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## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Mary Becht honored at U.S. Urban Arts Federation Meeting in Seattle**

SEATTLE — Mary Becht, Director of the Broward County Cultural Division received the Ray Hanley Innovation Award at a private event on June 18th hosted by the United States Urban Arts Federation (USUAF). A coalition of leaders from the country's 60 largest cities, USUAF established the award in 2007 to honor both Hanley and others who make outstanding individual contributions to arts and culture in American cities.

The award presentation coincides with the 2009 Americans for the Arts national convention, which brought 1,200 arts leaders to Seattle for three days of meetings, high-profile speakers, and strategic planning.

In making its choice for the award, the USUAF selection committee highlighted Mary's achievement over her career, recognizing her work in advancing public art, cultural facility development, the artists entrepreneur program, and other program innovations that have served as a model for her peers around the country.

"Mary Becht has demonstrated extraordinary leadership and with this award, is nationally recognized for developing innovative programs and initiatives to advance arts and culture

(more)

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in Broward County. Her colleagues from America's top 60 cities are inspired by her creativity and success,” said Michael Killoren director of the Mayor’s Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs in Seattle and president of the USUAF.

As president of the Greater Columbus Arts Council from 1985 until his untimely death in 2006, Ray Hanley was the driving force behind cultural development in Columbus, Ohio. He pushed artists, cultural organizations, arts educators, arts audiences, and the city itself to embrace the diversity and quality of the Columbus cultural community. Because of his work, Columbus has a strong cultural community that attracts visitors to the city and has contributed to city pride among its residents.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, it has a record of 49 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](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org). or call Michael Killoren, President, U.S. urban Arts Federation at 206.684.7173

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