

GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARDS RECIPIENTS

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Vincent Insalaco – North Little Rock

Vincent Insalaco has dedicated his life to creating, developing and promoting the arts. He is an author, business owner, former radio show host and documentary filmmaker. Insalaco's advocacy for the arts began in the early 1970s when he became involved with the Arkansas Arts Center and the Arkansas Repertory Theatre. He also directed plays with dance sequences choreographed by his late wife, Sally Riggs Insalaco, for whose memory he sponsors an annual scholarship program for senior dance students. From 1985-1991, he was the host of the "Vince Insalaco Show" on radio stations KARN and the Arkansas Radio Network.



For more than 25 years, Insalaco has been involved in making documentary, political and biographical documentary films. In 2007 he produced "War Eagle, Arkansas," his first feature-length narrative movie, which premiered at the 2008 Little Rock Film Festival and won the Charles B. Pierce Award for Best "Made in Arkansas" film. His most recent contribution to the arts is the Argenta Community Theater in North Little Rock, which he co-founded with Judy Tenenbaum. The facility is used for plays, film screenings, fundraisers, workshops, dance recitals, etc. Insalaco serves as the president of the THEA Foundation in North Little Rock.

ARTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AWARD

John Gaudin – North Little Rock

John Gaudin is an artist, local real estate developer and arts patron. He led an effort to transform a once neglected neighborhood into a vibrant arts district in the Argenta area of North Little Rock. Gaudin founded the Argenta Downtown Council in 2007 to support local businesses, bring together property owners and businesses to revitalize the downtown neighborhood and to provide an environment for an artist community to prosper. His partnered projects include Argenta Place and the Argenta Market. Gaudin is a transplant from south Louisiana. He moved to North Little Rock in 1982.



ARTS IN EDUCATION AWARD

Nicole Capri – Little Rock

Nicole Capri has been the director of education and resident director at the Arkansas Repertory Theatre since 2004 when she received grant funding to begin a residency project with the Arkansas School for the Deaf. In the second year of the program, Capri created and directed an original performance piece using the students' personal stories and experiences. The students performed a full theatrical production for schools and organizations throughout central Arkansas.

She also secured a grant for a residency program at North Little Rock High School. Capri has taught more than 50 workshops in acting, musical theater, dance and technical theater. She also developed The Rep's Summer Musical Intensive Theatre, a training program for aspiring young artists ages 10-22 in a professional theatrical summer stock experience. The program is now in its fifth year. A graduate of the University of Memphis and the National Theatre of the Deaf professional training school, Capri has directed and/or choreographed more than 100 productions.



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP OF THE ARTS AWARD

Thoma Thoma – Little Rock

Thoma Thoma is a Little Rock-based brand development and creative services firm, which over the past 20 years has generously contributed monetary gifts, time and resources to Wildwood Park for the Arts, Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, UALR Friends of the Arts, the Museum of Discovery, THEA Foundation and the Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions in Little Rock. Martin and Melissa Thoma, the co-founders and principals at Thoma Thoma, are not only patrons and "hands on" volunteers, but Martin

also serves as the president of the Arkansas Symphony's board of directors, while Melissa, a professional singer, is president of the Wildwood Park board of trustees. Thoma Thoma has contributed volunteer time, mentored young artists, created initiatives to fund scholarships and donated design services and marketing skills.



FOLKLIFE AWARD

Mike Shirkey – Fayetteville

Mike Shirkey is the founder and host of a two-hour radio program called "The Pickin' Post," which features a mix of folk, bluegrass, blues, singer/songwriter interviews and concerts. The show is in its 31st year of programming and airs on KUAF 91.3 FM on Saturdays from 7-9 p.m. Shirkey modified his historic Victorian home in Fayetteville to accommodate folk concerts. For 20 years, his house, known as the GoodFolk Productions stage, has been a popular destination for touring folk musicians to perform for sold-out crowds. He also brought Grammy Award-winning performers to other Fayetteville venues, including the Walton Arts Center and the University of Arkansas Center for Continuing Education.



Mike Shirkey
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INDIVIDUAL ARTIST AWARD

Larry Foley – Fayetteville

Larry Foley is a professor of journalism and a documentary filmmaker. He has produced award-winning documentary films about Arkansas people, history and culture for 34 years. His films have told the story of acclaimed Arkansas architect E. Fay Jones and the nation's first national river in "The Buffalo Flows." His latest film, "Bridge to War Eagle," is a 30-minute documentary with an environmental message. His productions have earned him three Emmys from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and nine Emmy nominations in writing, journalistic enterprise, history, cultural history and community service. His work has been broadcast on *ABC*, *CBS*, *PBS* and *ESPN*.



PATRON AWARD

Hershey and Denise Garner – Fayetteville

Hershey and Denise Garner are avid supporters of the arts in Northwest Arkansas. For nearly 20 years, the Garners have provided significant financial support and their time to many arts organizations, particularly the Walton Arts Center. They have served as board or committee members for several organizations and events, including



TheatreSquared, the Arts Center of the Ozarks, the Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, Komen Pink Ribbon's Art for a Cure, Life Styles Inc., Youth Bridge's "Starry, Starry Night," Feed Fayetteville's "Ozark Roots Festival" and the Arkansas Committee for the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

JUDGES' SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

Claire Haun – North Little Rock

Claire Haun arrived in Arkansas five years ago after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. Haun wasted little time integrating her time and talents into her new community. A nurse by profession, she has written and received millions of dollars in grants for the nonprofits that she serves. Her contributions to the arts in central Arkansas have been hands-on, as well as philanthropic. She has served on the board of the THEA Foundation, Argenta Community Theater and Arkansas League of Artists.

