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186,000 Colorado Jobs in Creative Economy: New Study Defines 5th Largest Cluster of Colorado's Economy

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The Colorado Council on the Arts released "Colorado: State-of-the-Art, Key Findings from The State of Colorado's Creative Economy", which shows that 186,251 jobs in the state are associated with creative enterprises and creative occupations. A key findings summary and the full report are available at www.colorarts.org.

Denver, CO (PRWEB) February 6, 2009 -- The Colorado Council on the Arts released "Colorado: State-of-the-Art, Key Findings from The

State of Colorado's Creative Economy", which shows that 186,251 jobs in the state are associated with creative enterprises and creative occupations. A key findings summary and the full report are available on the Colorado Council on the Arts web site at www.colorarts.org.

Colorado's creative enterprises alone employed over 122,000 individuals in about 8,000 establishments. This accounts for 3.9% of the state's estimated 3.2 million jobs, making it Colorado's 5th largest employment sector, almost as large as biotechnology/biomedical and IT & telecommunications, and larger than defense & security and agribusiness, food processing & technology. Employee earnings in these jobs, including employee benefits, was about \$5 billion. Another 64,000 individuals worked in creative occupations in non-creative enterprises.

"This research clearly demonstrates that the creative sector is a large and important sector of Colorado's economy," said Colorado Lt. Governor, Barbara O'Brien. "Our next step is to more fully understand the challenges in each industry sub-group and identify areas of opportunity."

Colorado is a magnet for creative talent, ranking 5th among all states for concentration of artists. Only New York, California, Massachusetts and Vermont have a higher concentration of creative talent. Colorado ranks 2nd in concentration of architects, 7th in concentration of writers, designers, entertainers and performers, and 8th in concentration of photographers. More information on creative talent and creative jobs is available in the key findings summary at http://www.colorarts.state.co.us/programs/economic/co_creativeeconomy/index.htm.

"Anecdotally we knew that Colorado was home to a large number of creative businesses and creative talent," said Elaine Mariner, executive director, Colorado Council on the Arts. "Now we have the statistics to prove that the creative sector is a critical part of our state's economy and could be an important driver for economic growth."

For this study, a creative enterprise is defined as any company for which the primary value of its products or services is rooted in its emotional and aesthetic appeal to the customer. A creative occupation is defined as a job in either a creative industry or non-creative industry in which the work itself is inherently creative or artistic. The creative economy encompasses both of these groups, which overlap.

The study categorized creative industries into six sub-groups: design, film and media, heritage, literary and publishing, performing arts, and visual arts and crafts. Colorado's strengths are design, literary and publishing, and film and media which represent 73% of all creative industry jobs.

The strengths of the creative economy vary across the state. For instance South Central Colorado has strength in literary and publishing including the greeting card industry, Northwest hosts nationally significant



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art and music festivals, and Southwest is home to a significant number of visual artists. More details on the creative sub-groups and the regions and their strengths are included in the key findings summary and the full report at www.coloarts.org.

The study identified four action steps to grow Colorado's creative economy: understand what drives and what impedes the growth of the various industry sub-segments, capitalize on the linkages between creative talent and other important industry clusters such as manufacturing, assess the strengths of the state's K-12 and higher education systems to further develop our creative workforce, and consider how to attract more creative enterprises to our state by learning about where creative people choose to live and why, by region.

The Colorado Council on the Arts is working with Lt. Governor O'Brien, Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Labor and Colorado Community College System to host a series of regional "Creative Conversations" through which the state can develop a better understanding of how the creative industries can be harnessed in each region to drive economic growth.

About the Colorado Council on the Arts

The mission of The Colorado Council on the Arts, a division of the Office of Economic Development and International Trade, is to promote the cultural, educational, and economic growth of Colorado through development of its arts and cultural heritage. For more information, visit www.coloarts.org.

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