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Arts Center celebrates national Arts In Education Week

Free admission day offered Sept. 25

(PUEBLO, Colo.) - It's now officially recognized – art really *does* boost your smarts! This year, the nation will recognize Sept. 12-18 as **Arts In Education Week**. Locally, the Sangre de Cristo Arts & Conference Center encourages more people to learn about education and the arts by offering a Free Admission Day to its Helen T. White Galleries and Buell Children's Museum on Saturday, Sept. 25, sponsored by Pueblo County and City of Pueblo.

In late July, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution declaring the week following the second Sunday of September as Arts in Education Week. The resolution specifically cites the educational benefits achieved by incorporating arts into children's education, including the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills, imagination and creativity, communication and cross-cultural understanding, among many others. It also recognizes that involvement in the arts supports academic success across *all* curricula for students.

"We are passionate about the arts, precisely because of the power we know them to have to boost self-esteem, expressiveness, concentration and decision-making abilities. We have seen children's lives changed again and again by their power to motivate and strengthen brain connections," said Gary Holder, Curator of Education at the Arts Center. Holder, a former public school educator, noted that all courses offered through the Arts Center's Friday Arts Academy for students in grades 1-8 address Colorado State Model Content Standards, as well as 21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies. The courses are taught by practicing, professional artists and/or licensed Pueblo District 70 teachers. The fall Arts Academy starts Sept. 10.

In addition to classes offered on Fridays for students from District 70, Pueblo City Schools, home-schoolers and charter school students, the Arts Center offers Spring Break and Summer Art Camps, and seasonal classes for all ages through its School of Arts and School of Dance. Fall classes begin Sept. 13.

A first introduction to art for many young children occurs in the award-winning Buell Children's Museum at the Arts Center. There, hands-on creativity is nourished by staff throughout numerous, interactive art stations, while visiting artists and community partners, such as the Pueblo Library District, make special appearances.

The community is invited to visit the Buell Children's Museum and Helen T. White Galleries for free on Saturday, Sept. 25. The children's museum is open from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; the galleries, featuring *Representing the West* and fall exhibits, are open 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The cultural hub of Southern Colorado, the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center gives visitors the tools to think and act creatively through a three building complex including seven galleries offering the best in historic and contemporary art by artists of local, regional and national renown. In addition the Arts Center offers the Buell Children's Museum, recognized as the second-best for art by Child magazine, a 500-seat theater featuring a variety of performing arts programs, both local and national, and two gift shops. Over 100 fine arts, dance and leisure classes are available every quarter providing something unique to everyone from children to adults of all skill levels.

Admission to the Arts Center is \$4 for adults and \$3 for children and military. Admission includes the Buell Children's Museum. Members of the Arts Center receive free admission. Galleries and Buell Children's Museum are open Tuesday-Saturday 11 a.m.-4p.m.; closed Mondays. Box office open Monday-Friday, 9a.m.-5p.m. and Saturday, 9a.m.-4p.m. For more information, please call 719-295-7200; stop by the Arts Center located at 210 N. Santa Fe Ave., just off of I-25, exit 98b, or visit online at www.sangredecristoarts.org.

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