

## **Cultural arts impact in Polk County estimated at \$48M**

The economic impact of cultural arts events in Polk County has grown 37 percent in the past five years, from \$35 million in 2001 to \$48 million in 2005, even as the number of events decreased from 3,554 to 1,700. The newly released study was done by the [Polk Arts Alliance](#) in collaboration with the University of South Florida-Lakeland campus and [Research Strategies & Associates](#). Among the study's other findings:

Direct spending increased 6 percent from \$11 million in 2001 to \$11.6 million in 2005.

Indirect spending in the community was up 7 percent from \$18 million in 2001 to \$19.2 million in 2005.

Indirect audience spending soared 180 percent from \$6 million in 2001 to \$16.8 million in 2005.

Total event attendance increased 53 percent from 588,430 in 2001 to 900,000 in 2005.

State grants to Polk organizations were up 65 percent from \$138,000 in 2001 to \$227,000 in 2005.

The Polk Arts Alliance's Michelle Anderson says the report shows that "we are doing better at what we have always been doing and getting better recognition from it."

Statewide, Florida's arts and cultural industry is one of the fastest-growing industries in the state, according to the 2005 "Culture Builds Florida's Future" study. In Florida, arts' annual economic impact has grown from \$1.7 billion in 1997 to more than \$2.9 billion in 2005, the report shows.