



**Eddie A. Perez**  
Mayor

## **ARTS AND HERITAGE STIMULUS MEANS HARTFORD EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **---NEWS AND COMMUNITY RELEASE---**

(July 1, 2009)--- Creating jobs is a top priority and Mayor Eddie A. Perez says Hartford's new Arts and Heritage Stimulus Package is building on its renowned Arts and Heritage Mecca to retain and create about 350 employment opportunities in the Capital City. On top of that, an industry analysis estimates about \$7.8 million in "audience impact" dollars are expected to flow into Hartford businesses. Mayor Perez and Acting COO David Panagore, who served as the Stimulus Panel Chairman, visited the first opportunity to see the stimulus dollars in action at the Billings Forge Community Works for an Artist residency and Open Studio program for 24 artists.

"This is just the beginning of something very unique and exciting here in Hartford. By stimulating our Arts and Heritage economy through job creation and artistic innovation, we are strengthening one of Hartford's standout features as well as better positioning our local economy for when we emerge from this recession," says Mayor Eddie A. Perez.

"These grants support arts and arts-related jobs. This includes construction workers, electricians, painters, seamstresses, food vendors, technicians, teachers, and of course our talented artists," adds Mayor Perez.

23 Hartford-based artists, arts organizations and community groups are being funded by \$1.1 million in stimulus money from the City of Hartford, administered through the Greater Hartford Arts Council. 57 nonprofit organizations and artists applied and about 40% were selected. Grants range from \$10,000 to \$100,000.

A 10-member Grant Review Panel made the award decisions, judging each application based primarily on the direct and indirect economic impact of the proposed projects, as well as factors such as community impact, project excellence, fiscal soundness, quality of planning and how results would be measured. Projects which committed to hiring Hartford residents and using Hartford-based businesses were given priority. Projects were funded in all three of the eligible categories: new or expanded works (17 projects), facilities building or improvements (2 projects) and youth employment (4 projects).

The City has applied to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to use \$600,000 in Community Development Block Grant Recovery money to create another grant pool. If approved, it is expected that these funds would target micro-enterprise arts organizations with fewer than five employees. The City and the Greater Hartford Arts Council hope to begin Phase 2 of this program in late summer or early fall.