the central focus in *The Art of Community* is on what "can be."

#### Framework:

1. An advisory council of national, state and local leaders support this initiative providing insight and connect. They participate in conference calls, provide guidance and new networks within the state and beyond. An advisory council gathering within the six-county region showcases new learning and opportunities; it also offers chance for all participants to know one another better.
2. Six community members serve as "mavens" (they make change happen through ideas; they are also well connected in their local communities). Each invites local residents to join them for community-based brainstorming activities and to become part of their local team.
3. A series of community-based, context-setting local meetings provide time and space for working together, understanding the variety of assets and cultural richness of each community, and for practicing telling stories of place within the context of what's beautiful, what's working and what's not. Each team has identified a community development challenge and a plan to use arts and culture to address that challenge. This provides a practical application of how arts and culture can be used within this context. Each project becomes a local example through which further learning occurs. As part of the process, the South Carolina Arts Commission grants requests for design and early implementation of the projects.
4. Rural Cultural Exchange: Traveling to other sites, including Kentucky, Mavens, Young Voices and team members have explored how other communities have addressed challenges through the use of arts and culture.

## Crafting a new framework

### Mavens



**Matt Mardell** (Colleton County representative), is a native of the United Kingdom, a graduate of the University of Portsmouth School of Architecture and the executive director of the Colleton County Museum Farmers Market and Commercial Kitchen. He began there as program coordinator under the direction of former executive director and Mavens Emeritus Gary Brightwell (who continues as an advisor to the local demonstration project). He serves on regional boards and advisory committees for health and economic development. When he is not busy renovating his 1923 Craftsman Bungalow in Walterboro, Mardell enjoys technical drawing, woodworking, reading about British history and playing soccer. He is married to Holly and has two children, Maddie and Towns.



**Evelyn Collier** (Barnwell County representative) has served as executive director with Blackville Community Development Corporation for 11 years. She earned a B.S. from Voorhees College and an M.B.A. from Nova Southeastern University. Collier currently serves on the boards of the S.C. Association of Community Economic Development and Low Country Health Care System, and is clerk/financial secretary of Surinam Baptist Church. For 12 years she served as trustee for Barnwell 19 School District. She earned the Certificate of Achievement from the Non-Profit Leadership Institute and attended leadership and community development training through Neighborworks' Community Development Institute. She is a native and lifelong resident of Blackville.



**Johnny Davis** (Jasper County representative) graduated from Winthrop University in 1992 with a B.S. in physical education with an emphasis in recreation and leisure services. He currently serves as the director of Jasper County Parks and Recreation and has more than 24 years in this field. He is a former chairman of S.C. Athletic Programs and *Eat Smart, Move More* of the Lowcountry. Davis served as an elder for a local church and currently heads up the Men's Ministry. He has been married to Macon Davis for 21 years and is the father of twin daughters Adia and Claire (14). Davis lives in Beaufort, S.C., and loves spending time outdoors with his family, fishing, camping and golfing.



**Audrey Hopkins-Williams** of Ertll (Hampton County representative) has worked with several community programs, including reading and math camps. She was involved in the Bridging the Gap Resource Center alliance with the Hampton County Arts Council to host an African-American art exhibition for Black History month called *The Arts of the Humanities*. It was viewed by nearly 5,000 students and community leaders. Hopkins-Williams is aware of her community's struggles with economic and educational opportunities. She attended Denmark Technical College and majored in human services. She has worked for her family's business, Gordon Logging Company, since 1999. She also owns and operates an event planning business, One Moment in Time Events. She is married to Wodwill Williams.



**Lottie Lewis** (Allendale representative), former chairman of the Allendale County Arts Council, head up *Eat Smart, Move More*, and has initiated several neighborhood associations and the area Farmer Market. She has brought many grant dollars into the community, and she understands how the arts drive economic development. She is skilled in design, loves the arts and community beautification, and runs a thriving home-decorating business. She coordinates several yearly mission teams that come into the area to serve. Ms. Lewis knows the arts play a vital role in education, and she launched the "A is for Allendale" initiative, placing banners downtown to promote early childhood literacy. She and her husband Frank recently renovated a home in Allendale to become Emma's House, a safe place for children after school.



**Yvette McDaniel** of Orangeburg (Bamberg County representative), a soprano, has performed nationally and internationally. Serving as an arts educator, advocate and consultant, she is native of Orangeburg. As choir director at Denmark Technical College, she has led performances for former President B. Clinton, Congressman James Clyburn and former Gov. Nikki Haley. An artist/entrepreneur, she founded Ultramix Music Group to assist young professionals; organized the Vocals Music Industry Conference to offer guidance with contracts, representation and promotion; and established the "Hood N-Da Woods" Awards for local Orangeburg artists. Dr. McDaniel is a Louisiana State University Fellow and earned a Doctor of Music Arts degree in vocal performance.

### Advisory Council

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National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, Washington, D.C.

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S.C. Office of Rural Health  
**Savannah Barrett**  
Art of the Rural, Ky  
**Dr. J. Herman Blake**  
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**Andy Brack**  
Better South, S.C.  
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**Robbie Davis**  
Smithsonian Museum on Main Street  
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(Ret.) USDA-Rural Development, Washington, D.C.  
**Charles Fluharty**  
RUPRI & Rural Cultural Wealth Lab  
**Kerri Forrest**  
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**Don Gordon**  
The Riley Institute at Furman, S.C.  
**Dixie Goswami**  
Write to Change Fnd, Middlebury Bread Loaf School of English, S.C. and Vt.

**J. Robert "Bob" Reeder**, Co-Chair  
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**Ken May**  
S.C. Arts Commission  
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**Leonardo Vazquez**, AICP  
The National Consortium for Creative Placemaking, N.J.  
**Chris Walker**  
(Ret.) Local Initiatives Support Corp. (USC), Washington, D.C.

#### Co-Chairs



**Pam Breaux** joined the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) in 2015. As president and CEO, she works with the association's board of directors and staff to advance NASAA's policy and programmatic mission to strengthen America's state and jurisdictional arts agencies. A native of Lafayette, Louisiana, Pam has held leadership positions at the local, state and national levels. While in Louisiana state government, she was secretary of the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (CRT), assistant secretary of CRT (overseeing its cultural development portfolio), and executive director of its state arts agency (the Louisiana Division of the Arts). During her time at CRT, Pam developed and led Louisiana's cultural economy initiative and spearheaded the successful UNESCO inscription of Poverty Point State Historic Site (an ancient Indian site) as a World Heritage site.



**J. Robert "Bob" Reeder** serves as a program director for Rural USC (the rural component of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation). There he directs sustainable rural community development activities covering 84 local, community-based organizations working in 43 states, covering more than 2,000 rural counties. His areas of expertise include community engagement, board of director development and training, land retention strategies in rural areas and other issues impacting land tenure, project feasibility analysis, grant and loan assistance, and organizational capacity building. Reeder has built a 30-year career devoted to social and economic justice, housing and comprehensive community development, particularly in incorporating arts and cultural-based strategies (creative placemaking) in the revival of distressed rural communities, public policy, and legal and administrative advocacy. A native of Rock Hill, S.C., he earned a BA in Government from Winthrop College and a JD from Vanderbilt University School of Law.



## Key components

- Mindset
- Listening and Learning together
- Flexibility
- Access & Equity





## Key components

- Customs, Traditions & Culture
- Peer Exchanges & Field Trips
- Assets, stories & history





## What we're learning: Local Projects

<u>County</u>	<u>Arts+ Culture + Challenge</u>	<u>Maven</u>
Hampton	Health	Audrey Hopkins-Williams
Allendale	Business Retention	Lottie Lewis
Bamberg	Blight	Yvette McDaniel
Barnwell	Youth/Education	Evelyn Coker
Colleton	Health/Food	Matt Mardell
Jasper	Literacy	Johnny Davis





What we're learning:  
The power of a field trip





What we've learned:

The power of arts & culture to create  
shared experience





The Art of Community:  
Rural SC

What we're learning:

The power of arts & culture  
to create new civic  
engagement and teach civic  
engagement



Grace Smith, Blackville, SC

## What Happens to a Kid Like Me

What happens to a kid like me  
When the wings of knowledge  
Are clipped short  
And my future is uncertain

What happens to a kid like me  
When my life dulled  
Because so many opportunities  
Are hindered by low funds

What happens to a kid like me  
When all color drains away  
From the art that once surrounded me  
And thrummed with life

I'll tell you what happens  
My imagination that once soared  
Plummets to the ground  
Now that its wings are gone



My life turns grey and dark  
Slowly freezing over  
Until it finally shatters into a million pieces

But a kid like me  
Wouldn't dare go down  
Without a fight  
They don't stop until their entire body  
Is broken and bruised  
And their mind is heavy with fatigue....



## What's changing:

- Participation
- Physical improvements
- Relationships
- Local ownership of issues
- Local pride of place and sense of belonging







## Paint the Park Day- Jasper Co.



What's changing:

Expanding the role of a county's "parks and recreation" Department to engage folks in important local issues like Literacy

The Art of Community:  
Rural SC





What's changing:

Working strategically to link  
economic development with  
local assets







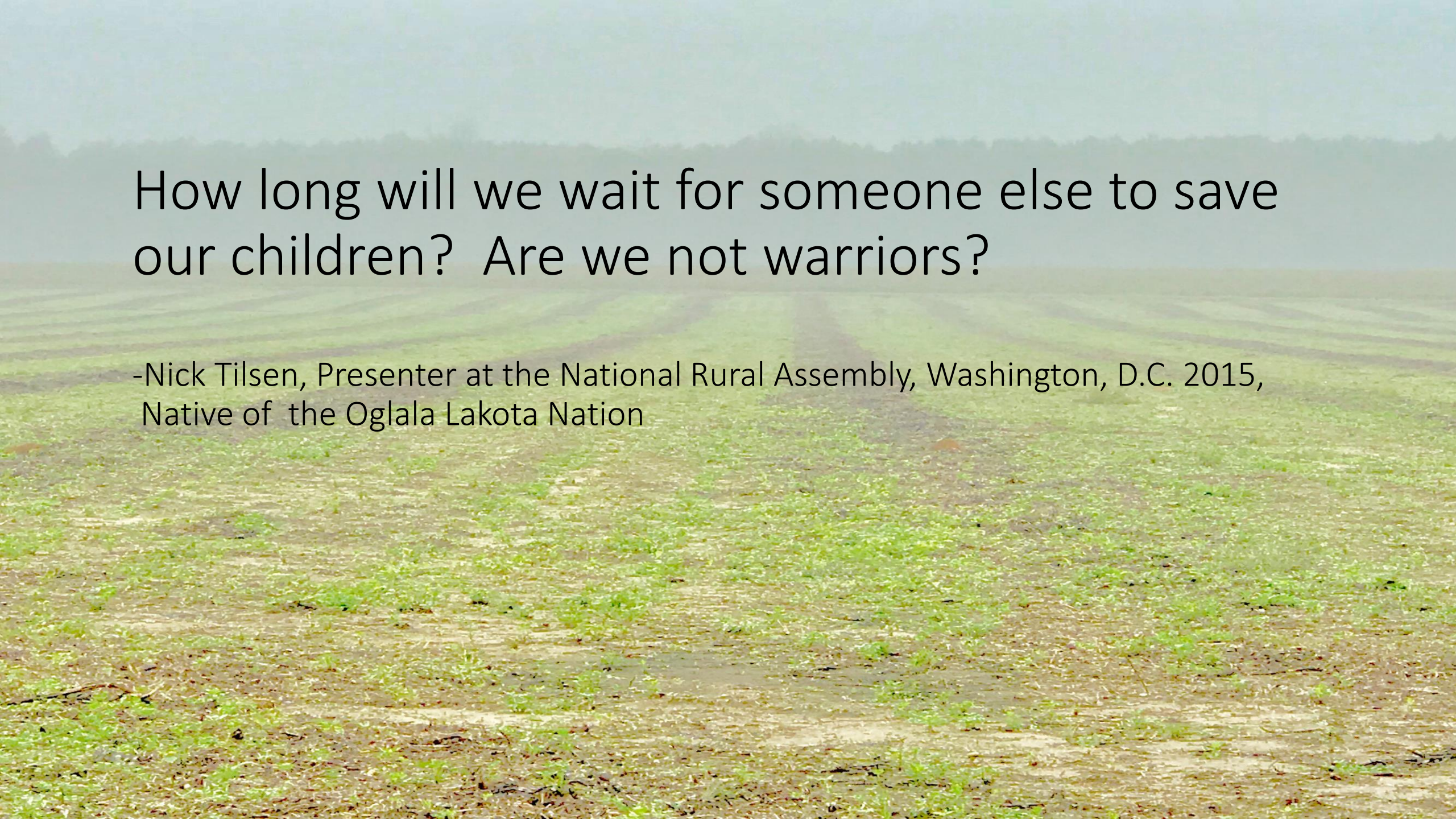
What's changing:

What we see, hear, feel and share.  
A sense of connection and what's possible.

## The Art of Community: Rural SC





The background of the slide is a photograph of a vast, open landscape. In the foreground, there is a dirt path or field with sparse green grass and patches of brown earth. The middle ground shows rolling hills covered in similar vegetation. The background is a hazy, distant treeline under a pale, overcast sky. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

# How long will we wait for someone else to save our children? Are we not warriors?

-Nick Tilsen, Presenter at the National Rural Assembly, Washington, D.C. 2015,  
Native of the Oglala Lakota Nation



The background of the image is a photograph of a rural landscape. It features rolling green hills under a hazy, overcast sky. In the foreground, there is a dirt road or path with patches of green grass and some dry, brownish vegetation. Overlaid on this image is a white rectangular box. Inside this box, at the top, is a dark blue silhouette of the state of South Carolina. Below the silhouette, there is a solid green horizontal band. Centered within this green band is the text "The Art of Community: Rural SC" in a white, sans-serif font.

# The Art of Community: Rural SC





Presented by  
Susan DuPlessis  
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The South Carolina Arts Commission  
[sduplessis@arts.sc.gov](mailto:sduplessis@arts.sc.gov)

For more info:  
<http://www.southcarolinaarts.com/artofcommunity/index.shtml>