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**Former Ohio Arts Council Director Wayne P. Lawson honored by  
Chilean National Council for Culture and the Arts**

The Chilean National Council for Culture and the Arts announced in May that it would award former Ohio Arts Council (OAC) Executive Director Wayne P. Lawson, Ph. D. a high honor by publicly recognizing his outstanding professional commitment to cultural collaborations between Ohio and Chile.

The OAC has engaged in nearly 100 exchange projects with Chile involving Ohio arts organizations and artists since 1997 with the financial support of partners like the Chilean Ministry of Education, National Council for Culture and the Arts, the American Embassy in Santiago, the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of State, and private foundations and individuals. The projects have included major exhibition exchanges such as *The Art of Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson* at the Museo de Bellas Artes in Santiago, Chile, several international symposia on arts administration, artist residencies and long-term collaborations benefiting cultural organizations in both Ohio and Chile. In 2005 the OAC was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs for a three-year program designed to strengthen and expand Ohio's exchanges with Chile.

"The programs of exchange and international cooperation which we have been able to develop are thanks to Dr. Lawson and the Ohio Arts Council's guidance and excellent work," said Paulina Urrutia Fernández, Minister of the Chilean National Council for Culture and the Arts. "Our innovative exchanges with Ohio have enabled us to gain important knowledge and practice in the contemporary field of arts administration and policy."

Dr. Lawson will receive his award as a guest of the Chilean government at its third annual seminar of Comparative Cultural Policies between Chile and the United States, June 16-17 in Santiago.

"I am deeply honored by this award and know that our programming in Chile has been successful because of the cooperation and collaboration of our Chilean colleagues and the strong support of the American Embassy in Santiago. We all know that understanding each other's culture helps us respect each other. And that is good business."

The exchanges have had a significantly positive impact on Ohio institutions and artists as well.

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“The Museum has been fortunate to benefit from Wayne’s passion and vision for the arts for many years, first in his role as executive director for the Ohio Arts Council and now as a Museum trustee” said Nannette V. Maciejunes, Executive Director of the Columbus Museum of Art. “He has been integral to helping us raise the international profile of the Museum through our projects in Chile, which would not have been possible without his leadership.”

Lawson began the OAC's International Program with a cultural exchange between Ohio and India in 1988. Since then the OAC's International Program has promoted exchanges between Ohio and Argentina, Chile (including Easter Island), China, Czech Republic Japan, Korea, Germany, Hungary, Mexico, Russia, Spain.

Long hailed as the most visionary arts leader in the country, Lawson’s groundbreaking initiatives made the Ohio Arts Council one of the foremost state arts councils in America in terms of funding, both public and private, long-range planning and evaluation, support for individual artists and innovative services to constituents in all arts disciplines. Lawson was Executive Director of the Ohio Arts Council for 27 years. He retired in March, 2006.

Lawson began working at the Ohio Arts Council in 1975 and became the fourth executive director in May 1978. During his tenure he helped stimulate a climate in Ohio that gives artists, arts administrators and the public access to the Ohio Arts Council. By encouraging people in the arts to become involved with public funding for the arts and to voice their opinions on arts policy and programming during public meetings held around the state.

Lawson, who was born in Cleveland, received a B.A. in Romance languages, an M.A. in European literature and earned his doctorate in theater from The Ohio State University (OSU). He holds a certificate in Spanish literature from the University of Madrid and an honorary doctorates from Rio Grande College, Ohio and the Columbus College of Art and Design.

Dr. Lawson is currently a professor in arts policy and administration in the Department of Art Education at OSU where he teaches graduate courses in public policy and the arts. He is a trustee of the Columbus Museum of Art and the Thurber House.

The Ohio Arts Council is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically.

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