

# Oregon Cultural Trust

**PRESS CONTACT:** Cynthia Kirk, 503-986-0081, [cynthia.kirk@state.or.us](mailto:cynthia.kirk@state.or.us)  
Chris D'Arcy, 503-986-0087, [christine.t.darcy@state.or.us](mailto:christine.t.darcy@state.or.us)

## Oregon Cultural Trust Announces 10% Increase in 2009 Donations *Increased Contributions Result in More Funds Available for Grants*

February 9, 2010—Salem, ORE. The Oregon Cultural Trust, Oregon's unique program to increase public and private investment in culture, reports calendar year 2009 donations of \$3,741,337, an increase of 10% over the \$3,406,254 contributed in 2008.

"Arts and cultural organizations have been particularly challenged to raise funds from individuals and foundations in 2009's difficult economy. The fact that giving to the Trust increased by 10% in 2009 demonstrates that Oregonians care about the history of their communities and the many ways the arts and culture makes a difference in our lives," said Christine D'Arcy, executive director of the Trust.

Oregonians made 7,436 gifts to the Trust in 2009; 1,648 (22%) of those gifts were from first-time donors. In 2008, the average gift was \$479; in 2009, the average rose to \$503.

The Trust intensified outreach across the state and undertook new communications strategies to reinforce the power of culture in communities, working with 45 cultural coalitions to increase awareness of Oregon's cultural tax credit across the state. As a result, giving in much of rural Oregon, including Curry, Gilliam, Jefferson and Sherman counties, went up. Of Oregon's 36 counties, 23 increased giving over 2008; 10 decreased; and 3 remained flat. Donors in the largest population counties, Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas and Lane increased giving by 21%, 16%, 15% and 12%, respectively.

The Trust once again participated in *Willamette Week's* Give!Guide – a campaign to encourage philanthropy, particularly among those 35 and under – and experienced a significant increase in donations there, too. In 2009, 327 donors gave \$105,871 to the Trust through the Give!Guide; in 2008, 293 donors contributed \$89,000.

Norm Smith, board chair, commented, "Oregonians are a can do people. Under challenging circumstances, people rally for the community good. This was certainly true of our 2009 donors, who recognized not only the value but also the need of cultural nonprofits across Oregon. With a 10% boost in giving, we are well on our way to increased grant making for fiscal year 2011. Good news for everyone who produces – and experiences – cultural programming in Oregon."

Kimberly Howard, Trust manager, added, "It's more important than ever that Oregonians support the libraries, heritage centers, arts councils, performing arts groups and museums that are woven so intrinsically into daily life. Oregon culture in its ever-evolving expression defines who we are as a state, as a society. Protecting and advancing that identity is critical. Donations to the Trust can be made in any amount any time – or multiple times – during the year at [www.culturaltrust.org](http://www.culturaltrust.org)."

Fifty eight percent of the money raised by the Cultural Trust each year remains in a permanent endowment for heritage, humanities and arts. The remaining 42% is distributed in three program: to Oregon cultural nonprofits; county and tribal cultural coalitions; and Oregon's five statewide cultural partners, Oregon Arts Commission, Oregon Heritage Commission, Oregon Historical Society, Oregon Humanities, and State Historic Preservation Office. Trust grants benefit every county in Oregon.

Oregon Cultural Trust fundraising history, by calendar year:

2002	\$1.5 million
2003	\$1.6 million
2004	\$2 million
2005	\$2.3 million
2006	\$2.8 million
2007	\$3.5 million
2008	\$3.4 million
2009	\$3.7 million

### **About the Oregon Cultural Trust**

The OREGON CULTURAL TRUST is an innovative, statewide private-public program raising significant new funds to support and protect Oregon's arts, humanities and heritage. Donors to the Trust are eligible for a 100% Oregon income tax credit for contributions of up to \$500 for individuals, \$1,000 for couples filing jointly and \$2,500 for corporations. To motivate Oregonians to increase direct giving to cultural groups, Trust donors must also make matching gifts to one or more of nearly 1,300 cultural nonprofits in order to qualify for the credit. Seventeen thousand (17,000) donors have contributed nearly \$21 million to the Trust since Oregon's cultural tax credit took effect in December 2002. In seven years, the Cultural Trust has distributed \$8 million in grants and built its permanent fund to \$13 million. In 2003, the Oregon legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Oregon Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission's expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development. The Arts Commission and the Cultural Trust are part of Business Oregon (formerly Oregon Economic and Community Development Department), in recognition of the expanding role arts and culture play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities.

More information: (503) 986-0088 or [www.culturaltrust.org](http://www.culturaltrust.org).