

THE ARTS  
COUNCIL



ARTS AND HUMANITIES COUNCIL OF TUSCALOOSA COUNTY, INC.

# ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2023



## from the director

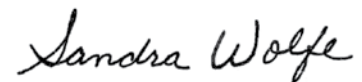
This year, we welcomed audiences back to our spaces as COVID numbers have declined. On April 7, 2022, we gathered as an arts community for the Druid Arts Awards to honor our educators, volunteers, and artists in all disciplines. The last time we celebrated the Druid Arts Awards was in 2019, and who could have imagined what the next few years would bring for our world? We have all suffered losses and yet the arts have been resilient. As artists and arts organizations, we have longed for lost connections between each other and with an audience. The arts are one of the things that brought comfort to people during the height of the pandemic. Many of our organizations pivoted to virtual programming. While all segments of our population struggled, the arts were hit particularly hard as our venues closed, education became remote, and events were canceled across the country. I am so proud of the arts organizations in Tuscaloosa County for their perseverance and dedication.

Art speaks its own language, whether it's a painting, sculpture, dance, music, or the written word. It's a worldwide language that anybody from anywhere can understand and feel motivated by. If it weren't for art, our history, culture, and traditions would remain at more risk of being forgotten than they currently are.

The arts in West Alabama are experiencing tremendous growth. Our community has recognized the value of the arts for its impact on quality of life. This growth comes with change. We must work together to establish dedicated funding for the arts, so that our organizations can meet the challenges that lay ahead.

One of the exciting changes will be in the historic Bama Theatre. This summer the Bama will experience a makeover with new seats and carpet! Years of planning have gone into the 10 weeks that we will be closed. We look forward to welcoming you back to the space.

Thanks for being part of our community of support. Without you, none of this work is possible!



Sandra Wolfe, Executive Director  
The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa

## history & purpose

Established in 1970 by a group of citizens dedicated to the arts, the mission of The Arts Council is to promote and encourage the arts and humanities in Tuscaloosa County. The Arts Council serves as the umbrella organization for 50 Member Organizations, offers educational programs, and manages the historic Bama Theatre and the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center.

## staff

Sandra Wolfe, *Executive Director* | Shannon McCue, *Education Director* | Kevin Ledgewood, *Publicity*

Benji Stockton, *Bama Theatre Manager* | Sheriah Gibson, *Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center Manager*

## board of directors

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[www.tuscarts.org](http://www.tuscarts.org)



[www.firstfridaytuscaloosa.com](http://www.firstfridaytuscaloosa.com)



[www.monstertakeover.com](http://www.monstertakeover.com)

# watercolor society of alabama

The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa hosted the Watercolor Society of Alabama's Annual National Exhibition June 4-July 23, 2021 at the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center (DWCAC) in Tuscaloosa.

- Featuring the work of watercolorists from throughout the nation, it included a workshop, demonstration, First Friday opening, and Awards Ceremony.
- Watercolor Society of Alabama (WSA) was organized in 1939 and has been a continuing and vibrant influence in advancing the art of watercolor painting and has contributed to the enrichment of the cultural environment of the citizens of the State of Alabama.

The Arts Council was chosen to host this exhibit because of their enthusiasm in welcoming the exhibit to Tuscaloosa and the availability of the Dinah Washington Cultural Center as a venue large enough in the state to host the exhibit and the workshop.



Top left: Chris Krupinski's "Birds Eye View" received the Award of Excellence. Bottom: Completed painting from the workshop

## flow tuscaloosa



Flow Tuscaloosa draws from the successful restoration of Hurricane Creek, a Tuscaloosa natural resource, to inspire protection of the Black Warrior River and its tributaries and to bring attention to the unique history and ecology of our watershed.

- Environmental stewardship was encouraged through art-making and included a series of lantern-building workshops, community lantern parade, and artist exhibitions in 2022.
- The project was organized by Jamey Grimes(UA Art and Art History) and Julia Brock (History) at UA and the Selvage Collective. Selvage is made up of Teresa Bramlette Reeves, Kirstie Tepper, and Julia Brock.
- The project also included the UA Collaborative Arts Research Initiative, where Grimes and Brock are fellows and where ideas and plans took shape.

The Collaboration included The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa with funding from the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

## tuscaloosa county schools visual arts showcase

The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa hosted the Tuscaloosa County School System Visual Arts Showcase May 6-17, 2022 in The Arts Council Gallery at the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center.

- The Showcase opened on May 6 during the First Friday Art Walk and was comprised of works by both middle and high school students.
- Each art teacher selected seven to ten pieces with the display including a variety of media.

This is an annual event at the DWCAC and provides the students the opportunity to display their work in a public setting.



# bama theatre

*All figures on this page reflect those from June 1, 2021-May 20, 2022*

**Established in 1938 through funds from the Public Works Administration (PWA), the historic Bama Theatre continues to captivate audiences with its twinkling lights and exciting year-round performance calendar.**

- Managed by The Arts Council and occupied almost 300 days per year.
- Rental location for productions presented by non-profit member organizations and community groups as well as concerts/performance presented by outside promoters.
- Programming presented by The Arts Council includes the Bama Art House Film Series, educational programs, and local and statewide art exhibits.

## rental income/restoration fund

- Rental: \$99,225
- Restoration Fund: \$22,769

Subsidy to Member Organizations: \$21,200 (as a result of discounted rental rates)

## completed restoration

- Stage Floor: \$40,700

## upcoming restoration

- Seating in the house and balcony: \$240,270.60
- Carpet throughout the theatre: \$104,523.74
- Concrete repair and staining in the house: \$39,519
- Wiring upgrades for lighting: \$47,467.50



# dinah washington cultural arts center

**The Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center (CAC) is a hub for the arts in Tuscaloosa, managed and maintained by The Arts Council.**

- The CAC houses the Alabama Power Grand Hall, utilized for weddings and private event rentals, and The Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa Black Box Theatre which provides a location for performances in an intimate setting.
- The University of Alabama rents a gallery space and The Arts Council also maintains a gallery within the DWCAC. The facility also houses offices for the Tuscaloosa Symphony Orchestra and the Alabama Blues Project.

## rental income

- Rental: \$72,613

Subsidy to Member Organizations: \$ 14,500 (as a result of discounted rental rates)

## the arts council income and expenses

- Income: \$630,259
- Expenses: \$603,438

## public art

**The introduction of public art to local citizens is a result of the efforts of the Tuscaloosa Public Art Committee, The Arts Council, and the City of Tuscaloosa.**

- The installation of large scale sculptures continues throughout the city, and now has extended to the Northern Riverwalk project.
- Public art can be found in downtown Tuscaloosa, parks, along the Riverwalk, and on the UA campus. The benchmarking trips established by the Chamber of Commerce introduced the participating citizens to cities that valued public art and the relationship the art had to overall economic impact of the arts.

Pictured, right:  
"Dogs, Dogs, Dogs"  
sculpture near the  
entrance of the  
Northern Riverwalk  
project on the Black  
Warrior River.



# advocacy

The Arts Council serves as the umbrella organization for over 50 member organizations representing the visual, performing and literary arts, museums, and philanthropic organizations.

- Any non-profit arts group (IRS-501c3) located in Tuscaloosa County can join The Arts Council as a member organization.
- Member organizations have access to the community calendar, are eligible to receive grant funding, receive a discount when renting the Bama Theatre and Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center, and can attend workshops presented by The Arts Council geared toward issues facing arts non-profits.
- The Council also sponsors the **Druid Arts Awards** every other year:

## 2022 Winners:

### Music

Artist – Osiris Molina

Educator – John Cain

### Theatre

Volunteer – Cooper Shattuck

Educator – Lyndell McDonald

Artist – NorQuina “Q” Rieves

### Visual Art

Artist – Michael Moore

Educator – Ruth O’Connor

### Literary

Artist – Laura Hunter

Educator – Michael Martone

### Dance

Artist – Lucy Rogers

Educator – Alden Phillips McShan

Volunteer – Theresa Rubio

**Special Award** – Gail Windham and Anna Gantt

**Home Grown Award** – Ransom Wilson

**Corporate Sponsor of the Year** – McAbee Construction

**Patron of the Arts** – Tuscaloosa Tourism and Sports in Memory of Bill Buchanan

# grants

The Small Grants program was established to aid Tuscaloosa County non-profit organizations, educators, and artists in their pursuit of projects contributing to the greater good of local students and citizens through the arts.

- Local artists and organizations have received more than \$130,000 since 1986.
- The Arts in Education Grant was established to award funding from the Arts in Education Fund within the Community Foundation of West Alabama. Tuscaloosa City/County/Private School educators pursuing a project with an arts-based element are eligible for this grant.

## Small Grants: Individual Artists

- Molly Lay: Fellowship Project

## Small Grants: Organizations

- Alabama Choir School: Choreographer for Show Choir Selections/Ambassador and Chamber Choirs
- Stillman College Art Dept.: West End Art and Makers Festival
- Tuscaloosa City Schools: Equity of Access to Arts Education Opportunities-Transportation
- Kentuck Art Center: Good Trouble Virtual Field Trip

## Arts in Education Grants:

- Central High School: Melissa Guynes for Puppet Show Presentation-Cultures from Around the World
- Paul W. Bryant High School: Michelle McDonald for Building Bridges to the Future Through Music Industries
- Northridge High School: Richard Nowell for 2022 National Arts Education Conference



# exhibits

The Arts Council provides local visual artists two venues to display their art as well as competitions that provide advancement and connection with other artists. (JLG=Bama Theatre’s Junior League Gallery; All other exhibits took place in the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center.)

**Left: The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama Purchase Award – \$1,000**

“Vivacious” by Joshua Hoggle

*To be included in The Arts Council’s permanent collection and displayed at the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama.*

June/July 2022	Watercolor Society of Alabama
Aug/Sept	Jay Waters
Oct/Nov	Mary Kerr
Dec/Jan 2022	West AL Juried Show
February	AL Blues Project
Feb/March	Visual Art Achievement Awards (JLG)
March	Danny Rountree
April	Rebecca Godfrey
May	Westwood Elementary (JLG)
May	Tuscaloosa County Schools

## programming

The Arts Council provides arts education opportunities to students at the Bama Theatre, the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center, and on site at West Alabama schools.

- Disciplines include theatre, music, dance, visual art, and literary arts.
- Exposes students to a wide range of activities conducive to academic and social development.
- Students benefit from curriculum-based activities that complement their classroom work.
- **Bama Fanfare, Fanfare Caravans, and Spectra** serve pre-k and elementary and high school students and teachers across West Alabama.



## outreach: poetry out loud

- Regional coordinator for District 3/4 Poetry Out Loud, which is sponsored by the Alabama State Council on the Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation.
- Encourages youth to learn about poetry through memorization and recitation and also helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritages.
- The Arts Council hosts the District 3/4 Final competition and student workshops.

Pictured, left: Congratulations to **Atticus Hill**, an 11th-grade ASFA Creative Writing student, who won first place in the Original Poetry category of this year's Poetry Out Loud competition for the State of Alabama.

## outreach: visual arts achievement program

- As district coordinator for the Alabama State Council on the Arts Visual Arts Achievement Program, The Arts Council provides gallery space for local students who are accepted to the competition on the local level.
- The Arts Council hosted app. 60% of the 80 entries from the region in an exhibit in the Junior League Gallery.
- 16 winners from the district advanced to the statewide competition where they were featured in an exhibit at the Alabama State Council on the Arts Gallery at the RSA Tower in Montgomery.



Pictured, above and right: Westwood students involved in creative programming during Spectrafest in Coker, Ala.

## outreach: adopt-a-school

- The Arts Council serves the students of Westwood Elementary through the Chamber of Commerce Adopt-A-School program. The program gives local organizations the opportunity to make connections with local schools and contribute to their specific needs through an area of specialty. In this case, that area is the arts.
- Students participate in activities such as **Spectrafest, Read Across America, Art Month at the Bama Theatre, and Job Shadowing.**
- All PreK-4th Grade students at Westwood participated in Spectrafest on April 17, 2022, during which they experienced a video art installation project, a drumming workshop with the Alabama Blues Project, caricature drawing, and storytime/technological play with the Tuscaloosa Public Library.
- The work of 40 Westwood students was on display at the Bama Theatre's Junior League Gallery in late April, and five winners of a job shadowing essay contest took a trip to the Arts Council to work with the Education Director for a half-day. Additionally, students participated in a collaboration with the Kentuck Art Center on a virtual Civil Rights arts integration unit.

## outreach: west alabama arts education collaborative

**The West Alabama Arts Education Collaborative (WAAEC) - part of the statewide Artistic Literacy Consortium Initiative - has continued to change and adapt due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

- In 2021-2022, the Collaborative's main program was held at The Alberta School of Performing Arts in Tuscaloosa, where teaching artist Ruth Jatib O'Connor led biweekly workshops with classroom teachers at the both the elementary and middle school levels in arts integration.
- Teachers were observed and had 1:1 coachings and designed their own arts integration units specific to their subject area and the needs of their students.

**ARTS INTEGRATION** is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.

Math	Visual Arts
<p>7th/8th Grade Geometry and Measurement State Standards</p> <p>Standard #18. Construct geometric shapes (freehand, using a ruler and a protractor, and using technology), given a written description or measurement constraints with an emphasis on constructing triangles from three measures of angles or sides, noticing when the conditions determine a unique triangle, more than one triangle, or no triangle.</p> <p>Standard #21. Use facts about supplementary, complementary, vertical, and adjacent angles in multi-step problems to write and solve simple equations for an unknown angle in a figure.</p>	<p>7th/8th Grade Visual Arts State Standard</p> <p>VisArt 7.Cr.3 - Develop and demonstrate skills with various techniques, methods, and approaches in creating art through repeated and persistent practice.</p>

**Students used their knowledge of angles to create their own artwork.**  
Specific requirements were given to students.

**Student Reflections**

"I enjoyed it a lot. It was fun to be able to experiment with angles and new things."  
Peyton Bailey

"Measuring angles was fascinating, easy and I had a test on it and I got a good grade. This project helped me, made me understand more about measuring angles."  
Tyler Smith

"I like how we are allowed to do our own drawing and define our own angle and figure out if they are supplementary. I like the coloring part of project."  
Kingston Crawford

"I thought it was fun, really creative. I enjoyed doing it. It helped me understand relationships of angles."  
Parker

## outreach: the pARTners project

**In February of 2021, the Arts Council, along with the Greater Birmingham Arts Education Collaborative (GBAEC) was awarded a \$100,000 Arts Education Collective Impact 2-year grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).**

- The grant project, which runs until the end of December 2022, is a multi-phase initiative that will create a plan to increase access to arts education in Hale, Jefferson, and Tuscaloosa Counties.
- The project brings together a diverse cross-section of the community that serves as a regional team - including those not working directly in the arts - to share ideas and determine the best way forward for the students in our regions.
- This year, the regional team collaborated with Quire Consulting, Eclipse Outreach, and Mindpop to do research and community engagement to bring this plan to fruition.

JOE BROWN   BILL BUCHANAN   EUGEN DAVIS   DR. ANDREW HENLEY

MYESHA HUTCHINSON   T. NABE KING   DIANE LITSEY

SHANNON WICKEE   SEAN WICKAMON   CELESTIA MORGAN   DEARNA SIKOOE

ASHLEY WHEAT   DR. JESSE WHEELER   SANDRA WIGGIE

**The pARTners Project**   REGIONAL PLANNING TEAM



# Ten Reasons to Support the Arts in 2022

The arts are fundamental to our humanity. They ennoble and inspire us—fostering creativity, empathy, and beauty. The following 10 reasons show why an investment in artists, creative workers, and arts organizations is vital to the nation’s post-pandemic healing and recovery.

- **Arts unify communities.** 72% of Americans believe “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity” and 73% agree that the arts “helps me understand other cultures better”—a perspective observed across all demographic and economic categories.
- **Arts improve individual well-being.** 81% of the population says the arts are a “positive experience in a troubled world,” 69% of the population believe the arts “lift me up beyond everyday experiences,” and 73% feel the arts give them “pure pleasure to experience and participate in.”
- **Arts strengthen the economy.** The nation’s arts and culture sector—nonprofit, commercial, education—is an \$876.7 billion industry that supports 4.6 million jobs (2020). That is 4.2% of the nation’s economy—a larger share of GDP than powerhouse sectors such as agriculture, transportation, and utilities. The arts boast a \$33 billion international trade surplus (2019). The arts accelerate economic recovery: a growth in arts employment has a positive and causal effect on overall employment.
- **Arts drive tourism and revenue to local businesses.** The nonprofit arts industry alone generates \$166.3 billion in economic activity annually—spending by organizations and their audiences—which supports 4.6 million jobs and generates \$27.5 billion in government revenue.
- **Arts improve academic performance.** Students engaged in arts learning have higher GPAs, standardized test scores, and college-going rates as well as lower drop-out rates.
- **Arts spark creativity and innovation.** Creativity is among the top five applied skills sought by business leaders—per the Conference Board’s Ready to Innovate report—with 72% saying creativity is of “high importance” when hiring.
- **Arts have social impact.** University of Pennsylvania researchers have demonstrated that a high concentration of the arts in a city leads to higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower poverty rates.
- **Arts improve healthcare.** Nearly one-half of the nation’s healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and even staff.
- **Arts for the health and well-being of our military.** The arts heal the mental, physical, and moral injuries of war for military service members and Veterans, who rank the creative arts therapies in the top four (out of 40) interventions and treatments.
- **Arts strengthen mental health.** The arts are an effective resource in reducing depression and anxiety and increasing life satisfaction. Just 30 minutes of active arts activities daily can combat the ill effects of isolation and loneliness associated with COVID-19.

