



NIAGARA ERIE REGIONAL COALITION

August 29, 2008

Attached please find an invitation to a very important statewide initiative – the Cultural Blueprints project. It's taking place Thursday September 18 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at WNEB Studios (Horizons Plaza at Lower Terrace, Buffalo).

This effort is being led jointly by Empire State Development and the New York State Council on the Arts. Locally, the Arts Council in Buffalo & Erie County is co-hosting the day, in partnership with the Niagara Erie Regional Coalition as part of its 10 year anniversary.

This is the opportunity for us to speak to the importance of arts, culture, and tourism on both the region's and the state's economy and to have our issues included in an overall statewide blueprint for economic development.

There will be both large group and breakout sessions throughout the day with many opportunities for your voice to be heard. The day is structured in such a way that you can come for the entire program or any portion of it.

Please join us for this significant event!



The **New York State Council on the Arts**, in association with the **Empire State Development's Western New York office** and the **Arts Council in Buffalo and Erie County**, invites your participation in

Cultural Blueprints

September 18, 2008

10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

WNED Studios, Horizons Plaza (at Lower Terrace), Buffalo

Arguably the creative capital of the world, New York State is home to nearly 2,700 non-profit cultural organizations, as well as tens of thousands of artists and for-profit cultural enterprises. Cultural activity plays a critical role in the social and educational well-being of the citizens in all 62 counties and infuses the State's economy with more than \$25 billion annually. With sound strategies in place that integrate culture with economic and community development priorities, the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) believes the potential for impact is far greater.

To develop integrated arts strategies, NYSCA and its partners will be conducting Cultural Blueprints sessions across the state. Building on Empire State Development's Regional Blueprint process, Cultural Blueprints intends to spark new cross-sector conversations and lead to a clear articulation of the region's strengths and opportunities, a statement of regional priorities, and the identification of regional and statewide arts-based growth strategies.

We hope you will join us on September 18, as we bring together Western New York's local arts professionals, economic development experts, private philanthropists, tourism professionals, public officials, artists, businesses, education, and community leaders to consider the issues and opportunities in Western New York in facilitated work sessions.

Please RSVP to Celeste Lawson, celeste.lawson@artscouncilbuffalo.org or (716) 856-7520; or Tod Kniazuk, tkniazuk@ecidany.org

Space is limited, so RSVP today!

For further information and to learn more about the Cultural Blueprints process and an ongoing conversation about what it means for Western New York, please go to:

www.culturalblueprints.co.cc