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**Deidre Thomas Elected to Americans for the Arts’
Advisory Council**
*Thomas of Houston Arts Alliance will advise the
Emerging Leaders Council*

HOUSTON - Members of Americans for the Arts, the leading organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America, have elected Deidre Thomas as a member of their advisory council for the Emerging Leaders Council. Thomas will advise Americans for the Arts’ staff on developing programs and services that will build a deeper connection to the field and the network membership.

In the [Emerging Leaders Council](#), Thomas will work with fellow arts leaders to assist in developing programs and resources to promote professional development and networking opportunities for emerging arts professionals nationwide.

As a grants coordinator for Houston Arts Alliance (HAA), Thomas works on all aspects of HAA’s grants programming and initiatives. In this role, she applies a broad range of skills in process management and technology, and has been instrumental in creating systems to support the growth of grants programs to serve arts and culture in the City of Houston.

“Americans for the Arts strives to cultivate the next generation of arts leaders in America, and I am pleased to welcome Deidre Thomas to our advisory council,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “These leaders are willing to dedicate their time and expertise to work with peers across the country to shape national programs and messages and help craft services for states, communities, and local organizations. I applaud Ms. Thomas for her valued contribution and commitment that will undoubtedly improve the state of arts in America.”

Potential council members were nominated in mid-September and were voted on by members of Americans for the Arts through November 12, 2015. Thomas will serve a three-year term, from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018.

“I love to provide the knowledge that organizations need to thrive and hope to make a great impact in furthering the arts both locally and nationally,” said Thomas.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 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.

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About Houston Arts Alliance

Houston Arts Alliance (HAA) is a nonprofit, public-private initiative that invests in Houston's arts and cultural sector, advances Houston's reputation as an arts and culture destination, and works to elevate the quality of life for all Houstonians through arts and culture. As the city's designated local arts agency, HAA provides programs and services for the arts and cultural sector and awards approximately 225 grants annually to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and individual artists. The Alliance is the custodian of the city's art collection; takes permanent and temporary art to Houston's public spaces; presents free Folklife + Traditional Arts programming; nurtures up-and-coming arts organizations through its capacity building programs; connects the business community with the arts; convenes the field as necessary, and provides the latest information and research on cultural policy, economic development and Houston's folklife.

HAA's primary partner is the City of Houston. Approximately 55% of HAA's budget comes from Hotel Occupancy Tax and 30% from the City of Houston's Percent for Art Program, which supports commissions of new civic art projects as well as conservation of existing artworks. The remaining 15% of HAA's budget comes from private fundraising (grants/contributions/other revenue) for programs and special projects. HAA is committed to raising funds for only those projects and initiatives that the Arts Alliance is uniquely positioned to provide the community.

For more information, visit houstonartsalliance.com. For events in the region, visit Artshound.com.