

Audit Report

Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation

January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010

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Organization & Background

Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is a private not-for-profit corporation that works with the business sector to attract, retain and expand for-profit and not-for-profit employers in Dutchess County. The programs are funded by Dutchess County, New York State, Local governments, the Dutchess County Industrial Development Agency (DCIDA) and private corporate donations. Additional information can be found on their website: www.thinkdutchess.com.

Audit Scope, Objective and Methodology

An audit was conducted of the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation for the period January 1, 2010 through February 28, 2011. As shown below, Dutchess County funded EDC \$250,000; and its major department Tourism \$600,000; and the separate entity Poughkeepsie/Dutchess Development, Inc. for the Empire Zone \$45,000. The contracts were under the auspices of the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Community Development.

	Contract #	Term of Contract	Amount
#10-0135	Economic Development	01/01/10 - 12/31/10	\$250,000
	Tourism	01/01/10 - 12/31/10	600,000
	Empire Zone (EZ)*	01/01/10 - 12/31/10	30,000
#10-0516	Empire Zone *	03/01/10 - 02/28/11	15,000
	Total		<u>\$895,000</u>

**Effective June 30, 2010 the NYS Empire Zone program officially ended. The Poughkeepsie/Dutchess Economic Development Zone dissolution was scheduled for June 30, 2011.*

Exhibit I provides an overview of funding for each contract. Addendum I and II were provided by EDC and Tourism to show goals, measurements and outcomes as they related to the 2010 funding.

The audit included a review of the contracts, claims, agency financial records and operating practices for the following: banking/cash handling, personnel costs, advertising, travel, and meeting expenses.

Summary of Findings

- EDC and Tourism did not have detailed written policies and procedures for petty cash and requests for proposals (RFPs).
- NYS cancelled the tourism matching fund grant program for 2009/2010: However, it was awarded in 2011.
- NYS Empire Zone program ended June 30, 2010: However, EDC is responsible to continue to administer the program to businesses which were previously approved for tax credits.

Internal Control

Internal control provides oversight to ensure efficient and effective management of resources as well as compliance with legal requirements. Management is defined as the President and Board of Directors. Monitoring is a critical role that must be undertaken by management to ensure fiscal accountability and alleviate risk.

Observations:

- EDC has various committees which perform operational oversight, governance and audit responsibilities.

Control Activities

Banking/Cash Handling

Nine bank accounts were reviewed. The same individual (the Director of Finance) handles human resources and major accounting duties for banking. Bank reconciliations are reviewed and initialed by EDC's board treasurer.

Observations:

- ❖ Bank reconciliations were up to date and reviewed by the board treasurer.
- ❖ The Empire Zone bank account was closed in 2011.

Findings:

- Since the last audit, the agency has added duty segregation for deposits. Deposits are now made by another individual.
- Management oversight and monitoring was not in place for fund transfers. Fund transfers from one bank account to another bank account were performed by the same individual who performs all major accounting duties. Bank transfers included amounts in excess of \$20,000.

Recommendation:

- We recommended the board treasurer or management appointee should review and acknowledge in writing all bank transfers to ensure oversight. *This was implemented immediately by the agency as a result of our finding according to the Director of Finance.*

Personnel Services

EDC expended a total salary of \$921,406.09 for 2010 programs of which the County funded a total of \$467,458.00.

Program	Total Expenses	County funded
EDC	\$407,061.12	\$137,870.00
Tourism	316,164.11	294,488.00
EZ	82,558.22	35,100.00
EMC	115,622.64	.00
Total	\$921,406.09	\$467,458.00

As of this audit, the agency staffing has decreased from 15 employees in 2010 to the current (2011) 10 employees. EDC provided the following information regarding the employee counts:

EMPLOYEE ALLOCATION 2010 and 2011

Division	2010		2011	
	Number	Comment	Number	Comment
EDC	5.45	0.6 terminated 1/20/10	5.35	1.0 terminated 5/31/11
EMC	1.65		1.65	
EZ	1.90	0.4 terminated 1/20/10 1.0 terminated 9/30/10	0.00	0.5 transferred to EDC
DCT	6.00	1.0 terminated 9/30/10	5.00	1.0 terminated 3/30/11
	<u>15.00</u>		<u>12.00</u>	

The payroll is performed by an outside payroll vendor. Salary increases are initially approved by the Operational Oversight Committee and then by the Governance Committee. The Treasurer presents the increases to the board with the budgets. In 2011, EDC/EMC employees received a 2% increase while Tourism employees received a pay increase in 2010.

The EDC Director and the Tourism Director have agency vehicles which are used for agency and personal use. In accordance with IRS regulations, personal use of automobile and gasoline was shown as compensation on the 2010 W-2s in the amounts of \$2,074.76 (EDC) and \$4,654.79 (Tourism).

Petty Cash

A total of \$500.00 is held in Petty Cash at EDC: \$300 for EDC and \$200 for Tourism. The agency's petty cash drawer was verified to the cash and receipts.

Findings:

- There were no written guidelines for petty cash usage. Procedures were informally stated. According to the EDC Director of Finance, expenditures from this account are to be limited and not to exceed \$20.
- Tourism receipts were reviewed and the following exceptions noted:
 - Expenditures were primarily for employee reimbursements for travel and meeting expenditures and should have been submitted on an employee reimbursement form.
 - Two expenditures were in excess of the \$20.
 - A tourism petty cash report totaling \$117.86 for the time period 6/25 - 10/12/10 did not have the required 'approved by' signature.

Recommendations:

- Formalize guidelines for petty cash usage and distribute written policies to staff and board members.
- Petty cash usage should be in compliance with the agency's guidelines.

Travel and Meetings

EDC and Tourism travel and meetings expenditures for 2010 were reviewed. In 2010, EDC expended \$16,574.94 and Tourism expended \$12,084.05 for travel and meetings. A sample of selected expenses were reviewed which included both EDC and Tourism's credit card purchases and employee reimbursements. The majority of reimbursements were for meals, hotel/motel stays.

The agency's policy requires all expenditures in excess of \$500 incurred by the EDC President be approved by the board treasurer and/or Chairman. The EDC President approves Tourism's travel and meeting expenses.

Observation:

- ❖ There were no discrepancies on travel approvals.

Finding:

- Late fees were incurred totaling \$220: four months on the gas credit card for a total of \$80 and four months on the Tourism credit card for a total of \$140.

Recommendation:

- Late fees should not be incurred.

Marketing and Promotion

A total of \$48,049.03 was expended by Tourism in 2010. The expenses included mailings, payment for delivery of travel guides and other tourist pamphlets, and costs associated with the local annual tourist conference. No discrepancies were noted.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Procedures – Advertising

EDC/Tourism Handbook of Personnel policies and procedures state 'a formal Request for Proposal process must be completed for expenses for, or in excess of \$10,000'. However, there was no written policy detailing the process. A Tourism advertising expense totaling \$60,157.25 was reviewed. According to the Director of Tourism, this RFP was based on performance rather than a flat fee.

Findings:

- EDC/Tourism did not have detailed written guidelines for RFP procedures.
- Formal bid documentation was not on file to support the advertising award. The bid file did not contain:
 - A sign-in sheet of attendees for the RFP review.
 - An evaluation sheet documenting review of each proposal by the team.
 - Minutes detailing the RFP process and the supporting documentation for the subsequent award.

Recommendations:

- Formalize written guidelines for the RFP process and distribute to staff and board members.
- Documentation should be retained for each RFP awardance. Documents should include: who was in attendance to review the proposals, the method of evaluation, notes evaluating each vendor (where applicable) and formal award of the RFP.

Contract Review – EDC, Tourism, Empire Zone

Contract #10-0135 - was written in the amount of \$880,000 for the period January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010. The contract provided for three programs as follows:

Economic Development Corporation - \$250,000 for two programs as follows:

SERVICES	Business	Economic	Total
	Development	Community Affairs	
Personnel/Fringe	\$156,000	\$39,000	\$195,000
Materials/Utilities			
Supplies	37,000	11,000	48,000
Travel & conferences	6,000		6,000
Postage/Printing	1,000		1,000
Admin	0	0	0
Total	\$200,000	\$50,000	\$250,000

Business Development - \$200,000 to provide assistance to retain, invest and create new jobs in Dutchess County. Serve as a central point of contact for business assistance and develop resources to respond to business needs.

Economic & Community Affairs - \$50,000 to develop community support for responsible economic development.

Dutchess County Tourism – \$600,000 for seven programs as follows:

TOURISM	Advertising	Travel & Tour	Brochures & Travel Guides	Website Development	Promotion Publicity	Hudson Valley Regional	Product Development & Community Relations	Total
Personnel	\$40,488	\$42,000	\$34,000	\$48,000	\$20,000	\$17,000	\$93,000	\$294,488
Fringe	12,577	13,650	11,050	15,428	6,451	4,048	27,737	90,941
Materials/Utilities								
Supplies	9,672	11,972	9,670	9,672	9,672	9,670	9,672	70,000
Travel & conferences		1,692			1,500		4,000	7,192
Postage/Printing	8,096	1,308	1,700		1,700		600	13,404
Advertise	26,993							26,993
Professional Fees	1,052	1,051	1,050	1,050	1,051		1,052	6,306
Marketing	1,126	1,005		1,000			2,800	5,931
Trade Shows		4,000	6,000					10,000
Matching funds	56,532		3,295					59,827
Total	\$156,536	\$76,678	\$66,765	\$75,150	\$40,374	\$30,718	\$138,861	\$585,082

Advertising - to promote Dutchess County as a travel destination to consumers and groups nationally and internationally through various media.

Tour and Trade Shows - to continue to create awareness and attract more group tours and continue on-going relationships with tour operators.

Brochures/Travel Guides - to provide publications that will promote the assets of Dutchess County both to domestic and international markets that will include but not be limited to travel guides, farm fresh events, and to distribute brochures at various tourist information centers.

Website Development & Marketing - to maintain an interactive website to promote Dutchess County as a vacation destination.

Promotion and Publicity - to develop editorial coverage for Dutchess County Tourism assets through a variety of media venues.

Hudson Valley Regional - to cooperatively market the Hudson Valley as a travel destination with 10 Hudson Valley counties.

Product Development/Community Relations - to enhance tourism relationships with local business, educational institutions and professional organizations. Also, to develop new programs and activities to enforce awareness and interest in Dutchess County as a tourism destination.

Tourism Program	Budget	Expended	Balance Not Claimed
Advertising	\$165,689	\$156,536	\$9,153
Tour and Trade Show	76,794	76,678	116
Brochures/Publicity	66,881	66,765	116
Website Develop & Mktg	75,438	75,150	288
Promotion/Publicity	41,539	40,374	1,165
Hudson Valley Region	32,195	30,718	1,477
Product Dev/Relations	141,464	138,861	2,603
Total	\$600,000	\$585,082	\$14,914

Observations:

- ❖ On March 4, 2010 the NYS Dept. of Economic Development informed Tourism the matching fund grant program for 2009/2010 was cancelled. Dutchess County continued to provide the matching funds that were provided in this contract totaling \$59,827. On December 23, 2010 NYS Dept. of Economic Development notified Tourism the grant funding for 2011 was approved for \$55,303.
- ❖ When NYS matching funds were cancelled, programs were scaled back resulting in a decrease in funding requested from Dutchess County as shown above.

Findings:

- As a requirement of the Dutchess County contracts, EDC, Tourism and the Empire Zone stationery and brochures are to have the following statement: "The programs provided by this agency are partially funded by moneys received from the County of Dutchess." The funding statement was not printed on the Dutchess County Tourism guide.
- As noted in the last audit, the Dutchess County Tourism, a department of EDC, is assessed a \$12,000 fee which is noted as an annual administrative surcharge. Once again we note that this is an overstatement of expense and revenue. All expenditures for program and administrative costs should be reflected as actual or based on an approved allocation method. This type of expenditure does not exist for any other programs that EDC lists in their EDC financials.

Recommendations:

- All stationary and brochures should include the statement above for compliance with the County contract.
- EDC's cost center -Tourism should include direct costs or allocated costs for administrative functions rather than duplicating the charges through an inter-agency administrative fee which results in an overstatement of revenue and expense within the EDC financials.

Poughkeepsie/Dutchess Development Inc. - Empire Zone (EZ) - \$30,000

A New York State Economic Development Zone statute was created to assist businesses in locating to distressed economic areas. This program provided businesses with tax incentive benefits if they were located in the county's designated Empire Zones. At the time of our review, approximately 216 businesses were certified in the Empire Zone.

A total of \$45,000 was claimed for salary and fringe in 2010: \$30,000 as part of the above County appropriated funds and an additional \$15,000 from the Federal funds provided from Planning's Department of Community Development through **Contract #10-0516**. The total amounts of each contract were paid for salary and fringe claims. No discrepancies were noted.

Observations:

- ❖ Effective June 30, 2010 the NYS Empire Zone program officially ended and was to be dissolved as of June 30, 2011.
- ❖ EDC reported it continues to provide support to the Empire Zone Program with annual data collection of Business Annual Reports (BAR). Forms are distributed, collected and data entered into an online data collection system and delinquent forms are pursued.

Findings:

- The Empire Zone administrative board had funding agreements with local municipalities annually to provide assistance to the businesses within each town's Zone. Per EDC, Empire Zone support was provided to the following municipalities; however funding was not received:
 - In 2010, the City of Poughkeepsie had a signed agreement but did not pay their annual fee.
 - Dover and Pawling did not have signed agreements and did not pay the annual fee.
- The second quarter 2010 Empire Zone report narrative did not have documentation to support two of the seven goals and outcomes.

Recommendations:

- Funding should have been pursued from the municipalities.
- Documentation for reported statistical information should be readily available for audit.

Exhibit I – EDC Funding Overview

EDC		Tourism		Empire Zone	
Services	Amount	Services	Amount	Services	Amount
Business Development Economic Community Affairs	\$200,000.00 50,000.00	Advertising	\$156,536.00	Empire Zone Program	\$45,000.00
		Tour and Travel	76,678.00		
		DC Travel Guide & Brochures	66,765.00		
		Website Development	75,150.00		
		Promotion Publicity Hudson Valley Regional	40,374.00		
			30,718.00		
		Product Development & Community Relations	138,861.00		
Total	<u>\$250,000.00</u>		<u>\$585,082.00</u>		<u>\$45,000.00</u>

Addendum I – Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation

Business Development

Goal – Assist employers to retain, invest and create jobs in Dutchess County. Serve as central point of contact for business assistance and develop resources, where necessary, to respond to business needs.

Measurements –

- Provide Business Services to at least 50 Dutchess County companies annually.
- Conduct 30 site visits during each year to assess client needs, provide advice and assistance.
- Solicit 20 trade show grant applications each year and solicit support from the DCIDA to fund at least eight.
- Develop market and conduct an annual webinar series for the sharing of relevant business topics to interested Dutchess County businesses.
- Facilitate the creation of 80 jobs annually through expansion activities.

Outcomes (2010)

- Provided business assistance to 128 discrete business entities in 2010.
- Conducted 45 site visits in 2010.
- Generated 15 applications for trade show grants and induced the DCIDA to award grants to 10 companies.
- Developed a successful webinar series that debuted in the spring of 2011
- Facilitated the expansion of Mechtronics with the addition of approximately 30 jobs by year-end 2011.
- Facilitated the expansion of Adams Fairacre Farms into Wappingers Falls with the addition of nearly 200 jobs by year end 2011.
- Facilitated the expansion of MetroKing Motors and Vantage manufacturing (job numbers are not available)
- Assisted PDQ manufacturing creating 6-12 new jobs through 2010-2011.
- Collaborated with the Solar Energy Consortium beginning in December 2010 on a sale or merger of SpectraWatt resulting in an offer that is likely to close by year-end 2011 saving 50-60 of the suspended SpectraWatt jobs.

Business Attraction

Goal – Attract new business and jobs to Dutchess County.

Measurements –

- Provide attraction services to at least 20 companies and attract at least two (2) to the County annually.
- Create at least 100 permanent jobs through attraction annually.
- Collaborate with developers, property owners and brokers to actively market. Dutchess County to corporate relocation companies throughout the tri-state area.
- Develop and market strategic industries plan.
- Develop and market a tactical infill plan.
- Facilitate the infill of at least five (5) properties through attraction annually.

Outcomes (2010)

- Attracted Life Medical Technologies to East Fishkill with an estimated 250 jobs over five years.
- Attracted a division of Illinois Tool Works to Millerton with an estimated 26 jobs.

- Continued to develop Cricket Valley energy with an estimated 500 construction and 50-60 permanent jobs to be completed in approximately 2015.
- Continued to develop the Army National Guard maintenance depot project with an estimated 100 jobs by 2013.
- Initiated development with Hudson Baylor, with estimated 60-70 jobs, to be completed in 2011.

Economic and Community Affairs

Goal – Develop community support for responsible economic development.

Measurements –

- Determine appropriate stake-holders.
- Assess development needs and obstacles in municipalities related to development.
- Develop a plan for remediation of obstacles

Outcomes (2010)

- One case study – East Fishkill – West Complex
 - Assembled a taskforce of public – private stakeholders
 - Assessed the zoning and resource requirements of the West Complex
 - Lobbied the municipality, property owner and the County for at least verbal commitments for resolution.
 - Result in a project in the due diligence stage for an adaptive reuse of the West Complex.

Addendum II – Dutchess County Tourism

Advertising

Goal – Promote Dutchess County as a travel destination to consumers and groups nationally and internationally through various media

Measurements –

- Develop themed campaigns for 4 seasons
- Administer the “I Love New York” Matching Funds program for county and Hudson Valley Tourism
- Develop advertising plan to include a variety of media
- Mail appropriate promotional material to fulfill requests

Outcomes (2010)

- Bed Tax revenue to DC \$1.9 million (estimate) 5% increase
- Created new logo campaign and theme: Simple and Sophisticated. You Deserve Dutchess
- There were no ILNY matching funds in 2010
- Our media markets included:
 - Northern New Jersey
 - Metro New York and Long Island
 - The Hudson Valley
 - The Mid-Atlantic region
 - Northeastern Pennsylvania
 - Group Tour Leaders
 - International travelers via the web
- Specific media components included:
 - Print advertising
 - E-blasts
 - Online box, banner, and tile ads
 - Editorial appearances
 - Web and radio spot package
 - Face book ads
- Secured 12 million impressions during the Facebook campaign which generated 3,875 visits to the DCT web site, was the third highest source of web traffic, and accounted for 5% of total traffic during its run.

Tour & Travel Trade Show

Goal – Attract new business and jobs to Dutchess County.

Measurements –

- Secure 150 business leads for leisure and group market
- Develop one familiarization tour for NYC hotel concierges
- Create 10 new leisure travel packages for consumer market
- Secure 25 accommodations for central availability service
- Write and distribute 2 e-newsletters to travel trade.

Outcomes (2010)

- 180 tour operators and group leaders services, attended 3 consumers show; GLBT, African American Travel Conference and AARP; Total buses coming to Dutchess County in 2010 was 762 for attractions carrying 27,385 person and 106 overnight coaches and generating 3,610 room nights
- Conducted two farm tours, one for NYC Hotel Concierge Association and one for Travel agents from Argentina
- Posted 10 new getaway packages on GetawayNewYork.com website.
- 30 inns/hotels/B&B's were members of the online availability system which received 710 requests for hotel reservations on Webervations website.
- Distributed 2 e-newsletters to travel trade and received grant from National Heritage Area to create a video promoting experiential tours which was copied to flash drives to distribute to group tour market

Brochures/Travel Guide

Goal – Provide publications that will promote assets of Dutchess County both to domestic and international markets that will include but not be limited to travel guide, farm fresh, events and to distribute brochure at various tourist information centers.

Measurements –

- Solicit listings and updates for new travel guide
- Design and print new travel guide
- Distribute brochures for appropriate audiences
- Collect and enter travel guide survey to database and create year end analysis

Outcomes (2010)

- Updated listings, designed/printed new travel guide and distributed 75,000
- Two new Tourism Information Centers at Hyde Park Marina and City of Beacon. 2010 distribution totals: 5570 Travel Guide; 1755 Walkway; 2490 Bike; 3315 Farm Fresh; 1130 Locust Grove; 2370 CIA; 1675 Art Along Hudson; Bridge music 555; FDR 1285; NYS Maps 695; HV Lodging 1135.

Website Development & Marketing

Goal- Maintain interactive website to promote Dutchess County as desirable vacation destination with up to date planning tools

Measurements –

- Continue use of RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds for individuals and the media
- Create e-newsletter for visitors and local tourism businesses
- Increase on site brochure advertising
- Measure impact of website through weblogs
- Write and post story ideas spotlights briefs
- Maintain Calendar Listings
- Develop strategy for Twitter and Facebook accounts

Outcomes (2010)

- Dutchess County Tourism website had 399,756 visitors during 2010, an average of 1,095 visitors a day.
- 182 web spotlight articles were read by total of 57,805 visitors.
- Created and published 8 e-newsletters delivered to 15,622 visitors and 1,873 businesses.

- Set up Twitter and Facebook accounts; as of 12/2010, 505 people are followers of Dutchess County Tourism on Facebook and 1,024 on Twitter.
- In addition to over 700 listings for events on DC Tourism website we updated 400+ listing and event for redesigned ILoveNY.com website. Obtained and added multiple photos for each listing and event.
- RSS feed discontinued and using Facebook and twitter to accomplish newsfeeds

Promotion and Publicity

Goal – Develop editorial coverage for Dutchess County Tourism assets through a variety of media venues

Measurements –

- Identify and pitch travel writers in developing articles about Dutchess County
- Arrange and host 25 familiarization tours for interested writers
- Write and distribute 100 news releases to local regional and national media
- Facilitate tourism business to market and promote facilities
- Investigate cost of CD/DVD to promote tourism product

Outcomes (2010)

- Hosted 49 writers on familiarization tours of Dutchess County.
- Dutchess County Tourism media coverage equated to \$2 million dollars in print media.
- Sent out 37 full news releases to 70 local, 350 regional and 300 national news outlets.
- Postponed CD/DVD due to budget reductions

Hudson Valley Region

Goal-Cooperatively market the Hudson Valley as a travel destination with 10 Hudson Valley counties

Measurements –

- Participate in regional advertising
- Development marketing plan that embraces county and state marketing efforts
- Create-print new regional guide

Outcomes (2010)

- No regional marketing program happened due to state stopping matching funds program for 2010
- Regional group continued to meet, expanded group to include nine (9) other partners

Product Development/Community Relations

Goal – Enhance tourism relationships with local business, educational institutions and professional organizations. Develop new programs and activities to enforce awareness and interest in Dutchess County as a tourism destination

Measurements –

- Explore 6 grants to support tourism activities and programs
- Maintain relationships with Hudson Valley Wine and Culinary Center
- Service and maintain 19 information centers in Dutchess County
- Give 5 presentation and attend 50 events and functions
- Organize one brochure exchange with 20 business

Outcomes (2010)

- Dutchess County Tourism was represented at more than 159 local community business, chamber meetings and events. Tourism presentations to: Fishkill Historians; Marist College Youth Program; Harlem Valley Chamber; Beacon Business Association; DC Arts Council; Beacon Business Association; and the Rotary Fishkill DC Arts Council; Dutchess County Bounty, HV Restaurant Week; Cornell Cooperative Extension (Nominating Committee), Garden of Eating committee, Great Estates member; Dutchess County Arts Council County Executive's Arts Awards; and volunteer Locust Grove Sunset Sensations.
- DCT hosted one industry educational event this year in conjunction with DC Arts Council titled Building your Business Connecting Arts and Tourism with over 75 participants
- DCT partnered in two promotions;; Bike Hudson Valley and Great Estate consortium
- DCT continued a very successful program that originally started in 2007, the Farm Fresh Program. DCT applied for, and received, a \$35k grant from USDA. This program brought another 1300 people to Dutchess County farms from the NYC metro area (whereas 525 participated in 2007). As we utilized the funds, we only had enough money for transportation to run the tours for 7 weekends (2 in Aug., 2 in Sept., & 3 weekends in October), plus Shuttle for Dutchess County Fair and Sheep and Wool Festival.

Awards

- Northern Dutchess Alliance Charting Our Course – 2010
- 2010 Headliner Award – Leadership in Organization & Community
- Inaugural Nominee for Victoria A. Simons Locavore Award
- Director receive 1 of 2 scholarships to attend 2010 International Culinary Tourism Conference

Boards

- Director of DCT serves as President of Hudson Valley Tourism
- Director of DCT appointed to Val-Kill Board of Directors
- Director of DCT served on the US Travel Association National Council of Destination Organization
- Deputy Director serves on DC Arts Council Board