



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Antoine M. Thompson

## New York State Senator Antoine Thompson Honors Local Arts Efforts with \$100,000 in Cultural Aid

ANTOINE M THOMPSON October 16, 2009

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**For Immediate Release:** Thursday, October 15, 2009

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**ANNOUNCEMENT:** Media Announcement

Friday, October 16, 2009 at 4:00 PM

Arts Council in Buffalo & Erie County

700 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14202

**Buffalo, NY-** On Friday, October 16, 2009 at 4 p.m. in the offices of the Arts Council in Buffalo & Erie County, NYS Senator Antoine Thompson will celebrate National Arts and Humanities Month by announcing \$100,000 in support for local arts and cultural programs.

Senator Thompson is a member of the New York State Senate Committee on Cultural

Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation. "I wanted to serve on this committee because for many people in Western New York, art is a resource that can transform lives," stated Senator Antoine M. Thompson.

The award will provide support for nearly 20 different efforts in the region. The Arts Council in Buffalo & Erie County will serve as the local administrator for the Senatorial item on behalf of the grantees. The Arts Council in Buffalo & Erie County will also receive \$25,000 to help identify cultural and artistic opportunities for artists who are part of this community's growing population of immigrants and who have not been able to find ways to express or maximize their artistic abilities since relocating to this area.

"The immigrant/refugee population in this region is expanding rapidly. Buffalo and Erie County has a long and recognized history as an ethnically diverse community and it should be celebrated," states Celeste Lawson, executive director of the Arts Council in Buffalo & Erie County.

Other organizations that will be included in the \$100,000 award include the Western New York Artist Group, Elmwood Avenue Festival of the Arts, Community Music School, Squeaky Wheel and Music Is Art. "I represent the heart of the arts and cultural community in Western New York and these groups are educating families, creating good jobs and improving the quality of life for all of Western New York," said Thompson.

Lynda Stephens, President of the Arts Council stated "We appreciate Senator's Thompson support and especially for his enthusiasm of the Arts Council's work and value in the community."

