

Mayors Hear About Arts and Humanities Programs

By Tom McClimon

A number of representatives from arts and humanities groups appeared before the meeting of the Arts, Parks, Entertainment and Sports Committee. Chaired by Miami Mayor Manuel Diaz, the mayors gained an insight into ways their communities can participate in a number of national programs.

Richard Fonte, Director, of the National Endowment for the Humanities Program "We the People," discussed ways cities can participate in this program which explores significant events and themes in our nation's history. Activities include a collection of books made available to local libraries through the We the People Bookshelf program; sponsorship of public programs and exhibitions on American history, and preservation of historic documents.

Earl Hurrey, Assistant Executive Director of the National Association for Music Education, talked about ways mayors can participate their "National Anthem Project," a national campaign to promote the singing and

history of The Star Spangled Banner. Launched this year, the campaign will include marketing tours to a number of cities, a national media campaign, and grassroots outreach to students, teachers and communities.

Nina Ozlu, Vice President for Government and Public Affairs of Americans for the Arts shared her thoughts on the outlook for federal support for the arts. It is hopeful that in the next budget round that be budget for the National Endowment for the Arts will be level funded. She also gave the mayors an overview on other countries' ministerial level positions on arts and culture. She also introduced Lina Garcia, a former staff person at the Conference of Mayors who is now the Local Government Liaison for Americans for the Arts.

Don Rossi Nuccio, Founder and President of Latino Art Beat discussed his organization's efforts to encourage the artistic talents of Latino high school students through annual city-wide arts competitions. A number of cities have participated including Chicago, New York, Houston, and Miami and he encouraged more cities

to participate. Nuccio unveiled the 2005 Art Beat poster.

Kate Rumbaugh, Vice President for Public Affairs for Coca Cola Enterprises engaged the mayors in a discussion

on efforts to promote physical activity in children. Coca Cola is partnering with the Conference of Mayors in this efforts and mayors discussed many of their best practices programs.



Miami Mayor Manuel Diaz is joined by Arts Committee presenters. Left to right, Don Rossi Nuccio, Latino Arts Beat; Kate Rumbaugh, Coca Cola; Earl Hurrey and Elizabeth Perry, National Association for Music Education; Mayor Diaz; Richard Fonte, National Endowment for the Humanities; and Nina Ozlu, Americans for the Arts.