



2016-17 Annual Report President's Statement

The 2016-2017 fiscal year has been a year of growth and community outreach.

Several different charitable trusts and foundations, as well as local businesses, have generously supported these efforts. With the support of the Ashtabula Arts Center Foundation, for the first time since we opened this building in 1973, we have new furniture in our lounge areas and hallways. Our grant from the CDC provided a new theater projection system, new LED lights and many other improvements to our theater. The Conneaut Foundation helped us launch sensory friendly theater performances and art classes for those on the autism spectrum. The Ashtabula Foundation provided support for ticket subsidies allowing us to expand our audience. These are just of few of the long list of contributors to our success and growth over the past year.

New Executive Director, Meeghan Humphrey, and our talented staff have worked diligently to strengthen our community ties. New connections were made with the City of Ashtabula, the Ashtabula Downtown Development Association, and the Ashtabula Autism Group. Longstanding relationships with the YMCA, local libraries, the Ashtabula Area City Schools, Geneva Lodge and Conference Center, the Ashtabula Senior Center, After School Discovery, Kent State Ashtabula, local veterans organizations and LEADERship Ashtabula have been renewed and strengthened. The results of these connections can be seen in our many programs in the community and at the Arts Center.

The Board of Trustees has spent considerable time reorganizing to ensure that it is guiding the Arts Center as efficiently and effectively as possible. The yearly Membership Campaign has been reworked as an Annual Fund Drive to emphasize accessibility and community.

Last, but certainly not least, we thank our ever-important volunteers. There were approximately 15,350 hours of volunteer work contributed by over 500 people. Volunteers manned the box office for performances, ushered guests to their seats, created beautiful baskets to be raffled at *The Nutcracker*, and transformed the AAC into a fairytale dream for the Sugarplum Fairy Luncheon, among other things. They also sang, danced, played music, and sewed to bring our performances to life.

We are so fortunate to have all of you who give your time, money and expertise to our institution. The Arts Center continues to thrive because of you.

Thank you,

Lauren Hammond President

Highlights

Adult String Orchestra

Under the direction of Dr. Carol Linsenmeier, our string orchestra continues to grow and take on more challenging pieces.







Art classes ranged from adult workshops to Steam Camp for kids.



Game Night
Game Night brought an evening filled with laughter.



Theater Classics like *West Side Story* were joined by *If All the Sky Were Paper* in its community theater premiere.







Dance

Ballet Theatre Ashtabula continues to provide high quality instruction and performance opportunities.

By the Numbers

- We held 108 individual performances and recitals in music, theater and dance
- 50 dance classes were offered
- Over 4,500 individual music lessons were taught
- 91 Visual Arts classes were offered
- 11 exhibitions were mounted
- 13,000 visits were made to our website
- 11,256 individual tickets were sold
- Almost 21,000 individuals participated directly in our activities.
- We employed 36 teachers as contract employees

Partners

Each year, we strive to build stronger connections with other organizations in the community. We strengthened relationships this year with The Ashtabula YMCA, Harbor Topky Library, After School Discovery, Kent State University, The Luvin Lavender Farm, Geneva Lodge and Conference Center, LEADERship Ashtabula County, the Ashtabula Area District Library, Ashtabula Area City Schools, and the Ashtabula Autism Group.



Sensory-Friendly Programming

In response to a request from the Ashtabula Autism Group, the Ashtabula

Arts Center sought funding for programming to serve the autism community in the region. A grant from the Conneaut Foundation made it possible for us to plan a full year of offerings including sensory-friendly theater performances and classes for those on the spectrum.

Encore Card

As a way to thank our returning theater patrons, we initiated the Encore Card which allows theater goers to collect stamps at the box office and turn in their completed card for free admission to a future show.

If All The Sky Were Paper

The Ashtabula Arts Center was the first community theater in the nation to mount a production of *If All the Sky Were Paper* by Andrew Carroll. This play is drawn from Carrol's collection of war letters from all over the world. We worked directly with the author to secure permission to perform this ground-breaking work and hosted the author for a question and answer session on opening-night. We paired this performance with a call for local war letters and mounted an exhibition of over 600 pages of local war correspondence in our gallery. All the letters were digitally archived at the Ashtabula County District Library.

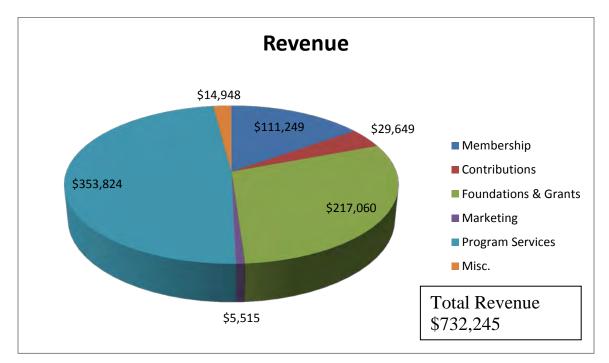
Theater at After School Discovery

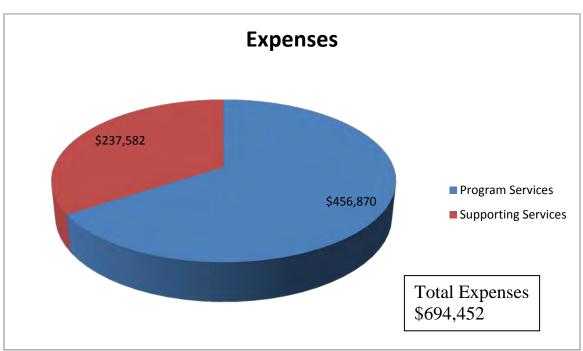
In an effort to expand access to performing opportunities to more children in Ashtabula, we launched a theater performance class with After School Discovery. Students in this class learned about the basics of theater and performed for their classmates and parents at the end of the session. This program continued into the next school year with hopes of expanding to additional grade levels.





Financials – 2016/17 Fiscal Year





Our Mission Statement

"To preserve and promote the arts through education and entertainment across cultural boundaries – encouraging personal growth, cultural growth, and economic growth"

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Our very grateful thanks to the following organizations for providing the Ashtabula Arts Center with funds essential to our ability to provide high quality arts programming to the region.

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Ticket sales and tuition comprise less than half of our annual operating budget. The remainder comes from grants and gifts from individuals and businesses who care about what the arts can bring to the life of a community. We ask that you consider adding your support by becoming a donor to the Ashtabula Arts Centerr.

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We recognize the contributions of our donors in print, on line, during curtain speeches and at all Arts Center events. Donors receive discounts on classes and season subscriptions.

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Thank you,

Judy Robson President Ashtabula Arts Center Board of Trustees

