

A large, dark-colored sculpture of a hand holding a musical instrument, possibly a trumpet or a similar brass instrument. The hand is open, with fingers spread, and the instrument is held within the grasp. The sculpture is set against a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The lighting suggests a sunny day, with some highlights on the metal surfaces of the sculpture.

ARTS AND HUMANITIES COUNCIL OF TUSCALOOSA COUNTY, INC.

# ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 1, 2018 - MAY 31, 2019

**THE ARTS  
COUNCIL**

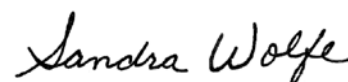
# BACKGROUND

Fiscal year 2018-19 was a milestone year for The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa with the establishment of new programs benefitting our students, local artists, and the community. After several years of planning and advocacy efforts in the state of Alabama, the West Alabama Arts Education Collaborative was launched in August 2018. One of the primary goals of this partnership is to make measurable progress toward the development of artistic and creative literacy for all Alabama students. This investment in education will provide our students with valuable skills imperative for their future. In April, The Arts Council was recognized as one of four finalists for the Impact Alabama Award, given by the Alabama Arts Alliance, for work in arts education.

In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama and the Alabama Small Business Development Center, The Arts Council launched Create Tuscaloosa, a project which will assist and connect creative professionals in our local area with resources to help them manage the business side of the arts. The Council has led the efforts of a growing public art initiative, which is making an impact on our community by enhancing our civic spaces and adding social, cultural, and economic value. Monster Takeover is based on the popular Monster Makeover project and now features 29 small bronze monsters hidden throughout downtown Tuscaloosa and along the Riverwalk. Other public art projects include those at Government Plaza, parks, and at local businesses. The support of the Chamber of Commerce and the business community has made projects like these possible.

These projects occurred while the usual work of The Arts Council continued by serving the greater community through its educational outreach, member organization assistance, and managing and maintaining the historic Bama Theatre and the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center. This work would not be possible without the support of our community. Together we are creating better access to the arts, giving artists opportunities, and stimulating new interest through business involvement. The arts make our cities destinations for tourists, help attract and retain businesses, and play an important role in the economic revitalization and vibrancy of our neighborhoods.

Because of a dedicated and hardworking staff, passionate board members, and an engaged business community, we continue to make a difference in this area. Thank you for support of the arts! I hope that you will get out and experience all that West Alabama has to offer!



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* | Sharron Rudowski, *Education Director* | Kevin Ledgewood, *Publicity*  
Jason Armit, *Bama Theatre Manager* | Sheriah Gibson, *Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center Manager*  
Shannon McCue, *West Alabama Arts Education Collaborative Director*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Amy Ahmed, *President* | Anne Guthrie, *Vice-President* | Ann Bourne, *Secretary*  
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Valery Minges | David Nelson | John Owens | Darryl Thornton | Debbie Watson | Margaret Wilson

**Cover photo:** STRUCTURAL MECHANICS by Ted Metz, In memory of Connie Saxon | Installed at Royal Fine Cleaners on University Blvd. as part of the Public Art Initiative



# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



## SONIC FRONTIERS

**October 30, 2018**

The University of Alabama's Sonic Frontiers concert series presented Alloy Orchestra performing an original score to Sergei Eisenstein's first full-length feature film, *Strike* (1925), at the Bama Theatre.



## CREATETUSCALOOSA

**March 21, April 10, and May 23, 2019**

The Alabama Small Business Development Center, The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa, and the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama presented Create Tuscaloosa, three seminars for artists and their professional business development.



**February 26-March 1, 2019**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools presented the second "Tuscaloosa Can!" project at the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center. The event featured over 20 school teams and the Rise-Reach Program that created large sculptures made from canned food items that were displayed at multiple Tuscaloosa exhibit spaces. 16,502 pounds of cans were donated to the West Alabama Food Bank at the conclusion.

## THEATRE TUSCALOOSA

**March 27-31, 2019**

The Theatre Tuscaloosa SecondStage program is designed to produce innovative work in non-traditional venues outside the Bean-Brown Theatre and brings their work into the downtown area. Theatre Tuscaloosa and The Arts Council presented *A Festival of One Acts* which brought together a myriad of local directors and actors. Seven one-acts were performed from quirky comedies to dramatic satire that had a connection to Tuscaloosa's Bicentennial year.

## TUSCALOOSA CITY & COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEMS

**April 4-May 31**

The Tuscaloosa City School System presented "Celebrate the Arts" at the Bama Theatre April 4-25 including a concert featuring the system's performing ensembles and an exhibit of student's visual art in the Junior League Gallery. The Tuscaloosa County School System's annual "Fine Arts Showcase" was featured May 3-31 in The Arts Council Gallery at the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center with an exhibit and performing ensembles.



# BAMA THEATRE



## BACKGROUND

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, the theatre is a cornerstone of cultural activity and community events in Tuscaloosa and West Alabama. The venue provides a rental location for productions presented by non-profit member organizations and community groups as well as concerts 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

- Rental: \$127,200
- Restoration Fund: \$35,159
- \*\*\*Subsidy to Member Organizations: \$35, 550

## BAMA ART HOUSE FILM SERIES ATTENDANCE

- Summer 2018 (June/July)- 5 films: 468
- Fall 2018 (August/September/October)- 5 films: 595
- Winter 2019 (January/February)- 5 films: 676

**2018 - 2019 BAH Total Attendance: 1,739**

## COMPLETED RENOVATION

- Jr. League Gallery Lighting Upgrade: \$11,000
- Backstage HVAC, Greensboro Room new HVAC, Main Theatre Cooling Tower: \$33,330.04
- Marquee Restoration: \$35,040

**Restoration Total: \$79,370.04**

\*\*\*All Arts Council Member Organizations pay dues of \$85 per year. In addition to other benefits, this entitles these organizations to receive discounted rental rates for both the Bama Theatre and Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center. "Subsidy" in this report refers to the financial gains received by these organizations as a whole in 2018-2019 as a result of these discounted rental rates. The Arts Council considers these gains as direct financial contributions to these organizations.



# CAC

## BACKGROUND

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, perfect 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 for family programming and educational opportunities. The University of Alabama rents a gallery space and The Arts Council maintains a gallery within the CAC. The facility also houses offices for the Tuscaloosa Symphony Orchestra and the Alabama Blues Project.

## RENTAL INCOME

- \$62,234

\*\*\*Subsidy to Member Organizations: \$33,900

## THE ARTS COUNCIL

- Income: \$812,111
- Expenses: \$758,435

- Overall Attendance Bama Theatre, Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center, and School Programs: 119,500
- School Attendance in the Bama Theatre: 46,000



## WEBSITE STATISTICS

### **tuscartarts.org**

Sessions: 15,413  
New Users: 11,435  
Average Time on Site: 1 min 19 sec  
Percentage New Visitors: 87.3%  
Pageviews: 27,629

### **cac.tuscartarts.org**

Sessions: 5,870  
New Users: 4,838  
Average Time on Site: 1 min 17 sec  
Percentage New Visitors: 89.2%  
Pageviews: 11,983

### **bamatheatre.org**

Sessions: 24,235  
New Users: 18,209  
Average Time on Site: 1 min 5 sec  
Percentage New Visitors: 84.8%  
Pageviews: 46,943

### **firstfridaytuscaloosa.com**

Sessions: 4,605  
New Users: 3,807  
Average Time on Site: 1 min 4 sec  
Percentage New Visitors: 89%  
Pageviews: 7,547

# PUBLIC ART PROJECT

## BACKGROUND

The efforts to introduce public art to local citizens have been a result of the combined goals of The Arts Council and the City of Tuscaloosa. With large scale sculpture already in place on The University of Alabama campus and in local PARA parks, the transition to public spaces within the city was an obvious goal. The benchmarking trips established by the West Alabama 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. Composed of representatives from the City of Tuscaloosa, The Arts Council, and The University of Alabama, the Tuscaloosa Public Art Committee was formed alongside the development of standards to help consistently guide each project from beginning to completion. Monster Takeover, an extension of the Monster Makeover program established by the *Tuscaloosa News*, is utilized as a method to bring the work of participating artists to the public through small scale 3-D bronze works installed throughout the downtown area.

## OCTOBER GLORY



"October Glory" quilt installation on metal located at Government Plaza. Artist: Hallie O'Kelley

## STRUCTURAL MECHANICS

"Structural Mechanics" large scale metal hand located at Royal Fine Cleaners on University Blvd. Artist: Ted Metzner



## KALEIDOSCOPE

"Kaleidoscope," by artist Eric Nubbe, located in the northwest corner of Snow Hinton Park on McFarland Blvd.







## ZHENG-LANIER MONSTER

*Selection of monsters clockwise from left:* **Student:** Ryan Zheng/UA Student: Jonathan Lanier monster located at Government Plaza, downtown Tuscaloosa; **Student:** Lawson Kelly/UA Student: Ringo Lisko monster located at Harrison Galleries on University Blvd.; **Student:** Megan Roberts/UA Student: Megan Fletcher monster located at Government Plaza. 29 Monster Takeover sculptures have been completed and installed at local businesses, the Riverwalk, and Government Plaza.

*Bottom:* Tuscaloosa/Druid City Mural by Jason Tetlak located at Egan's Bar



## ROBERTS-FLETCHER MONSTER

## TUSCALOOSA DRUID CITY MURAL



KELLY-LISKO MONSTER

# COMMUNITY



## 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 and Community Arts Conversations.

The Druid Arts Awards are presented by The Arts Council in a ceremony held every other year at the Bama Theatre. Volunteers, educators and artists in each discipline are honored in addition to corporate sponsors, the Patron of the Arts, and the Home Grown award. Special awards are also presented to those individuals or groups who contribute to the arts community but are outside of the aforementioned categories. The purpose of the ceremony is to publicly recognize the work of the dedicated individuals in each of these areas and their contributions to Tuscaloosa County. The 2019 winners were:

Visual Artist: Mortimer Jordan  
 Visual Art Volunteer: Ed Enoch  
 Music Educator: Dr. Kevin T. Chance  
 Theatre Artist: George Thagard  
 Theatre Educator: Sara Margaret Cates  
 Theatre Volunteer: Betty Meadows  
 Dance Artist: Mims McKee  
 Dance Educator: Morgan Williams  
 Literary Artist: Aileen Kilgore Henderson

Literary Educator: Easty Lambert-Brown  
 Special Award: Janelle Heinrich and Vanessa Jones  
 Special Award: Dr. Jeffrey R. Schultz  
 Special Award: The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama  
 Special Award: Al Head  
 Tuscaloosa's Home Grown: Birch "Crimson Slide" Johnson  
 Corporate Sponsor: Hudson Poole Fine Jewelers  
 Patron of the Arts: Dr. Robert F. Olin

## 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. Since the advent of the program in 1986, local artists and organizations have received more than \$130,000. 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.

### Arts in Education Grant Awards

Holy Spirit Catholic School: \$1,000 | Flatwoods Elementary: \$220 | The Alberta School of Performing Arts: \$1,000 | Hillcrest HS: \$1,000 | Holt Elementary: \$250 | Northridge HS: \$125 **Total Awarded: \$2,595**

### Small Grants – Organizations

Theatre Tuscaloosa Second Stage: In-Kind | Dance Alabama: \$1,000 | Tuscaloosa Children's Theatre: \$1,000 | Tuscaloosa Symphony Orchestra: \$1,000 **Total Awarded: \$4,000**

## ART 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. The 13th annual Double Exposure Photography Competition hosted entries in its Junior Division, and as Alabama's only statewide photography competition, it is especially valued by teachers in public and private schools. The West Alabama Juried Show provides a network for area artists and opportunities to display their work. African American artists from throughout the region were featured in a new exhibit in recognition of Black History Month. In both The Arts Council Gallery in the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center and the Junior League Gallery in the Bama Theatre, exhibit space is made available to individuals and groups through an application process. (JLG=Bama Theatre's Junior League Gallery; All other exhibits took place in the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center.)

June 2018	LaShonda Robinson
July	Tony Brock
Aug-Sept	Joint exhibit with UA – faculty
October	Gay Burke Photography
November	Warren Simons Photography
December	West Alabama Juried Show
February 2019	Black History Month
February	Double Exposure Junior (JLG)

March	Alabama Pleine Air Painters Bicentennial Exhibit
March	Visual Art Achievement Awards (JLG)
April	Madelyn Bonnett Photography
April	Tuscaloosa City School System (JLG)
May	Tuscaloosa County School System
May	Alabama Blues Project
May	Westwood Art Month at the Bama (JLG)



# EDUCATION

## 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. The Arts Council's programming exposes students to a wide range of activities conducive to academic and social development. Students also benefit from curriculum-based activities that complement their work in the classroom. **Bama Fanfare, Fanfare Caravans, and Spectra** served approximately 8,173 pre-k and elementary and high school students and 601 teachers across West Alabama in 2019.

**Bama Fanfare, Fanfare Caravans, and Spectra served approximately 8,173 pre-k, elementary, and high school students and 601 teachers across West Alabama.**

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH



public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritages. The Education Director administers the competition on the local level (District 3) by providing information to teachers and students, and The Arts Council hosts the District 3 Final competition and student workshops. (Pictured: District 3 Poetry Out Loud Winners at the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center)

The Arts Council serves as regional coordinator for Poetry Out Loud, which is sponsored by the Alabama State Council on the Arts. The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation partner with state arts agencies to support this contest which encourages youth to learn about poetry through memorization and recitation.

The program helps students master

public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritages. The Education Director administers the competition on the local level (District 3) by providing information to teachers and students, and The Arts Council hosts the District 3 Final competition and student workshops. (Pictured: District 3 Poetry Out Loud Winners at the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center)

- 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. Winners from the district advance to the statewide competition where they are exposed to work by their peers from across the state. **The Tuscaloosa County Schools received the School System Award for the greatest number of pieces exhibited at the state level.**

- 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.



*Pictured: 2019 Visual Art Achievement Awards Exhibit in the Junior League Gallery at the Bama Theatre*

# WEST ALABAMA ARTS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

## BACKGROUND

The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa announced the establishment of the West Alabama Arts Education Collaborative, a project of the Artistic Literacy Consortium, in 2018. The Collaborative is administered through a regional office located at the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center. The Artistic Literacy Consortium is a joint project between the Alabama State Council on the Arts and The Alabama State Department of Education. Currently, less than 40% of school systems across the state of Alabama offer arts education programming with rural communities impacted the most.

A leadership team of arts, education, business, and community leaders from across the state worked for three years to create the Alabama Plan for Arts Education. The plan was accepted by the State Board of Education in March 2016. In 2018, the Alabama State Legislature approved \$400,000 in new funding for the Alabama State Council on the Arts to launch three pilot Regional Arts Education Collaboratives. The collaboratives are strategically located in Huntsville, Birmingham, and Tuscaloosa. The shared goals for the three collaboratives are to provide regional arts education inventories as well as professional development for teachers, artists, and arts organizations in arts integration.

The West Alabama Arts Education Collaborative held its first semester-long program in the Tuscaloosa County Schools at Myrtlewood Elementary in Fosters, Alabama and in the Tuscaloosa City Schools at The Alberta School of Performing Arts. At Myrtlewood, all second graders received visual art classes twice-weekly with professional teaching artist Ruth O'Connor. The curriculum, co-designed by O'Connor and the Myrtlewood second grade teachers, aimed to integrate art into the regular classroom curriculum. At TASPA, all fourth grade students received once-weekly visual art classes that were integrated with the English/Language Arts curriculum.



## PROGRAM GOALS

- Form partnerships with schools to offer innovative arts integration units
- Help classroom teachers gain confidence using the arts to teach state core curriculum standards
- Recruit and train teaching artists in the West Alabama region in arts integration curriculum design and execution
- Form relationships with community arts organizations in order to build varied and sustainable arts integration programs in the schools

*Top left and bottom: Images from Myrtlewood Elementary; Top, courtesy the Tuscaloosa News*





*“My favorite part was making an animal. It was so so so so much fun. I made a snake out of blue, red, and green. I am very proud of my artwork.”*

*“I love art class. I made a gulper eel. It has a long tail. It’s orange and yellow and red. It lives in the water.”*

*“My favorite part was getting to be creative and having fun.”*



*Left, Images of teachers and students actively engaging in the program at The Alberta School of Performing Arts*



#### *Goals on the Local Level*

- 2 school partnerships serving 2 grade levels
- Myrtlewood Elementary School – Fosters, AL – 2nd grade (Tuscaloosa County Schools)
- The Alberta School of Performing Arts – Tuscaloosa, AL – 4th grade (Tuscaloosa City Schools)
- 2 units serving approximately 160 students in two different core curriculum areas
- Science: Ecosystems- Animals and their Habitats
- Language Arts: Reading Comprehension- Author’s Purpose and Elements of the Story
- Co-designed curricula by 7 classroom teachers and 1 teaching artist
- Approximately 100 hours and 17 weeks of arts integrated lessons through one 9-week unit (Myrtlewood) and one 8-week unit (Alberta)

#### *Evaluation Parameters*

- Changes in student engagement and participation levels (from teachers’ and students’ perspectives)
- Demonstrated growth in vocabulary skills (Myrtlewood and Alberta)
- Demonstrated growth in reading comprehension (Alberta)
- Change in classroom teachers’ skill level and interest in using arts integration in their lessons
- Degree of meeting state standards in the arts and academic areas

#### *Other Goals*

- Training for teaching artists in all arts disciplines in using arts integration
- Following up with classroom teachers at programs after units end to assess longevity of skills learned
- Training for community arts organizations in arts integration/recruitment of local teaching artists
- Training for principals on the benefits of becoming an arts integrated school

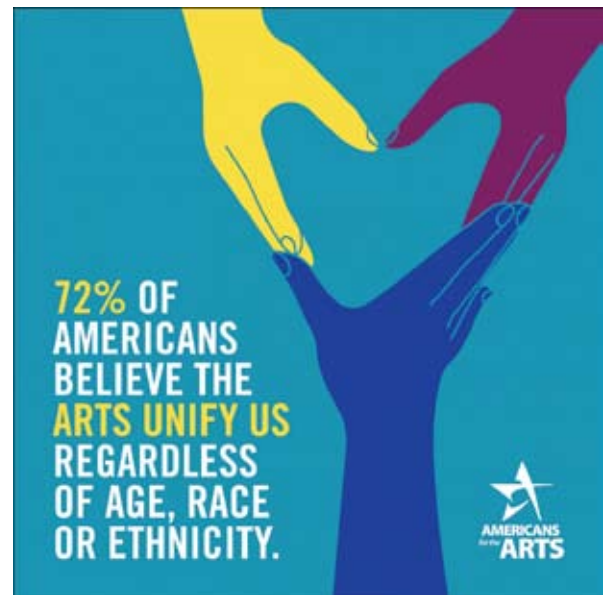
#### *2018-2019 Measured Outcomes*

- Increase in student engagement and participation
- Demonstrated growth in vocabulary skills
- Demonstrated growth in reading comprehension
- Increase in classroom teachers’ skill levels and interest in using arts integration

# SUPPORT THE ARTS



## TEN REASONS TO SUPPORT THE ARTS IN 2019



**1. Arts improve individual well-being.** 69% of the population believe the arts “lift me up beyond everyday experiences,” 73% feel the arts give them “pure pleasure to experience and participate in,” and 81% say the arts are a “positive experience in a troubled world.”

**2. 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.

**3. 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.

**4. Arts strengthen the economy.** The production of all arts and cultural goods in the U.S. (e.g., nonprofit, commercial, education) added \$764 billion to the economy in 2015, including a \$21 billion international trade surplus—a larger share of the nation’s economy (4.2 percent) than transportation, tourism, and agriculture (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis). 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.

**5. Arts drive tourism and revenue to local businesses.** Attendees at nonprofit arts events spend \$31.47 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on items such as meals, parking, and baby sitters—valuable commerce for local businesses. 34% of attendees live outside the county in which the arts event takes place; they average \$47.57 in event-related spending.

**6. Arts spark creativity and innovation.** Creativity is among the top 5 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.

**7. Arts drive the creative industries.** The Creative Industries are arts businesses that range from nonprofit museums, symphonies, and theaters to for-profit film, architecture, and design companies.

**8. 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.

**9. Arts improve health care.** Nearly one-half of the nation’s health care institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and even staff. 78% deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.

**10. 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 4 (out of 40) interventions and treatments.

*The programming represented in this report is made possible in part by funding from:*

