



NEWS RELEASE

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COMMISSIONER WARD RECEIVES FIRST LIFETIME COUNTY ARTS LEADERSHIP AWARD

The National Association of Counties (NACo) and Americans for the Arts recognized Commissioner Betty Lou Ward as the first recipient of the Lifetime County Arts Leadership Award on Sunday, July 12, 2015, during NACo's 80th Annual Conference and Exposition in Charlotte.

"In 1999, Betty Lou Ward received the very first Public Leadership in the Arts Award for her work in bringing the topic of arts and culture to NACo," said Americans for the Arts Senior Director of State and Local Government Affairs Jay Dick. "Over the past 16 years, she has never stopped promoting the social and economic value of the arts in culture in Wake County, in North Carolina or on the national stage."

Ward currently represents North Carolina as a NACo Board of Directors member, but her extensive involvement in NACo began in 1997 when she first served as the Bylaws Committee Chair. Ward would continue on to become NACo President from 1998-1999.

"The Board of Commissioners applauds NACo and Americans for the Arts for recognizing Commissioner Ward's passion and dedication with this prestigious award," said Chairman James West. "The work she's done in the past and her work today have undoubtedly contributed to enhancing the quality of life for citizens in our community and other across the country."

Ward's interest in and dedication to the arts led to the formation of the Arts and Culture Commission shortly after her presidency in 1999. She served as Commission Chair from 2000-2008.

Ward's additional leadership positions in NACo include First Vice President from 1997-1998, and Health Committee Vice Chair in 2005.

NACo brings together all of the United States' 3,069 county governments to collaborate on attention-worthy subjects such as national policy, innovative leadership skills, effective county solution, and public awareness of county government's role in communities.

As a partner with NACo, Americans for the Arts conducts extensive and comprehensive research on all aspects of the arts and culture industry, such as business, workforce development, healthcare, education, and government appropriations on all levels.

Media Note: A photo of Commissioner Ward is available at wakegov.com/media/resources/Pages/commissionerphotos.

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