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MetLife Foundation
national *arts* forum series

**ARTS & BUSINESS COUNCIL OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA SELECTED TO HOST
METLIFE FOUNDATION NATIONAL ARTS FORUM SERIES**

Philadelphia, PA, March 1, 2007: The Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia will host one of 40 MetLife Foundation National Arts Forum Series events, on Wednesday, March 14 from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m at The College of Physicians of Philadelphia located at 19 South 22nd Streets in Philadelphia. The forum, entitled, “*Leveraging the Arts for a Creative Future*” focuses on the critical role that arts participation can have for the Boomer generation that is fast approaching retirement.

As Boomers prepare for “life after work”, there is a great opportunity for many individuals to turn to the arts to discover a hidden talent, return to an interest from their childhood, or pursue an unfulfilled passion. Attendees will hear from **Gene Cohen, M.D., Ph. D, Director of the Center on Aging, Health & Humanities at the George Washington University** who will share his latest research findings on the association between creative expression and health. A panel discussion will follow, moderated by Dick Goldberg, Director, Coming of Age, and panelists, Laura Burnham, Executive Director, Abington Arts Center, Dr. Gordon B. Fink, member, Settlement Music School’s Chamber Music Players and Diane Melley, Director, IBM Corporate Community Relations and On Demand Community.

Research has shown that the way adults spend their free time presents a significant opportunity for profound civic and personal rewards that not only impact communities but also have positive effects on individuals’ health, happiness and overall well-being. The Forum will explore planning successful transitions into retirement, the potential to lower the burden of health and disability, and opportunities for businesses and arts organizations to collaborate in new ways. Attendees will be inspired to challenge their brains through the arts; increasing innovative, creative thinking and most importantly, promoting good health.

“This is a topic that affects everyone, from businesses to arts organizations to the individual who is just beginning to think about their retirement” said Karen B. Davis, president & CEO of the Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia. “We hope that we can inspire businesses to help their employees plan for their future and to think of the arts as a solution to easing what can be a difficult transition for many people.”

The cost to attend the forum is \$20 and includes the program and reception. Attendees can register online at www.artsandbusinessphila.org/metlife or by calling 215.790.3620.

Over the course of the last five years, the forums have established a clear record of achievement in communities across the United States, galvanizing conversations among and collaborations between arts and business leaders.

The dialogues that take place at the forum revolve, by design, around relevant cultural and economic issues. Past forum topics have included private sector support of the arts; the impact of 9/11 on arts marketing and philanthropy; and arts-based training programs for business, among others. The 2006-2007 series will address the issue of the “Arts and Workforce Development” and will involve approximately 4,000 arts, business, and civic leaders around the country.

“This initiative is designed to focus attention on issues important to arts groups across the country” said Sibyl Jacobson, president and CEO, MetLife Foundation.

“We look forward to continuing a successful collaboration with MetLife Foundation on this important national initiative,” said Gary P. Steuer, executive director of the Arts & Business Council of Americans for the Arts. “The Foundation has played a key role in stimulating locally relevant dialogue among arts, business, and civic leaders and in bringing the lessons learned in those conversations to the larger field.”

About the Series

Forums are presented as part of the MetLife Foundation National Arts Forum Series. In the coming year, forums will take place in 20 cities nationwide and will investigate themes related to the arts and workforce development, a topic that allows for an exploration of the central role the arts can play in creating a workforce capable of achieving corporate and citizenship objectives. Excerpts from each forum will be posted at www.AmericansForTheArts.org, and a culminating forum will take place in June 2007 at the Americans for the Arts 2007 Annual Convention in Las Vegas. Forums are produced by program partners of Arts & Business Council of Americans for the Arts, which is focused on developing private-sector support for the arts within the organization’s broader mission of advancing the arts in America.

The Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia, a nonprofit affiliate of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce and a chapter of the national Arts & Business Council for Americans for the Arts, is the region’s only nonprofit organization dedicated to cultivating mutually beneficial relationships between business and the arts and cultural institutions located in Southeastern Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey and Northern Delaware. Since its inception in 1981, the Arts & Business Council has partnered with the business sector to generate more than \$24 million in contributed goods and services for the region’s arts and cultural institutions and has trained and placed more than 2,000 business professionals in a variety of leadership roles within arts organizations. For more information, call 215.790.3620 or visit www.artsandbusinessphila.org.

MetLife Foundation was established by MetLife to carry on its long-standing tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. Grants are made to support health, educational, civic, and cultural organizations and programs. Recognizing the vital role the arts play in building communities and educating young people, MetLife Foundation provides grants to cultural organizations throughout the country. Support is emphasized for opportunities to bring cultural experiences to wider audiences and for projects with large and diverse audiences that help promote greater understanding among different cultures and bring communities together. For more information about the foundation, please visit its website at www.metlife.org.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, it has a record of more than 45 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.