



A R T S P L U S

2024-2025

IMPACT REPORT



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Thanks to supporters like you, 2024–2025 was a year of growth and expanded impact at Arts+. Together, we broadened our community outreach and created more opportunities for accessible arts education in the greater Charlotte region. Read on to see the difference you helped make possible!

 facebook.com/artsplus.ct

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A MESSAGE FROM EUGENE YOUNG + EDISON CASSELS

As we reflect on the past year and look ahead, we're filled with sincere gratitude and pride in all our Arts+ community has accomplished together.

In fiscal year 2025, we continued to bring high-quality, accessible arts education to more people—serving more than 4,500 students. Participation in our group classes, workshops, and summer camps has grown significantly, with hundreds more students engaging in creative learning experiences than the year before. The increase shows a clear and growing demand for Arts+ programming in our community.

This remarkable growth was made possible through the activation of the Arts+ Community Campus, which is already serving as a vibrant center for learning, creativity, and connection—even as we continue to fundraise to renovate and expand it to be our home. The campus is welcoming students, local artists, partner organizations, and neighbors. It offers an exciting glimpse of what is to come.

Together, we're building something bigger than buildings—a shared space where creativity, equity, and opportunity thrive.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your support makes it all possible.

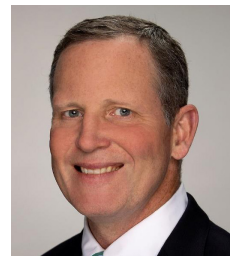
With sincere gratitude,



Eugene Young
2024-2025 Board Chair



Edison Cassels
2025-2026 Board Chair



WHO WE ARE

We are Arts+, and **our mission is to unleash creativity, transform lives, and build community through outstanding and accessible arts education.**

We offer instruction in music and visual art for both children and adults that is designed to provide access to outstanding arts education plus all the benefits it brings. Each year, we are proud to deliver high-quality arts education to thousands of students. As a result of our extensive outreach programs, financial aid, community partnerships, and supporters, **a majority of our students receive their education for free or at a reduced cost.**



We were founded as Community School of the Arts in 1969 by Henry Bridges and have been bringing arts education to the Charlotte area for over 50 years.

WHAT WE OFFER

PUBLIC PROGRAMS*

Group Classes & Workshops

Weekly series and one-day offerings exploring music and art for all ages

Charlotte Youth Choir

Three choirs for grades 1-12 that practice weekly and perform throughout the year

Camps

Kids, youth, and teen camps with varying music and art themes

Carolina Suzuki Strings

Violin, viola, cello, and harp instruction following the principles of language acquisition

Private Lessons

One-on-one music instruction for both children and adults

Private Group Experiences

Unique ways to celebrate a birthday or spend time with family, friends, or coworkers

**Financial Aid Available*

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Studio 345

Free, creative, out-of-school youth development program for Charlotte-Mecklenburg high school students

Project Harmony

Community-based orchestra for students in grades 2-5, in partnership with the Charlotte Symphony

ArtsReach

Free visual arts and music programs provided with partner organizations

Arts for All

Visual art and music instruction for at-risk preschools

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

Preschool Arts Lab

Literacy-based art instruction at local schools and early education centers

Music Classes, Lessons, and Coaching

Music instruction at local schools and early education centers

Festivals & Community Events

Free family-friendly arts activities and crafts

WHY WE DO IT

Research consistently shows that arts education builds discipline, perseverance, and collaboration—skills that benefit students far beyond the classroom. For many young people, **the arts become a source of confidence, a means of self-expression, and a path to a stronger sense of identity and purpose***.

Arts+ makes these life-changing opportunities accessible by removing barriers to participation. At a time when arts programs are increasingly underfunded or eliminated in schools, Arts+ is investing in the full potential of young people and, in turn, the cultural and economic vitality of the Charlotte community.

**Americans for the Arts, 2020; Arts Education Partnership, 2019; National Endowment for the Arts, 2021*



ONE YEAR OF THE ARTS+ COMMUNITY CAMPUS

In September 2024, Arts+ activated the Arts+ Community Campus with group classes and workshops, private lessons, camps, and festivals. The new space allowed Arts+ to host more programs than ever before—expanding its Teacher Workday Camps from grades K-2 to K-5, offering the first-ever adult music classes across a variety of instruments, and more.



“Working at the Arts+ Community Campus has truly been a dream,” says Arts+ Teaching Artist Chalice Meikle. “Many students walk, bike, or carpool to class, making this space a welcoming and accessible hub for the community and a heartfelt addition to the neighborhood.”

The Arts+ Community Campus has also provided much-needed space for artists, hosting 10 dedicated studio spaces and Activation Studios, a nomadic arts organization that uses vacant buildings as affordable studio space for local artists. Additionally, the sanctuary has served as a vibrant hub for community engagement, welcoming organizations and creative groups such as Epoch Tribe, Charlotte Is Creative, SHARE Charlotte, the Women’s Impact Fund, and Meikle’s artist talk series The Artists’ Why.

Following a full property upfit supported by a capital campaign, the campus will be the hub for our programming, host the Arts+ administrative offices, provide a space for local artists and musicians to showcase their work, and function as a community resource for other organizations. Arts+ is excited for the continued opportunities the Arts+ Community Campus will bring.



ARTS+ BY THE NUMBERS

Every year, Arts+ is proud to serve thousands of students through high-quality music and visual art programming. Because of our outreach programs, financial aid, community partnerships, and supporters, the majority of our students access our programming for free or at a reduced cost.



825

Group Class and
Workshop Students



590

Summer Campers
(Summer 2025)



205

Studio 345
Participants



49

Charlotte Youth
Choir Singers



126

Carolina Suzuki Strings
Musicians



216

Private Lesson
Students



1,000+
ArtsReach Students



101
Project Harmony
Musicians



216
Preschoolers



143
Financial Aid Students

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS



"Arts+ has been very important to me since I started my musical journey as a Discovering Strings camper at 4 years old. At first, I played the violin and changed to the cello at 6 years old. I love the cello and I have made new friends at Arts+. Thank you, Arts+!"

- Arthur Guile
Private Lesson Student
Grade 4

"Studio 345 is like a family to me. I initially took Filmmaking due to my interest in being an actress, and I loved learning about everything that goes into creating a film. I also took Mixed Media, which taught me to express myself without focusing on perfectionism. No matter the class, Studio 345 encourages an appreciation for the arts, builds friendships, and drives growth."

- Ana Marcela Garcia Chaguendo
Studio 345 Student
Grade 12



DONOR HIGHLIGHTS



“Glenn and I enthusiastically support Arts+. We donate to ensure that Arts+ will continue to provide exceptional arts education to children in Charlotte—regardless of their ability to pay. And as an Arts+ piano student myself, I've experienced firsthand the incredible quality of that education.”

- Deb Stewart

The arts have been instrumental to all our children as they have matured and pursued careers in both the arts and the sciences. We support Arts+ because they have long provided invaluable grassroots access to arts education for a wide range of communities. With the opening of the new Community Campus, their impact grows, creating synergy across many disciplines throughout Charlotte.

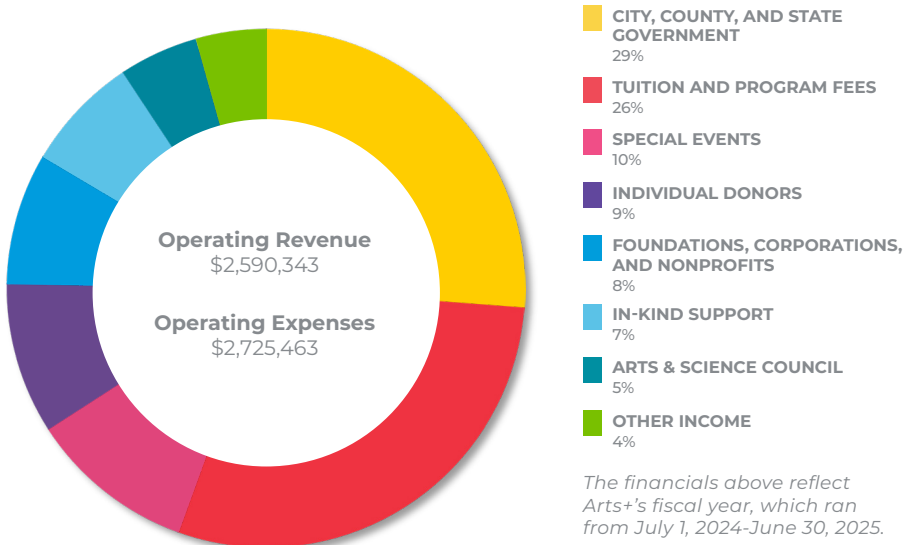
- Lisa and Tom Phillips





FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Arts+ operating numbers reflect significant growth in both revenue and expenses this year, driven largely by the opening of our new campus, which brings exciting program expansion alongside new operating costs. Our revenue base continues to be diverse, with support from individuals, government entities, foundations, and tuition. We closed the year with a planned deficit as we continue to make strategic investments in growth. In addition, we advanced our capital campaign and are pleased to share that we are already 60% of the way toward our \$16 million goal.



The financials above reflect Arts+'s fiscal year, which ran from July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025.



CREATIVE MAKERS, CONTINUO + IMPASTO

Creative Makers

Individuals who set up recurring donations are Creative Makers. They provide reliable support for a variety of Arts+ needs including supplies for ArtsReach and financial aid for private music lesson students.

Continuo

Continuo is our Leadership Giving Circle, recognizing individuals who give \$1,000 or more in a year. In music, Continuo describes a low-pitched instrument, like a keyboard or cello, that plays a bass line, providing structure to sustain the full harmony of the piece. As in music, Continuo gifts help us maintain our commitment to excellence, strengthen our programs, and deepen our impact in underserved communities.

Impasto Sponsors

To use the Impasto painting technique is to lay down a thick enough layer of paint with your brush that the strokes remain visible and expressive. Like this method of painting, our corporate supporters leave a noticeable and profound impact on the communities that Arts+ serves by giving unrestricted gifts as an Impasto Sponsor.

To support Arts+ individually or with a corporate gift, contact Haley Rafferty at hrafferty@artsplus.org or 704-887-0297.

BRIDGES SOCIETY

Named in honor of our founder, Henry Bridges, the Bridges Society recognizes those who include Arts+ in their estate plans. With Henry's legacy and the support of our Bridges Society members, we can ensure that the arts remain accessible for generations to come.

Three Easy Ways to Make a Planned Gift:

- 1. Bequest** – A gift indicated in a will allows you to make a future donation to Arts+ after passing.
- 2. Retirement Plan Assets** – An attractive option for making a planned gift since they are among the most tax-burdened assets in an estate. Simply name Arts+ as a beneficiary.
- 3. Life Insurance** – To use a life insurance policy to make a gift, name Arts+ as a beneficiary of a new or existing policy.

Arts+ Tax ID/EIN: 59-1356847

There are many vehicles to make a planned gift. This is not intended to provide tax or legal advice and should not be relied on as such. You should consult with your legal and tax counsel to understand the implications of a specific charitable gift. If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie Stenglein at [sstenglein@artsplus.org](mailto:ssstenglein@artsplus.org) or 704-887-0298.



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OUR MISSION

Unleashing creativity,
transforming lives, and building
community through outstanding
and accessible arts education.

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