



ARTS & CULTURE QUESTIONNAIRE 2021 DALLAS CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

Thank you being a candidate and for your willingness to serve! And thank you in advance for answering the DACAC Arts & Culture Questionnaire for candidates for Dallas City Council in the upcoming 2021 election. You can fill this out online at [this LINK](#). The responses can go below and the form saved as a pdf and emailed to dacac@artsdallas.org.

1. **NAME:** **Monica R. Alonzo**

2. **COUNCIL DISTRICT:** **6**

3. **YOU AND THE ARTS**

**Give us a sense about your relationship with the arts
(Some ideas to consider)**

- *What art form or cultural organization do you particularly enjoy?*
- *Are your family members involved in the arts?*
- *Share favorite cultural experience in the last two years?*
- *What virtual arts programs have you and your family enjoyed during the pandemic?*

I love all art forms, especially music. While I support all arts groups, some favorite arts groups are the Dallas Children's Theater, the Latino Cultural Center, the Oak Cliff Coalition for the Arts, and the Junior Player's. My family has been involved in the arts for many years. My daughter fondly recalls the arts camps I would send her to in the summer. She states that this was a very positive impact on her life. The pandemic has been detrimental to the arts community; however, some groups were able to redirect and begin to offer virtual events. Given that, I was glad to join in a virtual performance sponsored by the Dallas Public Library of the Alma y Corazon Tejano Ballet Folklorico.

4. **ADVOCACY**

The support of our elected City leaders is important to ensuring arts and culture remain a priority at City Hall and part of the civic dialogue.

QUESTION: How have you advocated for the arts community and/or how will you do that going forward?

I am a strong advocate for the arts. The arts are very important to any community and its vibrancy! As a former Chair of the Arts, Culture & Libraries Committee of the City Council, I worked closely with organizations like yours to assure that we worked together to secure funding for the arts as well as worked to obtain funding from other sources. Working together, we were able to accomplish positive outcomes. As for District 6 CM and Mayor Pro Tem, I had the privilege of working with several arts groups to turn Dallas Arts Week into Dallas Arts Month. My support for the arts is just as strong now as then and I am committed to work together with all organizations and individuals to assure that we have sufficient funding for the arts.

5. **SUPPORT & RECOVERY**

Prior to COVID, the Dallas creative economy was on track to have an economic impact surpassing \$1B a year, a vital business sector. The pandemic derailed that momentum. Arts facilities were the first to close and will be among the last to reopen at full capacity. The city’s nonprofit arts and cultural community has lost more than \$95M and over 1,000 jobs and cultural tourism has virtually stopped. City support has been critical to keeping these institutions alive. Even in a tough budget year, this need remains.

QUESTION: Will you work to see that City support continues and how will you ensure arts and culture play a key role in the Dallas economic recovery?

Apart from adding to the qualify of life for the residents of Dallas, the arts are an economic driver for the city as evidenced by the economic impact you reference above. The arts are a vital part of the cultural tourism that brings people from far and wide to Dallas. I am committed to work diligently and collaboratively to restore the needed city support for the arts not only because of quality-of-life impact but also because of the positive economic impact and, to borrow a phrase, to build back better, so that the arts can once again be a vehicle for revenue and job creation.

6. **EQUITY AND NEIGHBORHOODS**

The top pillar of the Dallas Cultural Plan is Equity, with a goal of ensuring arts and culture are accessible in communities that have been historically underserved. And we know when arts are purposefully imbedded in the community, they can fight urban blight and create vibrant neighborhoods.

QUESTION: How will you keep the focus on equitable access to the arts; and specifically where and how would you like to see art used to address challenges in your City Council District.

(Some applications to consider)

- *Murals*
- *Underpass transformation*
- *More opportunities for ALAANA artists in underserved communities*
- *Popup cultural centers*
- *Neighborhood performances*
- *Economic incentives for developers to create affordable galleries, workshop spaces and artists housing*

I am committed to equitable arts funding and agree that the arts can fight urban blight and create vibrant neighborhoods. I will assure that we are focused on equity in arts funding. It took us many years to get there, and we are still not where we need to be as regards equity, but we are on the right track.

7. **PARTICIPATION**

The Dallas arts and cultural community is diverse and growing and contains a range of genres, ethnicities, locations and more. Every group, especially those serving your district, is honored when elected officials attend a program, visit our organizations, or even stop by a monthly DACAC meeting to say hello.

QUESTION: Will you commit to attending local programs (performances, exhibitions, classes) or meeting with a Dallas arts organization on a regular basis? What would that look like?

Yes, I make that commitment. When I was Chair of the Arts, Culture and Libraries Committee, I attended at least one performance of each arts group that was funded by the city. I look forward to continuing to support your organizations’ events and stop by your meetings to say hello and update you on what is going on at City Hall. Many of your members know me and my strong support for the arts. I am your #1 Cheerleader!

While DACAC does not endorse candidates, these responses do guide consideration for support by individuals such as arts patrons and advocates, artists, board members, and more. Your responses will be publicly shared on our website to review. www.DallasNeedstheArts.com.