



NORTHEAST LOUISIANA
ARTS COUNCIL

2017-18 Annual Report





Letter from the President

What a great year!

To our members,

Thank you! Thank you for your generous support. Thank you for your encouragement. Thank you for believing in the arts. Stepping into this role in late 2016, I hoped to find a way to provide a synopsis of the accomplishments of the Arts Council on a periodic basis. What better way to do that than to provide you with an Annual Report. The arts are alive and well in northeast Louisiana, and here at the Arts Council we are working hard to get that word out. We have much to celebrate as you will see when you look through this report.

It's been a busy year. If you haven't noticed, the Arts Council has a fresh new look, a new logo, and new colors. We spent much time in 2017 designing our new logo. With that decision made came a new website. Following the new website emerged an e-newsletter that comes to you every other week. This is a great way to keep up with the exciting activities going on in our region. If you're not receiving that email, it's easy to sign up online at www.nelaarts.org.

New programs have been and are being developed. Our Visual Artist Business Boot Camp and Northeast

Louisiana Arts Summit are part of our new Arts Entrepreneurial Training initiative. The Northeast Louisiana Summer Film Series is an exciting new effort to bring documentary films to our area. Arts Council Café is a monthly gathering of major arts organization leaders where we discuss important issues we all face. Our rural arts education research has focused a bright light on the situation facing half of our school-age children in the 10 rural parishes that we serve. These are all efforts the Arts Council began in 2017-2018. On the horizon are additional programs aimed at enhancing the outreach of the Arts Council.

Your support of these efforts is what makes this all possible. Without you, we would not be able to accomplish this important work that is targeted at enhancing the art community we all enjoy and benefit from. Your participation in and support of the cultural activities that abound will help move our region to a new level. Thank you for joining with us on this journey.

Barry C. Stevens
President/CEO

Mission

The Arts Council of Northeast Louisiana seeks to nurture a **vibrant regional arts culture** through support, promotion and education.

Vision

The Arts Council of Northeast Louisiana strives to be a transformative force for the community by encouraging a passion for the arts, promoting partnerships and collaboration, and ensuring **access to the arts for all**.



Community Investment

\$110,395

invested in regional arts organizations, programs and services, including:

- Strauss Theatre
- Strauss Youth Academy for the Arts
- Downtown Arts Alliance
- Princess Theatre
- Masur Museum of Art
- Biedenharn Museum and Gardens
- Monroe Symphony Orchestra
- Monroe Symphony Youth Orchestra
- Schepis Museum
- Doorway to Louisiana
- Jackson Parish Library
- Madison Parish Library
- Richland Arts Council
- Saint Joseph Arts
- Union Museum of History and Art
- West Carroll Parish Library
- New Music on the Bayou, Louisiana Opera
- Twin City Ballet Company
- Louisiana Delta Ballet
- Downtown West Monroe Art Festival
- West Monroe-West Ouachita Chamber of Commerce Brown Bag Concerts
- Northeast Louisiana Children's Museum.

Total revenue for the 2017-18 fiscal year equaled \$186,364.92. Total expenses for the 2017-18 fiscal year equaled \$193,555.52.

Decentralized arts funding (DAF) grant program dollars were awarded to:

- Schepis Museum – \$1,210 funding to present Florian Music/Those Were the Days
- Doorway to Louisiana – \$1,193 funding to present An Evening with Caesar
- Princess Theatre, Inc. – \$3,195 funding to produce *Doctor Doolittle*
- Jackson Parish Museum – \$2,500 funding for a public concert featuring Caesar
- Madison Parish Library – \$1,860 funding to present a variety of arts events
- Richland Arts Council – \$3,189 funding to present Old Songs and Shelter Pups
- St. Joseph Arts, Inc. – \$808 funding to present Caesar
- Union Museum of History – \$3,496 funding to produce Arts for All
- West Carroll Parish Library – \$1,786 funding to present West Carroll Arts
- The Arts with Passion – \$2,464 funding to produce the musical Memphis
- Biedenharn Museum – \$3,850 funding to produce Images of Christ
- Monroe Symphony Orchestra – \$3,797 funding to produce An Unforgettable Valentine Pops with Caesar
- New Music on the Bayou – \$1,839 funding to produce New Music on the Bayou Festival 2018
- Strauss Youth Academy for the Arts – \$3,973 funding to produce *Seussical*
- Twin City Art Foundation (Masur Museum) – \$3,450 funding to produce AltEx: Alternative Exhibitions
- Twin City Ballet Company – \$4,278 funding to produce *Rudolph/The Nutcracker Act II*



Northeast Louisiana Arts Awards

Artists, arts organizations, businesses, and volunteers were celebrated at the 33rd annual Northeast Louisiana Arts Awards presented by the Arts Council of Northeast Louisiana and sponsored by Origin Bank. This annual event is an opportunity for the membership of the Arts Council to show their appreciation to the many individuals and organizations that help make our region culturally rich.

To insure an unbiased review and selection process, a panel of judges outside the Region 8 area voted and chose the winners. These judges bring either an arts administration background or actual art discipline to the process of selecting the winners in each category.

The Edmund Williamson Artist of the Year award went to the visual artist ensemble of Emj Cruz and Aliz Hijazi. Local stained glass artist Bruce Fleming provided the stained glass sculpture that was presented to the couple. Other nominees included:

- Dr. Scot Humes, nominated by the Monroe Symphony Orchestra
- Gretchen Jones, nominated by the Twin City Ballet
- Michael Levine, nominated by the Louisiana Delta Ballet

Visual artist Accie Sullivan was the recipient of the coveted Dorothy Bassett Emerging Artist award. Sullivan also received a stained glass sculpture by local artist Bruce Fleming as well as a \$1,000 cash prize to further his professional career as an artist. Other nominees included:

- Krislynn Flowers, nominated by the Twin City Ballet
- Taylor Smith, nominated by the Louisiana Delta Ballet

Bobbie Legan took home the Volunteer of the Year award and received a handmade wooden bowl by local artisan Audie Maxey. Other nominees were:

- Jen Brister, nominated by the Downtown Arts Alliance
- Marilyn Koepke, nominated by the Monroe Symphony Orchestra
- Lacy Miletello, nominated by the Louisiana Delta Ballet

- Celeste Shivers, nominated by the Princess Theatre
- Darris Waren, nominated by the Twin City Ballet

Begun in 1986, the BART Award recognizes the invaluable contributions businesses make to the arts community. **Taking home the BART prize was Evans Oil Company.** With this award came a lidded raku jar made by local artist Gary Ratcliff. Other nominees were:

- Flying Tiger Brewery, nominated by the Downtown Arts Alliance
- Plunk's Wrecker Service, nominated by the Twin City Ballet

Below: Artist of the Year ensemble winners Emj Cruz and Ali Hijazi pose with their awards.



Public Programming

Brown Bag Concert Series

For decades, the Arts Council has presented its spring and fall Brown Bag Concert Series. This year was no different as dozens of families and friends gathered at Anna Gray Noe Park in downtown Monroe.

Performances included Mason Granade, Jordan and Stacey Sheppard, the Oden Family, Mike McKenzie, Josh Madden, the Allen Family, and Rod Payne and Lisa Spann.

The Arts Council also continued to co-sponsor the West Monroe-West Ouachita Brown Bag Concert Series held at The Pavillion at Seventh Square. Performances included The Waterboys, Paul Amy, Wood 'n Brass, The Homegrown Band, and The Bad Monkey Brass Band.

Stay tuned for the Arts Council's next Fall Brown Bag Concert Series at noon on Wednesdays this October in downtown Monroe.

Northeast Louisiana Summer Film Series

Thanks to a grant from the Monroe-West Monroe Convention and Visitors' Bureau, the Arts Council was able to present the first ever Northeast Louisiana Summer Film Series, hosted by the Flying Tiger Brewery.

Films included *Heart of a Tiger*, *All Over But to Cry*, *Five Awake*, and *I Am the Blues*. The Arts Council partnered with Chennault Aviation and Military Museum, Friends of Black Bayou National Wildlife Refuge, The Wellspring, and KEDM, respectively, to present the films. Ticket sales were split 50/50 between the Arts Council and its partners.

All films were either Louisiana-made, or its story had a tie to Louisiana heroes and artists. Due to its great first-year success, the Arts Council is already planning the 2019 Northeast Louisiana Summer Film Series.

Visual Artist Business Boot Camp

In February, the Arts Council hosted a Visual Artist Business Boot Camp for local artists. The Boot Camp was presented by The Ella Project, a New Orleans-based nonprofit with pro-bono attorney services for artists.

16 artists from multiple medium backgrounds learned about career planning, digital marketing, intellectual property and much more.

After local artist and Arts Council board member Courtney Wetzel attended, she was inspired to set up a professional Facebook page and website.

In one week, she sold five pieces and received four commissions.

Arts Entrepreneurial Training Program

Q& A with Courtney Wetzel

Q: Describe the printmaking method. Why do you love this process over other media?

A: In college I experimented with all kinds of media only to find I was at best mediocre. During this exploration, I took a printmaking class. The deconstruction of subjects into shapes and curves and lines is something I found interesting. Working with the extremes of positive and negative space is easier to communicate with printmaking rather than with painting. Carving and printmaking is a slow and steady process. I use traditional carving tools on a wood or linoleum block to create a “stamp” for prints. After the image is carved, the block is inked. Paper is then pressed on top and the ink is massaged into the paper. I can make as many prints as needed from a single block. Once the series of prints are completed the block is painted and sealed thus ending the life of the “stamp.”

Q: You attended the Visual Artist Business Boot Camp. How has your business changed since the program?

A: The boot camp covered many areas of art including copyrights, tax matters, and marketing/promotion. Who knew social media could give an artist such exposure! I think many artists have concerns about putting their work on this public forum. For me, the training program highlighted the importance of understanding the business aspect of being an artist.

Northeast Louisiana Arts Summit

Held June 16 at the West Monroe Convention Center, the Northeast Louisiana Arts Summit featured three separate sessions: a Board Development Workshop, Developing a Consistent Brand, and Grant Writing 101. Board and staff members from 16 arts organizations in northeast Louisiana attended to learn more about how to continue to improve their nonprofits.

Pam Atchison, executive director of the Shreveport Regional Arts Council (SRAC), led the Board Development Workshop and taught attendees the seven overarching responsibilities of a board member. Danielle Kelley Tolbird, Arts Council community development coordinator, led the lunch session on Developing a Consistent Brand. Margrit Brazda Poirier, owner and founder of Grants4Good LLC led Grant Writing 101.



Photo by Kelly Moore-Clark



Of the 20,279 children in public schools in our rural parishes, *nearly half* of them have no opportunity to study arts.

Board and Staff Members

- Chair** - Michael Sawyer
Administrative Vice Chair - Ashley West
Community Vice Chair - Sushma Krishnamurthy
Development Vice Chair - Linda O’Neal
Treasurer - Chris Hyde
Secretary - Janna Graff
- Arely Castillo
Debora Colvin
June Cooper
Lisa Estes
Evelyn Johnson
Adrienne LaFrance-Wells
Arabella Moore
Malcolm Oakley

Kevin Caston
Jeremy Cook
Clinton Downing
Sarah Heatherly
Kevin Klug
Heath Lord
Nadia Morris
Kara Platt

Rural Arts Education Research

In February, the Arts Council debuted its “State of Arts Education in Rural Northeast Louisiana” research white paper.

After surveying all public schools in our 10 rural parishes, the Arts Council found that 8 schools do not employ any arts teachers of any discipline - visual art, music, drama or otherwise. Of the 20,279 children in public schools in our rural parishes, nearly half of them have no opportunity to study arts. In total, 9,922 students (49 percent) do not even have the option to take an arts class.

The Arts Council is investigating ways to make arts education more accessible because children who study arts grow up to be well-rounded adults who find creative and strategic solutions in their families, careers, and communities.

To view the entire white paper, including the opportunity breakdown by parish and ways you can help, please visit www.nelaarts.org/arts-education/.

Left: a boy learns about color theory at the West Monroe Community Center.

- Alex Schott
Courtney Wetzel

Georgia Street
- Incoming 2018-19 board members include Brandi Cole, Jason Tiser, and Jay Yates. West will serve as chair, Schott will serve as administrative vice chair, and LaFrance-Wells will serve as community vice chair. Hyde, Graff, and O’Neal will continue in their respective executive committee positions.
- President/CEO** - Barry C. Stevens
Community Development Coordinator - Danielle Kelley Tolbird



Photo by Hidden Productions

Members

Gold Circle (\$2,500)*

Beyond Reynosa Foundation

Bronze Circle (\$500)*

Jeremy Cook
Dr. Soheir Nawas
Kelley & Malcolm B. Oakley

318 Club Members (\$318)*

Debora & Todd Colvin	Sushma Krishnamurthy
Lisa & Mike Estes	Nancy & Guy Miller
Carolyn & Gordon Gates	Staci Albritton Mitchell
Cherry Genusa	Kelly & Alex Schott
Emy Lou Biedenharn Foundation	Dr. Terry Tugwell
Sara & Kevin Klug	Ashley & Frederick West
Dr. Michael F. Zambie – The Allergy and Asthma Clinic	

*denotes 318 Club membership

Sustainers (\$200)

Emily & Doug Caldwell
Nancy & Elton Farrar
Jean & Richard Harrison
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Hendrick
Nancy & Carrick Inabnett

Organizations (\$100)

Biedenharn Museum & Gardens
Friends of Chennault Aviation & Military Museum
Louisiana Delta Ballet
Monroe Symphony League
Monroe Symphony Orchestra
Old Post Office Museum
Schepis Museum
St. Joseph Arts, Inc.
Twin City Art Foundation/Masur Museum of Art

Patrons (\$100)

Mr. & Mrs. Kent Anderson	Judy & Billy Haddad
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Creed & Creed Attorneys at Law	Linda O’Neal
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Lillian & Herschel Gentry	Mrs. D.R. Sartor, Jr.
Janna & Tom Graff	Mr. H Graham Schneider

Patrons Continued (\$100)

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Christie & Bill Weeks
Adrienne LaFrance-Wells & Vernon Wells
Elmarie & Herman Wessels
Mrs. Ann S. White

Friends (\$50)

Anonymous	Tammy McKown
Anonymous	Emily & Jay Morris
Douglas Breckenridge	Nadia Morris
Nan Cole	Denis O’Leary
Betty & Jay Cummins	Joan & Bob Payne
Marynell Hardin	Dr. Uma Rangaraj
Mrs. Beverly B. Jarrell	Beth Ricks
Shannon Landry	Ann Bloxum Smith
Helen Ledbetter	Gayla & Barry Stevens
Carol McDonald	Lila & Chip Strode
Donna & Mike McGee	

Artists (\$31.80)

Brad Arender
Kelsea McCrary
Nancy Shutt

Young Professionals (\$25)

Emily Brasher	Wilma Roy
Cara Crawford	Grant Tolbird
Bryan Creekmore	Landon Williams
Christy Francis	

Students (\$15)

Peyton Ballew

Sponsors

BancorpSouth
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Jim Taylor Chevrolet
Kilpatrick Funeral Homes, Inc.
LA Pain Care
Monroe-West Monroe Convention & Visitors Bureau
NELA Dental
North Delta Title Company
Origin Bank
Ouachita Independent Bank
Progressive Bank
Richland State Bank
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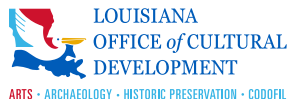
Let's stay in touch!

Sign up for our bi-monthly e-newsletter by visiting our website, www.nelaarts.org.

 www.facebook.com/NortheastLouisianaArtsCouncil

Want to talk? Call us at 318.397.6717.

 [@nela_arts_council](https://www.instagram.com/nela_arts_council)



Activities of the Arts Council are supported by a grant from the Louisiana Division of the Arts, Office of Cultural Development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, in cooperation with the Louisiana State Arts Council. Funding has also been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, Art Works.


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