

Leadership: Dr. Michael Vincent

Website: <http://nau.edu/CAL/Faculty-and-Staff/Deans-Office/>

Dear Selection Committee,

We enthusiastically nominate Dr. Michael Vincent for this year's Viola Award in Leadership for his contributions to the arts and culture at Northern Arizona University, the Flagstaff community, Northern Arizona, and the state of Arizona. Dr. Vincent was hired as the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters in the summer of 2006, and each year since his hiring the College's budget has shrunk, with a 16% budget reduction to the state allocation over this time. Because of and in spite of these budget cuts, Dr. Vincent's leadership has focused on maintaining quality in the education of our students, in the creative growth of our faculty, and in the cultural and entertainment offerings provided to the university and our community. The College of Arts and Letters is the largest arts and cultural organization in Northern Arizona, sponsoring over 350 public performances, exhibits, lectures, conferences, camps, and other activities each year; it draws, on average, over 75,000 attendees every year. The College of Arts and Letters' reach is also immense as it produces some of the finest educators in the arts and humanities who are working at all levels throughout Arizona and across the country. Dr. Vincent's determination to foster quality has enabled the College to not only manage, but to thrive and grow during these trying times.

Under the cloud of decreased funding coupled with increased enrollment, and to respond to the early incentive retirements of fourteen tenured faculty, Dr. Vincent has worked in creative ways to continue to hire quality educators, using non-state funded budgets, increased funding from the college's auxiliary programs, and private funding to maintain the excellent reputations of the college's academic programs. Also during this time, Dr. Vincent successfully led the efforts to create new academic programs in Cinema Studies, Museum Studies, Arts and Cultural Management, and Philosophy in the Public Interest, all of these programs were instituted this and the last academic year.

Dr. Vincent took advantage of the recent state stimulus funded Liberal Arts building renovation, completed in August 2011, to not only upgrade all classroom technology, but to include a brand new, state of the art, 200 seat cinema/lecture hall to host film festival and film series screenings open to the public with no admission charge. Dean Vincent has also initiated and vigorously pursued facility upgrade projects including the Clifford E. White Theatre lobby and upcoming theatre lighting upgrades, classroom and studio upgrades in the Babbitt Academic Annex and Performing and Fine Arts Building, a new facility to house the NAU Curry Summer Music Camp and Community Music and Dance Academy, and future upgrades to the ceramics complex.

The most notable facilities improvement project of these is the fundraising campaign that Dean Vincent started to replace the thirty-seven year old broken and deteriorating seats in Ardrey Auditorium, the largest performing arts hall in Northern Arizona. This campaign quickly morphed into restarting the all-but-dead stimulus renovation project for the entire auditorium. This \$7.5 million project, which broke ground this month, will dramatically improve the accessibility, amenities, and audience experience for the thousands who attend performances in Ardrey Auditorium each year. The separately donor-funded seating upgrade, Dean Vincent's "Take A Seat' for Ardrey" campaign has already raised \$160,000 of the needed \$350,000.

Dr. Vincent's commitment to the arts and culture in Northern Arizona and the state is also evidenced by his initiation of an annual symposium and supporting projects involving Medical Humanities. In addition to his involvement on University governance committees and boards, Dean Vincent is also on the Arizona Humanities Council Board of Directors (<http://www.azhumanities.org/about3.php>), the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors (http://www.flagstaffsymphony.org/about_bod.php), and came up with the idea for and is a founding member of the Flagstaff Arts & Business Alliance (<http://www.culturalpartners.org/faba.htm>), an organization working to highlight and increase the impact of the arts and culture on the economic vitality of the Flagstaff community.

Another example of Dean Vincent's commitment to the arts and cultural offerings to the Flagstaff community stems from his current endeavors working with the Director of the NAU Art Museum and the Cosanti Foundation Board (which oversees Arcosanti) to bring an exhibition of models and renderings of Paolo Soleri's career as an architect to the NAU Art Museum in the Spring of 2013. Dr. Vincent hopes to generate more collaborative relationships with Arcosanti in the future.

We have attached links to two videos of Dean Vincent discussing his passions and visions for the arts and culture at NAU and the Flagstaff community:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZR4KGwdT7rg>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vruPthYJGTk>

Thank you for your consideration of this nomination for the 2012 Viola Award in Leadership.