

DANE COUNTY CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION
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The Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission is a governmental agency, created by ordinance in 1977 to support public participation in local arts and historical activity and to increase public access to the cultural resources of Dane County. Funded by a combination of public and private dollars totalling \$600,000 for 2003, the commission serves the public through three program areas: grantmaking; commission-produced projects; and information services. The commission is a division of the County Executive Office and is governed by an eleven-member policymaking board composed of three county board supervisors and eight citizen representatives.

In three annual grant competitions, the Cultural Affairs Commission awards \$450,000 to area nonprofit groups, school districts, municipalities, and individuals seeking support for arts and history projects. The commission's grants program is financed through an annual county appropriation, joined by contributions from the Overture Foundation, the Madison Community Foundation, Pleasant Company's Fund for Children, the Evjue Foundation, Inc., and the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation. Cultural affairs grants help recipients leverage an additional \$3 million annually from other sources to underwrite a wide range of community activities.

The commission initiates and sponsors special programs of its own, including the annual Dane County art poster featuring works by Wisconsin artists; the annual desk calendar; publication of *A Gallery of Colors and Numbers*, a fold-out book created for Dane County kindergartners; poster sets for elementary school children which include *Everybody's Ethnic: A Dane County Alphabet* and *CAPITAL LETTERS in Dane County Architecture*; placement of artwork on government publications; and various directories, books, guides and educational materials.

For the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial, the commission published a large-format children's book, *Back to Beginnings: The Early Days of Dane County*. Featuring early maps, photographs, drawings, engravings and artifacts, the book highlights major developments in county history from pre-settlements days through the Civil War.