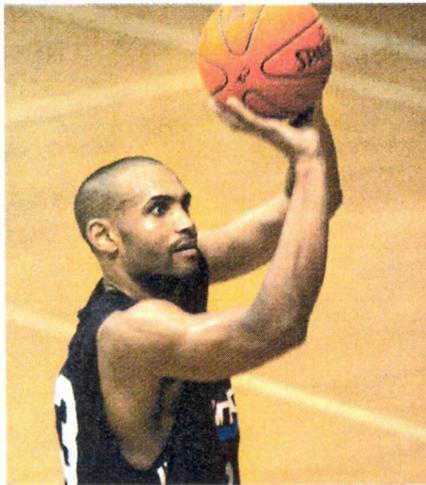




Arizona
Commission
on the Arts

Dear Fellow Arts Champions,



In my 16 years as a professional basketball player, I have come to understand that achieving excellence is no small feat. It takes practice, repetition, dedication and discipline, among many other things. Committing to achieving excellence often means long hours and endless practice, and it takes heart. All of these skills are mirrored in the pursuit of excellence in artmaking. As someone who understands sweating it out for something I love, I have the utmost respect for the work of artists.

This is part of the reason my wife, Grammy-nominated singer, Tamia Hill, and I collect works of art that are meaningful to us; works of art that embody the dedication and discipline of an artist and reflect a moment in time.

From a young age, my father instilled in me a respect for well-crafted and historically significant artifacts and works of art. He took me to museums and taught me to appreciate the energetic vision of artists, especially African-American artists. This family tradition of collecting is another reason I continue to acquire impactful works of art.

Now, as a father myself, I recognize the value of passing this appreciation on to my two children. They have a natural affinity for creative works, and it is inspiring to see them make their own artistic discoveries. Tamia and I fully support arts education, not just because we are artists and arts lovers in our own ways, but also because we recognize the value of arts education in our children's lives. When my daughters are given the freedom to discover and interpret the world through their own creativity, they produce things that express their own individuality and reflect how they see the world. It is this kind of freedom for self-discovery, and encouragement of problem solving and critical thinking skills, that arts education instills.

Including the arts as part of a comprehensive curriculum is critical. Arts education instills skills that help kids cope and helps them work through issues on their own. With skills from an education that includes the arts – discipline, practice, dedication, problem solving and critical thinking skills – I know my kids will not only succeed, but they will be more competitive workers in anything they decide to pursue, or in any sector in which they choose to work.

Most of all I believe my children will have a better life because of the opportunities an arts education provides, and I believe all children should have equal access to those opportunities.

I will never stop reaching for a championship for Arizona, and will never decrease my support of the arts for all children. Let's work as a team to protect and support the arts in Arizona today, to ensure the Arizonans of tomorrow live in a vibrant state with a wealth of opportunities.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Grant Hill'.

Grant Hill