

CULTURE BRIGHT:

A SUMMER ESSAY SERIES

Reflections on art, culture, and the future of the Quad Cities from **Jen Lewis-Snyder**, President & CEO of The Cultural Trust.

The Front Porch

Every neighborhood has a front porch.
It's where conversations begin.
Where neighbors become friends.
Where ideas are exchanged.
Where people feel welcome before they ever step inside.

Today, The Cultural Trust opens its front porch to the Quad Cities. This afternoon, we'll celebrate the opening of our new home in downtown Rock Island. On the surface, it's a ribbon cutting. In reality, it's a reflection of what this community has made possible. For years, The Cultural Trust operated out of generously donated office space thanks to Northwest Bank & Trust and Time Investments. We were grateful for every square foot because it allowed us to direct more of our resources where they belonged: investing in our Legacy Partners and strengthening the cultural life of this region. As our work grew, so did the need for a space that could grow with it. Thanks to the Downtown Rock Island Revitalization (DARI), we found more than an affordable building.

We found a place where our mission finally had room to grow. A place where artists, donors, volunteers, trustees, community leaders, and neighbors can gather around one shared belief: that arts and culture make communities stronger.

Most of what The Cultural Trust does happens quietly. Unrestricted grants help our Legacy Partners plan boldly and serve our community with confidence. Partnerships are formed. Conversations become collaborations. Ideas become action. Organizations gain the capacity to dream a little bigger. And year after year, that investment compounds. A young artist finds a stage. A child discovers a lifelong passion. A family visits a museum for the first time and becomes members. A collaboration becomes something no one organization could have accomplished alone. The headlines belong to the performances, exhibitions, concerts, and gardens. We wouldn't have it any other way. Our role has always been to help others shine. Today also marks the kickoff for our friends at Alternating Currents (AC). Thanks to AC, thousands of people will gather to experience music, comedy, film, art, and creativity throughout the Quad Cities August 13 – August 16.

On August 16, the Culture Bright Summer Series will carry that

momentum forward through experiences hosted by our six extraordinary Legacy Partners. To me, they aren't separate celebrations. They're evidence of what becomes possible when a community invests in creativity. When organizations choose collaboration. When audiences choose to show up. When donors choose to believe. For nearly twenty years, The Cultural Trust has believed arts and culture are not amenities. They are community infrastructure. They strengthen local economies. They attract talent. They inspire young people. They give families reasons to gather. They create places people are proud to call home. Today, we simply open the front door to the place where that work is fueled. Not because a building changes our mission. Because our mission finally has the space to grow into what's next. If you're downtown today, stop by.



“Because that’s what front porches are for. They welcome people in. Then they send them back into the neighborhood a little more connected than before.”

Take a tour.
Meet our team.
Stay for a conversation.
Then spend the next eleven days exploring everything this remarkable community has to offer. Because that’s what front porches are for. They welcome people in. Then they send them back into the neighborhood a little more connected than before. We’ll leave the light on. Explore the full Culture Bright Summer Series schedule at CultureBright.org. Because culture matters here. And it always will.

Come see why Culture Matters Here. And why it always will. To learn more about the Culture Bright Summer Series go to CultureBright.org.

