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## Letter: BR branding initiative applauded

(Source: [The Advocate](#))

The Jan. 28 Advocate editorial "Fostering creativity" commented on the new Baton Rouge branding initiative "the Creative Capital of the South" and reinforced many excellent points about opportunities and challenges facing our region that cross the economic, political, social, cultural and perceptual boundaries.

This is exciting to learn about and deserves the support of LSU's students, faculty, professional staff, alumni and community partners who are engaged in creativity on a daily basis.

In the College of Music and Dramatic Arts alone, our students and faculty perform for live audiences of more than 1.5 million people annually at more than 500 plays, concerts and events. The considerable financial return from these activities boosts the area business climate and economy.

The CMDA has fostered relationships with creative professionals and graduates. Among them: Writer Adam Rapp (HBO's "In Treatment") is affiliated with our theater department and Swine Place; Academy award-winning alumnus and friend of LSU Bill Conti; the National Public Radio show "From the Top" taped a live show at LSU featuring a Baton Rouge High senior and broadcast the show to almost 1 million listeners.

Notable LSU graduates include DreamWorks digital animation guru Marty Sixkiller, who majored in art, marched in the Tiger Band and played in the School of Music's Wind Ensemble, and Lisette Oropesa, a 1976 School of Music graduate, currently starring internationally and at the Metropolitan Opera.

Now that music talent scholarships have been cut, we are struggling to support students such as Lisette.

"Creative Oklahoma" has the goal "to transform the state of Oklahoma through initiatives which lead to a more entrepreneurial and vibrant economy along with a better quality of life for its citizens." As one of 12 international "Districts of Creativity" in the world (and the only one in the United States), it has been working in the field of creativity with the support of industry, government, education and the nonprofit sector.

In a recent search for a new provost, Oklahoma State University intentionally hired the distinguished psychologist Robert Sternberg, whose primary area of research and publication is creativity.

I want to learn more about "the Creative Capital of the South" campaign, and stand ready to unleash the creative potential of our 600 students, 70 faculty, 15 professional staff, millions of audience members, and thousands of alumni and community partners.

And while I express my pride in our community of performing artists, scholars, researchers, educators and creators, I am also proud of our creative campus partners, Art ♦ Design, AVATAR and others, such as LSU's Stacey Simmons (associate director for economic development at our Center for Computation & Technology), whom Fast Company Magazine recently named as one of the 100 Most Creative People in Business for 2010.

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