



lawrence
artscenter
ART IS FOR EVERYONE

ANNUAL REPORT

2019 • 2020

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Friends,

Planning this year has been like shooting at a moving target in the dark. Blindfolded. In fog. Using a cheap squirt gun. And the sprinklers have just come on.

We began this fiscal year with hope and excitement, and ended it deep in a global pandemic, economic crisis and social revolution. Grasping that the unparalleled circumstances of our present was paving the way to an unpredictable future, we asked ourselves: "How do we plan anything in these conditions? How do we succeed in dire circumstances that are beyond our control? What does success even look like now?"

We have come to understand that this crisis is not only an emergency of the medical kind. It challenges everything that holds us together. We believe in the power of the arts and the collective inspiration of artists to help sustain our communities, even more so in times of crisis. As an organization made up of artists, we are certain that our core values of creativity, community and connection have become more important than ever. I cannot think of a more crucial time for artists in our world.

This year our shared goal was to provide innovative access to our patrons while responsibly maintaining stewardship of the Arts Center. We focused on retaining our ability to recover, with an eye on strengthening our foundation – the essentials of what we do – so that when recovery is possible, we are rock-solid, robust and ready for anything. We dedicated ourselves to finding alternative ways to retain the people and programs that comprise our organization. Facing this challenge compelled us to act on our shared values in ways we never had before and to demonstrate what we meant to each other. We countered isolation by finding new tools and defining methods that strengthened our connection to each other as individuals, neighbors and a community. Artists are the creators, connectors, conveners, and community builders. Our job is and has always been, exactly this.

This year we are especially thankful for our community. We would not have been able to weather this storm without exceptionally talented artists, dedicated staff, and strong partnerships. None of our success would have been possible without generous support from our members and friends, as well as federal relief programs. At the heart of it all, a gift from the estate of Ellie LeCompte was perhaps the most significant stabilizer. This year would not have been possible without her extraordinary gift. Ellie gave us the roots to stand firm in this unrelenting hurricane of a year. We are weathered and different, but we are unbroken. Our heartfelt thanks to all, and especially to Ellie.

Studies reveal that it is likely one in four arts organizations in the United States will close as a result of the pandemic. This year, we promised to not be that one. We will emerge from this darkness into the light, positioned in a way that will allow us to do more than recover. We will thrive.

I usually pick one word to guide our year at the Lawrence Arts Center. We began 2020 with Bravery, but as we close out the year, it feels as though the times call for more tools in our tool belt. Adaptability. Patience. Forgiveness. Hope. Gratitude. Grit. These are our words now.



Ad astra per aspera,

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "M. Morris".

Margaret Weisbrod Morris
Chief Executive Officer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Lawrence Arts Center is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational organization. Our members and donors are critical to the success of the Lawrence Arts Center, and we thank you for your financial support.

The Lawrence Arts Center is a creative community that activates the artist in everyone through performance, exhibition and education because we believe ART is for EVERYONE.

Special thanks to the City of Lawrence for their 40 year commitment to our public-private partnership ensuring art is available to everyone!

THE LAWRENCE ARTS CENTER CONDUCTS AN INDEPENDENT FULL FINANCIAL AUDIT ANNUALLY WHICH IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

EMAIL: BUSINESS@LAWRENCEARTSCENTER.ORG

Photos taken by Amy Albright, Marlo Angell, Neal Barbour, Ann Dean, Aaron Paden, Jeremy Rockwell and Kyla Strid.

COVER IMAGE, Lisa Grossman, *Channel Changes-Mile 47*, Oil on canvas, 48 x 72", 2019.

OUR CREATIVE REACH

FACEBOOK **11,200+ FOLLOWERS**
INSTAGRAM **3,300+ FOLLOWERS**
TWITTER **7,000 FOLLOWERS**
YOUTUBE **220 SUBSCRIBERS**
EMAILING LIST **7,500+ SUBSCRIBERS**
CATALOG
CIRCULATION **45,000+**

STAFF & FACULTY

161 artists were employed as faculty, staff, and visiting artists



\$1,416,341 was paid to these artists



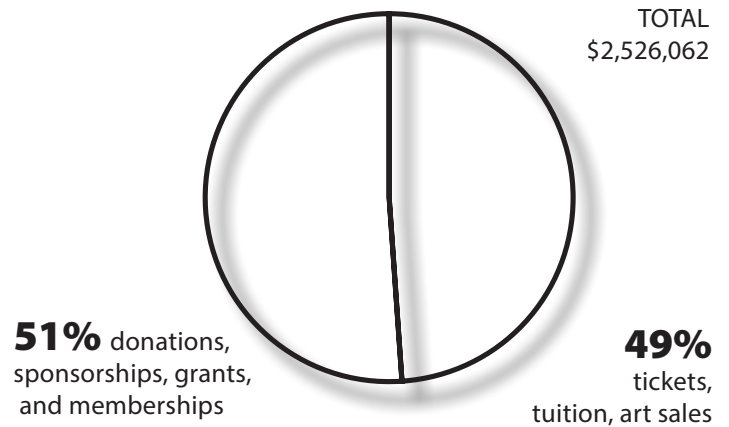
80% of the artists employed by the Arts Center reside in Douglas County



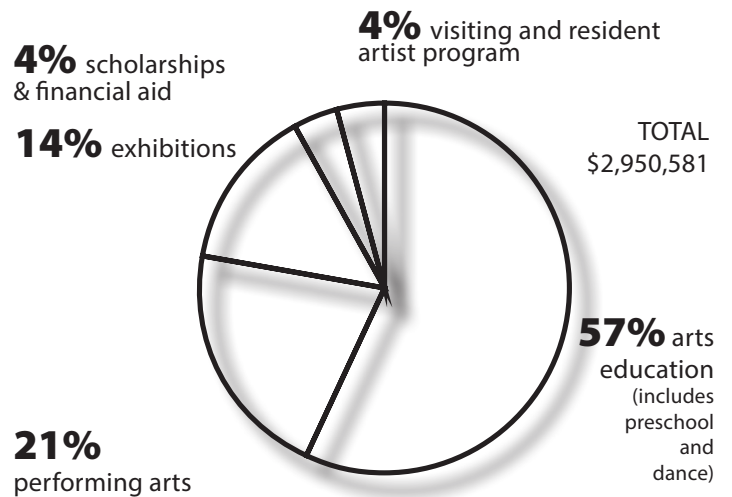
THE MISSION of the Lawrence Arts Center is to create meaningful arts experiences with and for the community through education, exhibitions, and performances.



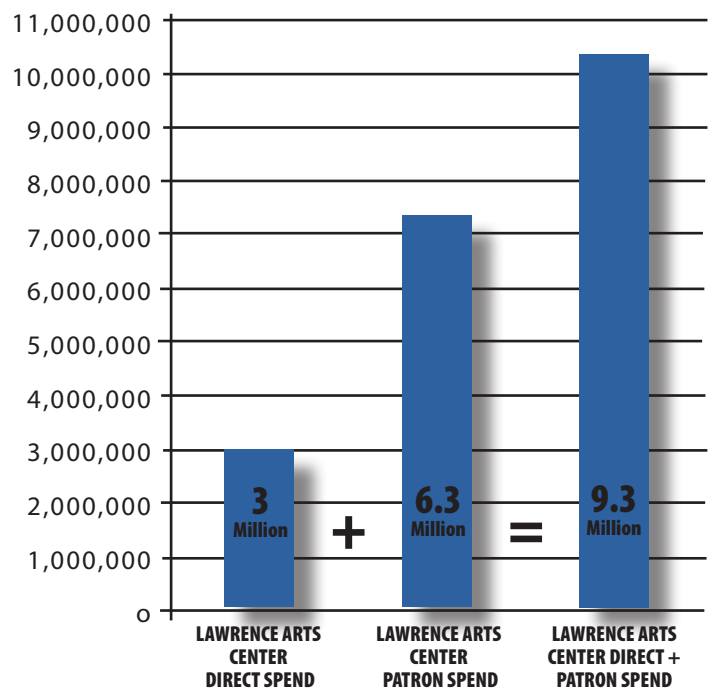
INCOME *



EXPENSES *



ECONOMIC IMPACT † \$9.3 MILLION



* UNAUDITED FINANCIALS Audited financials available upon request. † Based on the Arts & Economic Prosperity V calculator.

\$404,926 generated in tax revenue for the city of Lawrence.

FUNDRAISING

memberships, sponsorships, grants, and foundations

\$1,295,806

Souper Bowl Saturday raised **\$17,192** for visual arts education

our preschool earned **\$3,105** from various fundraisers

the annual Benefit Art Auction raised **\$163,038**

for the exhibitions program and **\$90,726** for the visiting artists fund

Financial Aid Awarded

YOUTH VISUAL ARTS

\$37,010

ADULT VISUAL ART

\$27,122

SCHOOL OF DANCE

\$23,052

PRESCHOOL/ KINDERGARTEN

\$15,763

PERFORMING ARTS

\$2,563

TOTAL AWARDED

\$105,510

Covid Emergency Campaign

Due to the incredible strain Covid-19 put on businesses everywhere, we put a call out to our community to help support the Arts Center in this difficult time. The Lawrence community wowed us with their support and generosity.

AMOUNT RAISED \$51,326

Tequa Creek Access to the Arts Donation

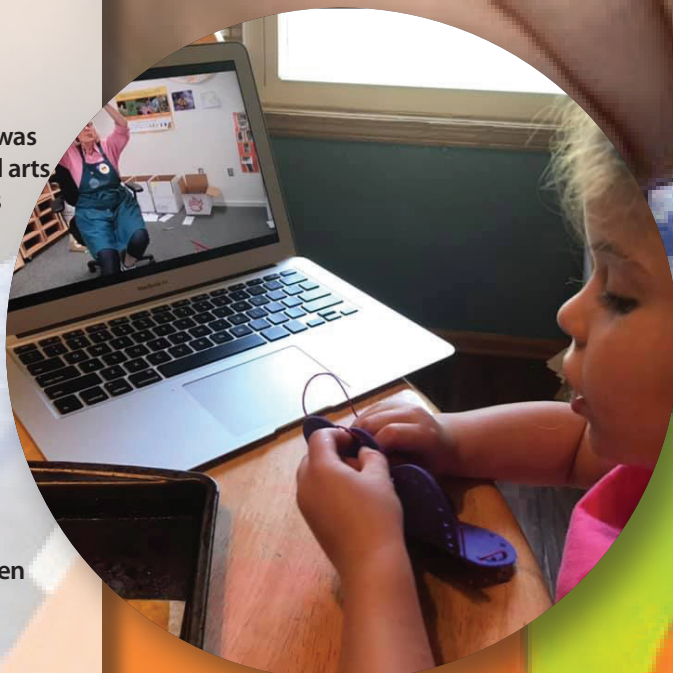
With the generous support of Tequa Creek, the Arts Center was able to continue to provide access to the arts through visual arts kits. Each kit came with the supplies and resources students would need to continue making art, as well as training and collaboration with site leaders at the Boys and Girls Club. In addition to these kits being provided off site, some of the funding went to support access to limited on-site programming.

\$2,500 DONATION + MATCHING FUNDS

Tuition Donations

Another amazing way our community supported us was by donating their tuition payments back to the Arts Center when classes were cancelled due to Covid. We cannot thank our community enough for their kindheartedness.

COVID TUITION DONATIONS \$10,592





BETTER TOGETHER

Community partnerships

- Douglas County Fairgrounds
- Boys & Girls Club
- Ballard Center
- Douglas County CASA
- Willow Domestic Violence Shelter
- Cottonwood, Inc.
- VanGo, Inc.
- The Lawrence Public Library

EDUCATION

Total students **4,761**

Visual Arts Education

Adults 859
1-12 1090
PreK-K 219

Virtual Students 534

Performing Arts

Adults 47
1-12 179
Infant-K 63

Virtual Students 72

School of Dance

Adults 175
PreK-K 187
1-12 1359

Virtual Students 880*

Community Engagement

PreK-K 156
Elementary 650
Middle School 212
High School 229
Adult 516

Year round Early Childhood

PreK 118
K 20

Extended Care 45

Even more people attended free, walk-in events throughout the year.

64 free events

* School of Dance students transitioned from in person to virtual and back again during spring and summer sessions.

Free Family Art Experiences

The Arts Center hosted eighteen Free Family Art Experiences on Saturdays throughout the year. Each event was open to all members of the public and connected artists and art making to community members in a variety of engaging ways. From collaborative painting to gallery I-Spy's to creating art based on visiting artists' work, over 800 people attended these popular and fun gatherings.

Rebuilding East Ninth Street- a community public art project funded by Artplace

This incredible grant, a project initiated in 2013, has finally come to an end this year. Together, the Lawrence Arts Center and the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association, along with a team of administrators coordinated 17 public art projects that now reside in East Lawrence. For more information about the projects, the history and the artists, please visit www.rebuildingeastninth.com

Print Week!

A Biennial collaboration with the Lawrence Arts Center, Wonder Fair, the University of Kansas Printmaking Department, and the Spencer Museum of Art to bring together printmaking artists, students, and collectors lovers. Attendees enjoy exhibitions, workshops, demonstrations, presentations, and a print fair.

EXHIBITIONS

works by over **59** artists

over **180** artists in the benefit art auction

11 INSIGHT Art Talks with over **400** attending

\$6,260 paid to artists for artwork

10 exhibitions

Art Talks and Exhibitions are always free!

FREE STATE FESTIVAL

Under normal circumstances, the final week of June would have brought films, comedy acts and performances to packed venues across Lawrence for the annual Free State Festival. Food shared. Ideas exchanged. People gathered in darkened rooms for the communal joy of experiencing stories on large screens.

But then the global pandemic hit. Large gatherings were no longer safe for guests or audiences, so we postponed our in-person gatherings to 2021.

But Free Staters aren't known for wallowing in setbacks. We take action! We quickly booked our three headliners for next summer and are thrilled that John Waters, Cameron Esposito and Boots Riley will all be here with us in June 2021. We also quickly switched gears to connect with audiences in new ways. Bridging the gap between moviegoers during social distancing brought new challenges, unexpected delights and technical innovations to our programming.



PERFORMING ARTS

14 Free State Festival virtual events
free events **10**

\$250 raised through virtual screenings

Since the COVID-19 shutdown, we have hosted 14 virtual film screenings — several of which were world premieres — participated in community discussions and connected with cinephiles from other cities, states and countries. Highlights included a conversation with Kevin Willmott on his new Spike Lee collaboration, Da Five Bloods, the Flicks at Five short film series, live tweetalongs, and Film Festival Day - 3 joint screenings with other festivals around the world.

113 live performances
virtual performances **29**

673 student participants

8 artists in residence

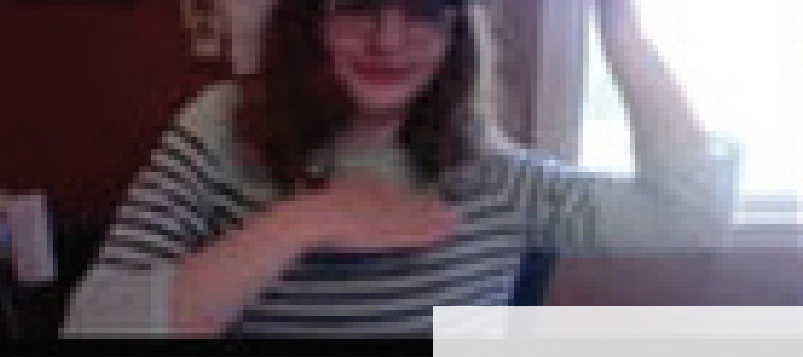
live audiences totaled **8,585**
virtual audiences totaled **9,520**

Even more audience members attended free, non-ticketed events throughout the year.

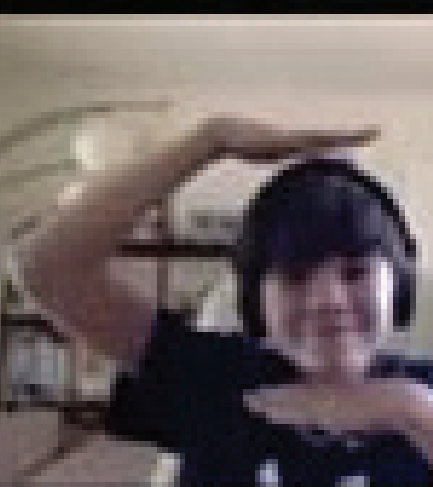
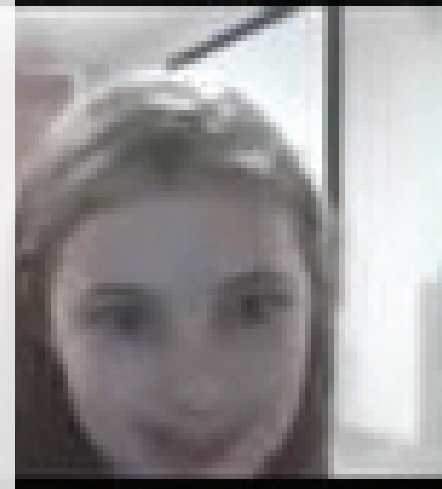
50 free events included Story Slams, Tuesday Night Concerts, Drive-In Kid's Concert, Q&A Virtual Events with Artists, SYT and School of Theatre & Music Sharings

(Photo, far left) Woodstock, '300,000 Strong' 1969 by Baron Wolman

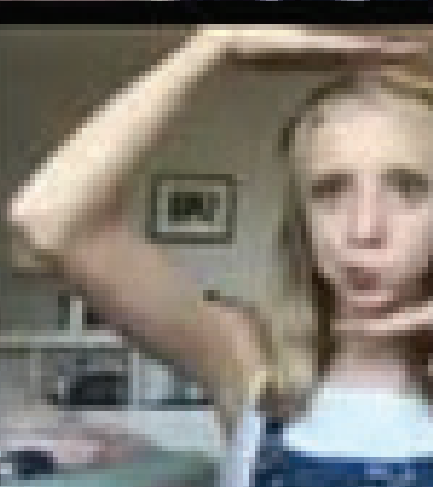




**Even when
we had
to STAY
HOME**



**to STAY
SAFE**



**we never
stopped
STAYING
CREATIVE!**

