

Dear Candidate:

On behalf of the Georgia Arts Network and the Georgia Arts and Culture Venues Coalition, we are asking all candidates for statewide elected office the following questions. The responses will be shared in full with our respective newsletter subscribers and social media followers as well as shared on our website. We thank you in advance and look forward to sharing your responses with our constituencies.

Please return your completed survey to either president@gaartsnetwork.org or the PO Box below.

Sincerely,

Jessica Akers, President, Georgia Arts Network

Candidate Name: DeAnna Harris

For which office are you running? Georgia State Representative District 41

Would you please share your personal involvement in arts and culture (such as being an artist/performer, attending various events, supporting a spouse/child as they pursue the arts, donating to local organizations, or other items that may be personal to you)?

I have been apart of the arts and music culture for over a decade. As a child, I played several instruments and participated in most of the culture arts programs offered to students. I have an undergraduate degree in apparel design and advertising. My company, Brown & Harris Media, has also created a fundraising gala event to support the after-school student art community in Cobb and Fulton county. We have also worked with the Fulton County Arts Council, City of Smyrna and Cobb county to birth new programs and funding for students.

According to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies FY2019 State Arts Agency Legislative Appropriation Preview, Georgia ranks 49th in per capita funding for our State Arts Agency. Do you believe that this is an appropriate level of investment? And why or why not?

"I feel the arts are integral parts of our school system. We should never sacrifice art programs or education for budget cuts. I know that students who are involved in an extracurricular activity such as playing an instrument are more likely to do well in school and less likely to be involved in harmful activities. My goal is to protect the art and music programs in our school district and ensure our students have ample opportunities to participate in classes and after school programs that will broaden their knowledge and exposure to different types of art and music programs."

The mission of the Georgia Arts Network is to strengthen, connect, and advocate for the arts in Georgia.

Georgia Arts Network, P.O. Box 244191, Atlanta, GA 30324 gaartsnetwork.org

What are your goals for arts education in our public school systems?

My goal is to protect the art and music programs in our school district and ensure our students have ample opportunities to participate in classes and after school programs that will broaden their knowledge and exposure to different types of art and music programs."

Do you support the statewide legalization of gaming at casino resorts?

"I do not support statewide legalization of gaming casino resorts. I feel that opening our state to that kind of activity would be detrimental to our communities. There is a positive correlation between gambling and crime. Our citizens need our leaders to invest in other sectors that will benefit our community such as small business, education, healthcare, transportation and crime prevention."

According to industry consultant CSL's 2016 analysis of the Casino Impact on Performing Arts Venues, there is a negative impact on existing local arts and cultural entertainment venues when casino-owned and funded entertainment venues are constructed in the market. Were you aware of this detrimental consequence? Do you think these civic assets deserve formal protection?

"I was not aware of the results from this survey. This is a detrimental consequence and is further reason to prevent the legalization of casino resorts. I do believe local arts and cultural venues deserve protection. In Cobb County, we have the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Center. This beautiful venue brings a vast amount of beautiful productions, while also providing economic growth to our county. I know there are many bigger and smaller venues that do the same around the state and they deserve the protection. "

Other states that have legalized casino gaming have included language in the legislation to protect local arts and cultural facilities, including provisions to prohibit or limit the capacity of entertainment venues housed at casino resorts. Would you introduce protection for Georgia's arts and culture facilities? If so, what would you propose?

"I would introduce the protection of these facilities if such legislation were to come up. I would suggest an amendment that would prohibit the gaming companies to buy the property of thriving art or cultural center and suggest a board be formed for the protection and advancement of local cultural and arts centers."

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