



Arts Impact Report FY 23/24

A year like no other

As we reflect on the past year, we proudly highlight the profound impact of the arts in our community. From enriching cultural experiences to fostering creativity and innovation, the arts play a vital role in enhancing the quality of life in Gaston County.

ARTS IMPACT REPORT

Dear Friends of the Arts,

We are proud to share with you the progress we've made this year in supporting and fostering the arts within our community. While our focus has been on rebuilding the organization, we've made significant strides toward our vision for a vibrant arts culture in Gaston County.

Over the past year, we have invested \$183,759 with 17 different arts and culture organizations in Gaston County. These grants have enabled local organizations and artists to thrive, creating enriching experiences that uplift and inspire our community.

As we worked diligently to rebuild the Arts Council, we engaged various consultants to guide us through this process and established a renewed vision that aligns with the evolving needs of our community, as well as concentrated on strengthening our relationships with our grantees and other community organizations.

This foundational work is essential as we lay the groundwork for future initiatives that will broaden our impact and further integrate the arts into every aspect of life in Gaston County.

Thank you for your continued support and belief in the power of the arts. Together, we are shaping a brighter, more creative future for our community.

Sincerely,

Steph Newman
Board Chair
Gaston Arts Council

Jessica Tillman
Arts Administrator
Gaston Arts Council



AEP6 STUDY

The **Arts and Economic Prosperity Study (AEP6)** is conducted approximately every five years by the *Americans for the Arts* in partnership with the *NC Arts Council* to gauge the economic impact of spending by the non-profit arts and culture organizations and the event-related spending by their audiences.

In **Gaston County**, the non-profit arts and culture organizations spent an estimated **\$7.1 million** and an additional **\$15.5 million** in event related expenses, that supported **449 jobs** and generated **\$3 million** in tax revenues local, state, and federal governments.

Americans for the Arts provides trusted knowledge, that leaders need to advocate for increased funding for arts and culture, inclusive equitable policies and programs, and a thriving local arts agency field.

IN GASTON COUNTY

449

Employment

Arts and culture supported 449 jobs

\$3.0
m

Tax Revenues

Arts and culture generated \$3.0 million in tax revenue for local, state, and federal governments.



Non-profit and cultural organizations are businesses. The very act of doing business -- creating, presenting, exhibiting, engaging -- has positive economic impact and improves community well-being. Organizations employ people locally, purchase supplies and services, engage in the marketing and promotion of their cities and regions.

FUNDING IMPACT

Gaston Arts Council invested

\$183,759

in Grassroots & ARPA funding for the
23/24 season. (This represents 72% of all
Grassroots & ARPA funds received.)



Gaston Arts Council supported

17 arts & culture
organizations

through Grassroots and ARPA subgranting for the
23/24 season - representing all organizations that
applied and were eligible.

SUPPORTED PARTNERS

Organization	Amount Requested	Grant Award	Multi-cultural %
African-American Musuem of History & Culture	Grassroots Grant - \$1,800 ARPA Grant - \$25,000	Grassroots Grant - \$1,800 ARPA Grant - \$10,000	3.67% 26%
African-American Quilt Guild	Grassroots Grant - \$700 ARPA Grant - \$8983	Grassroots Grant - \$700 ARPA - \$7081	1.42% 19%
Arts on the Greenway	ARPA Grant - \$2671	ARPA Grant - \$2500	0%
Authentically Healed CDC	ARPA Grant - \$10,000	ARPA Grant - \$2500	7%
Carolina Pro Musica	Grassroots Grant - \$1600	Grassroots Grant - \$1600	3%
Carolinas Street Art Collaborative	Grassroots Grant \$10,000	Grassroots Grant - \$10,000	20%
C&J Creative Expressions	ARPA Grant - \$15,500	ARPA Grant - \$7775	20%
Friends of the Gaston County Public Library	Grassroots Grant - \$15,095	Grassroots Grant - \$15,095	16%
Gaston County Musuem of Art & History	Grassroots Grant - \$15,000 ARPA Grant - \$41000	Grassroots Grant - \$15,000 ARPA Grant - \$20,000	9% 9%
Gaston County Parks & Recreation	Grassroots Grant - \$8560	Grassroots Grant - \$5769	0%
Gaston Dance Theatre	Grassroots Grant - \$13,987 ARPA Grant - \$7000	Grassroots Grant - \$13,987 ARPA Grant - \$3500	11% 9%
Gaston School of the Arts	Grassroots Grant - \$14,440	Grassroots Grant - \$14,400	12%
HELP Carolina	Grassroots Grant - \$13,850 ARPA Grant - \$12,000	Grassroots Grant - \$13,850 ARPA Grant - \$0	28%
Keep Gastonia Beautiful	Grassroots Grant - \$10,000	Grassroots Grant - \$2500	0%
Legacy Builders, Inc.	ARPA Grant - \$6,000	ARPA Grant - \$2500	7%
Little Theater of Gastonia	Grassroots Grant - \$39,800	Grassroots Grant - \$29,800	0%
Piedmont Chapter of the Links	Grassroots Grant - \$1,500	Grassroots Grant - \$1,500	3%

GRASSROOTS FUNDING GRANTS

Provides program expenses for high-merit projects, covering artist fees, travel, space rental, marketing, costumes, and limited operating costs

ORGANIZATION

**AFRICAN AMERICAN
MUSEUM OF
HISTORY & CULTURE**

**AFRICAN AMERICAN
QUILT GUILD**

**CAROLINA PRO
MUSICA**

**CAROLINAS
STREET ART
COLLABORATIVE**

**FRIENDS OF THE GASTON
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**GASTON COUNTY
MUSEUM OF ART &
HISTORY**

**GASTON COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION**

DETAILS

Hosted "Beautiful Blackbird" to bolster children's self-esteem, foster empathy, support mental wellness, & increase cultural awareness.

Hosted a vibrant Fall Quilt Show, showcasing stunning quilts and celebrating creativity in our community.

Performed 'A Global Experience' concert, featuring songs and dances from the medieval times to 19th century performed with early instruments.

Hosted a vibrant, diverse art market at the Cavendish Brewing and Friends & Family Workshop celebrating creativity and community.

Presented the Live @ Your Library Family Art Program Series, featuring performing artists bringing joy to families through free public art performances.

Collaborated with textile designer, Portia York to guide high school students in an Accessible Fashion Show, enhancing skills & promoting diversity in fashion.

Supported the Cotton Ginning Days festival, celebrating Gaston County's rich textile history & bringing in 3 bluegrass bands to expand our appreciation for this musical art form.



GRASSROOTS FUNDING GRANTS

Provides program expenses for high-merit projects, covering artist fees, travel, space rental, marketing, costumes, and limited operating costs

PROJECTS

GASTON DANCE THEATRE

GASTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

HELP CAROLINA

KEEP GASTONIA BEAUTIFUL

LITTLE THEATER OF GASTONIA

PIEDMONT CHAPTER OF THE LINKS

DETAILS

Choreographed & showcased the performance of The Nutcracker to increase accessibility for children in underserved schools, highlighting backstage production & crew.

The 'Arts for All' program provided quality art exposure through group art & drama classes, music lessons, and playhouse experiences to underprivileged students.

Presented 'EbonyFest,' a vibrant Juneteenth Celebration, honoring culture, heritage, and community unity through art and music.

Completed stage one for a mural installation at Armstrong Park, aiming to transform the space with vibrant art that celebrates community.

Obtained performance licenses and provided children's performances, educational classes, summer camps, props, costumes, and other program cost.

Supported the 'Artist in Schools' initiative featuring the 'Bright Star Touring Theatre' present two performances to minority students addressing anti-bullying, saving the plant, & using your creativity.



ARPA FUNDING GRANTS

Builds sustainability for arts organizations through equipment upgrades, capacity-building, and BIPOC community engagement.



"Seeing the high school art students collaborate on adaptive fashion was a meaningful experience, highlighting inclusivity, creativity, and collaboration. I was honored to be part of this project through Gaston County Museum."

Portia York, Textile Artist

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE

The museum provided toolkits, backpacks for students, educational materials, display cases to preserve artifacts, a tech station and seating for visitors.

ARTS ON THE GREENWAY

Grant funds supported QuickBooks training, a new printer, Square register, and hiring a professional accountant and part-time bookkeeper for record-keeping.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN QUILT GUILD

The guild used grant funds for rental fees, quilting supplies, fabric, and software for their quilting machine to support their mission, enhancing operations and empowering creativity.

AUTHENTICALLY HEALED CDC

Created a summer arts program where students performed scenes on crime prevention, building interpersonal skills and addressing behavioral challenges, such as bullying, drugs, and violence in the community.

ARPA FUNDING GRANTS

Builds sustainability for arts organizations through equipment upgrades, capacity-building, and BIPOC community engagement.

C&J CREATIVE EXPRESSION

The 'WHO I AM' youth project promoted self-expression through arts, using grant funds for marketing and film equipment.

GASTON COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART & HISTORY

Facilitated the preservation of the John T. Biggers art collection, a historic acquisition celebrating Gaston County's rich cultural heritage.

GASTON DANCE THEATRE

Funds provided essential office equipment, supporting operations and helping them focus on what they love - dance.

LEGACY BUILDERS

Purchased equipment for kids' photography workshops, inspiring young creatives to explore their talents and capture the world around them.



We couldn't have done it without your generous support.

We are deeply grateful to all of our supporters, partners, and the NC Arts Council for your unwavering dedication to enriching the arts in our community. Your generosity and passion empower us to continue investing in creative expression, fostering cultural growth, and making a meaningful impact on the lives of so many. Together, we are building a vibrant, thriving arts ecosystem that inspires, educates, and connects us all. Thank you for being a vital part of this journey!



gac@gastonarts.org



P.O. Box 242 Gastonia, NC 28053



<https://gastonarts.org>



(704) 853-ARTS (2787)

