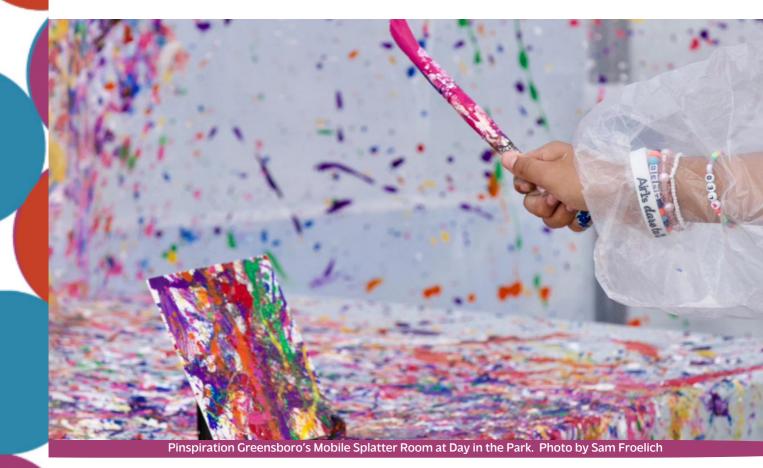


# **A New Hue**

Uniting communities, exciting possibilities and igniting inspiration.



High Point Arts Council's Strategic Plan 2024–2028



121 S Centennial St High Point, NC 27260 #336-889-2787 highpointarts.org

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Dr. JP Castillo performs at the 49th Day in the Park on September 16, 2023

Photo by Sam Froelich

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# Introduction





This High Point Arts Council (HPAC) strategic plan covers fiscal and calendar years 2024 to 2028. The plan took shape against the backdrop of significant organizational changes, most notably the appointment of a new Executive Director in 2022. This change in leadership brought fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and a renewed energy to HPAC. Simultaneously, as we approach the milestone 62nd anniversary of High Point's art council, we recognize the need for thoughtful reflection and purposeful evolution.

In light of these changes and the evolving landscape of our community, there is a clear imperative for the Arts Council to move in a new direction. From 2022-2023, the Executive Director led a community needs assessment survey and held over 15 focus groups throughout the greater High Point community. These focus groups were intentionally selected to target a diverse range of community voices and were conducted in locations such as the Latino Family Center, The Library, The Arch of High Point, at several High Point Parks and Recreation after school programs, an artist only group, and more. We have incorporated over 150 of these community voices into our new strategic plan. The 62nd anniversary serves as both a commemoration of our rich history and a springboard for the future. This juncture provides an opportune moment to reevaluate our mission, strategies, and impact to better serve the city and its diverse residents.

As we embark on a new journey over the next five years, our aim is clear: to position HPAC as the nucleus for arts in the city. By 2028, HPAC envisions itself not only as an arts and cultural institution, but also the central hub that unites, excites, and ignites artistic creativity within the city. We aim to take on a more integral role in the civic and cultural life of our city, responding proactively to the ever-evolving needs of our community.

This strategic plan outlines our commitment to future sustainability and fostering a vibrant and inclusive community hub, where creativity flourishes, diversity is celebrated, and collaboration knows no bounds. This plan is a living document, responsive to the nuances of artistic expression and the evolving needs of our diverse community. Together, let us celebrate the arts in all its diverse forms and its unique ability to enrich lives by exciting possibility, igniting creativity, and uniting us all.

## A Message from the President/ Executive Director

Alexandra Arpajian, MS, LRT/CTRS, CPRP



"A New Hue" outlines our strategic focus to amplify the impact of the arts. It's a dynamic roadmap shaped by your voice that guides us toward a future where artistic brilliance is at the heart of the arts. Art has the power to heal, educate, inspire, and uplift. The arts remind us that being joyful is our birthright and those that participate in the arts are made stronger through their ability to emote, empathize, and understand. My deepest wish is to build a society where everyone has access to the arts to make their lives fuller and develop more meaningful connections with others.

Through "A New Hue", we're unlocking the potential to make a lasting impact on the lives of individuals and the communities we serve. We are looking forward to building policies and procedures that center on opening the Centennial Station Arts Center as a collaborative space for our arts community. As the High Point Arts Council plans and implements many successful and beloved programs with limited resources and human capital, there is a pressing need to build more financial sustainability while also growing our team.

We cannot have a strong arts community without a strong Arts Council, and through "A New Hue" we are being visionary leaders to ensure the sustainability of our arts community for years to come. We have a number of key areas of focus to drive forward the organization for lasting impact, such as workforce development, community engagement, and the establishment of an endowment. Our shared vision is to see "A New Hue" create a renewed sense of purpose, restore faith in the High Point Arts Council, and display the impact of putting the arts first in the greater High Point area. You are a the center of our story, and we are thankful to unite, excite, and ignite the creative community with you by our side.



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# Setting The Stage



#### **Community Consultation Process**

This strategic plan is a five-year planning document that serves as a multi-year guide for the direction and priorities of HPAC. In the genesis of our strategic planning journey, HPAC undertook a comprehensive community consultation process that served as the bedrock for our five-year strategic initiatives. This inclusive endeavor was designed to capture the authentic voice of our community, ensuring that our strategic vision resonates with the diverse needs and aspirations of those we serve.

## **Methodology Recap**

#### PHASE 1: DEVELOPING THE PROCESS

In this phase, we focused on establishing a robust foundation for the strategic planning process. We created a governance structure reflecting the diversity of our community to ensure accountability, transparency, and effective decisionmaking and oversight processes.

Guided by key principles:

- Inclusive: Key stakeholders are engaged in a transparent process
- Aspirational but grounded: A free flow of ideas structured into our aspirational goals.
- Diverse voices: The process was members of the community, internal stakeholders including employees and organizational leaders, external stakeholders such as civic leadership and other community partners.
- Measurable strategies: The process was designed to have clear and specific objectives and outcomes where successful progress towards achievement of the strategic plan's priorities and objectives can be clearly gauged.

#### PHASE 2: ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE

The success of the strategic plan hinges on understanding the community we serve. Through carefully crafted surveys distributed to the broader community and focus groups, we actively involved community members to gather diverse perspectives. The quantitative and qualitative information was aggregated to understand needs of the community from diverse perspectives. This collaborative approach was intended to ensure our strategic goals align with the real needs and aspirations of those we aim to impact.

The High-Point Community Theater presents Mama Mia O High Point Arts Caunal 2024 121 S Centannial Stree High Point, NC 27260 | director on ighpointarts con 136-88-2780 Page 3

## Methodology Recap Continued



#### PHASE 3: KEY STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Recognizing the importance of key stakeholders, this phase was dedicated to engaging essential partners.

External Stakeholders: We undertook fifteen in-depth interviews with key stakeholders from various sectors, including community leaders, disability serving organizations such as the Arch of High Point, local nonprofits such as the Latino Family Center, local businesses like Congdon Yards, High Point Parks and Recreation after school programs, arts-affiliated organizations, artists, educational institutions, and civic leadership. Insights from these interviews provided a nuanced understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and aspirations within our community.

Focus Group Sessions: We hosted a focused discussion and brainstorming sessions with staff members to explore aspirations for the impact of the organization and explore employee-specific insights and challenges.

Through these feedback sessions, we aimed to ensure that the strategic plan reflects the collective insights and interests of those critical to HPAC's success, whether that be employees, artists, stakeholders, community partners, or civil leaders.

#### PHASE 4: BOARD AND LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

To foster alignment at the leadership level, we held two strategy retreats where the board and Executive Director collaborated intensely on generating an updated vision, mission, and key priorities for the next five years.. This phase also emphasized goal prioritization, objective development, and actionable measurable outcomes. This phase ensured that every voice of community arts members on the board, whether they are affiliates or liaisons, contributed to the planning process.

#### PHASE 5: FINALIZATION AND APPROVAL

Following the collaborative efforts in Phase 4, the working strategic plan underwent a meticulous finalization process. The Executive Director played a key role at this phase and was guided to ensure that the priorities and goals are specific and clear as well as relevant to HPAC's mission and vision.

# Strategic Framework



#### Meet the new face of the High Point Arts Council (HPAC)



Unite

**Excite** 

Ignite

#### MISSION

Enriching lives through the arts.



#### VISION

Our vision is to create a community where art unites people from all walks of life.

## Core Focus Areas



Refers to uniting the creative community on multiple fronts – nurturing bonds between artists, creators, artistic disciplines, and fostering an environment of collaboration and cross-pollination.

Refers to bringing engaging art in the community and highlighting artistic excellence in a myriad of forms.

Refers to our commitment to unwavering advocacy for recognition and support at local, state, and national levels, including sparking the arts through grants and resources.

#### **Strategic Priorities**

In HPAC's 2024-2028 Strategic Plan, we identify four major priorities: Amplify Community Impact, Foster Brand Identity and Visibility, Establish Financial and Human Resource Sustainability, and Enhance and Strengthen Corporate Infrastructure. These set our two strategic domains for the next five years – Community Empowerment and Organizational Resilience.



# Strategic Priorities in Focus

## **Community Engagement**



#### **Priority 1: Amplify Community Engagement**

This strategic priority is to elevate the arts experience across communities through multifaceted objectives. The priority seeks to build a vibrant and inclusive arts community while fostering economic growth and cultural enrichment. This includes establishing new arts programs and events, generating new partnerships, understanding community demographics, diversifying event attendance and engagement, fostering arts educational opportunities, creating valuable arts related resources, advocating for artists, and driving economic development impact. The anticipated outcome of this priority is to amplify HPAC's community footprint, diversify event offerings, build patron engagement, and develop sustainable arts-related initiatives.



Vinmark International Dance performs

## Objective 1.1. Pursue excellence in programs and events offerings.

This objective involves the establishment of new programs and events, in order to diversify and enrich the arts landscape. This involves continued annual investment in legacy programs, such as Arts Splash, Day in the Park, and the John Coltrane Jazz Workshop, to ensure a lasting impact on the community. The objective also includes the establishment of out-of-school arts education programming, an artist-in-residency program, and professional development workshops for artists and arts administrators. Additionally, the objective includes initiatives related to collaborating with community stakeholders for public art displays. Participant creates pottery at The Art Gallery's clay studio

### Objective 1.2. Advocate and champion artists and artistry at local, state, and national levels

Advocacy for artists in the greater High Point area involves voicing and supporting artist spaces, developing foundational business skills programming, connecting artists to opportunities, allocating grant funding, and engaging with the local arts scene. The goal is to create a thriving arts community, ensuring sustainability, a high quality of life, and a profound economic impact for artists in the area. Activities include annually granting in-kind spaces, connecting artists to opportunities and grants, attending at least five city council meetings annually, and implementing the State of the Arts Annual Impact Report.

#### Objective 1.3. Identify, generate, and leverage potential partnerships.

This objective involves the identification and generation of new partnerships. As part of this, initiatives involve identifying potential collaborators, assessing their strengths, and fostering reciprocity. Additionally, a user-friendly resource will be developed for identifying collaborative opportunities, while a creative conversations group will be established to facilitate connections and collaborations among artists and arts administrators. These efforts aim to amplify the community footprint and create a dynamic network of collaboration in the area.

#### Objective 1.4. Enhance Understanding of Community Demographics and Needs.

The objective of gaining an understanding of community demographics involves a comprehensive approach to measuring and analyzing baseline socio-economic data. Initiatives seek to address existing gaps and align programming that is reflective of the greater High Point area.

#### **Objective 1.5. Foster New and Existing Arts Educational Opportunities**

Fostering new and existing arts educational opportunities involves a systematic approach to identifying and addressing the educational needs of artists, organizations, and community members. Through a comprehensive needs assessment and baseline data collection, we seek to establish a foundational understanding of the community's educational requirements. Initiatives aim to forge new connections with local institutions and foster formalized partnerships in order to enrich learning experiences and strengthen community ties.





The High Point Community Theatre performs in A Christmas Carol

#### **Objective 1.6. Foster Inclusive Community Event Participation and Patronage**

AT HPAC, we aim to serve and connect people from all walks of life. As such, we recognize the need to enhance inclusive community event attendance, patronage, and engagement. Initiatives related to this objective include a focus on a strategic evaluation and refinement of programming events to cater to diverse demographics, including those requiring accessible programming. Through a comprehensive approach, the organization will evaluate the current programming events for mission focus, ensuring alignment with community needs and values. A detailed plan will be formulated and implemented to increase patronage from under-represented groups, fostering improved variety and appeal of community events. This initiative also involves the development and refinement of community events tailored to different groups, with a specific action plan for integrating accessibility into both new and existing programming.

#### Objective 1.7. Create Arts-Related Resources for the City of High Point, NC.

The objective to create arts-related resources focuses on compiling valuable information to support the local arts community. This includes creating a directory of community artists, local arts summer camps, and a guide of available venues for artists. Additionally, the initiative aims to provide a comprehensive list of programs offered by various arts organizations, promoting collaboration and accessibility within the community.

#### Objective 1.8. Drive Economic Development and Impact.

The economic development impact initiative encompasses foundational data collection through the Americans for the Arts Economic Prosperity Survey for the greater High Point Area. This aims to understand the economic contributions of the arts across Guilford County happening every five years (next survey will be in 2028). Additionally, the initiative involves collaborating with local government to influence policy and strategically enhance the economic impact of the arts in the greater High Point area.



CO/

# Strategic Priorities in Focus



### **Foster Brand Identity and Visibility**



The High Point Ballet performs Celtic Legends. Photo by Gary Taylor Photography

#### **PRIORITY 2: FOSTER BRAND IDENTITY AND VISIBILITY**

Establish a distinct brand identity as a central hub for all things arts in our community of High Point over the next five years. Increase brand awareness over the course of five years based on a current state brand audit and brand audit at year five. Further assessments include percentage growth in brand awareness based on pre-campaign benchmarks and ongoing monitoring.



# Objective 2.1. Develop and implement a compelling brand narrative that clearly communicates who we are and what we do.

HPAC aims to enhance community awareness through a comprehensive branding strategy. This involves finalizing and launching a new brand, conducting a bi-annual brand audit for baseline awareness, collaborating with experts to refine messaging and creating a marketing plan. The expected outcomes include the creation of a unique brand story and increased brand awareness.

#### **Objective 2.2. Strengthen Community Awareness and Reputation**

The High Point Arts Council plans to strengthen its community reputation through strategic initiatives. This includes hosting forums, lunch and learns, or engagement events annually. In addition, HPAC will forge new partnerships, involve grantees in brand promotion, and implement post-attendee surveys for all events annually. The expected outcomes are heightened community involvement, increased awareness of the organization's mission, and an enhanced community image.

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High Point Ballet performs the Nutcracker. Photo by Gary Taylor Photography

#### Objective 2.3. Create and Implement a Digital Marketing Plan.



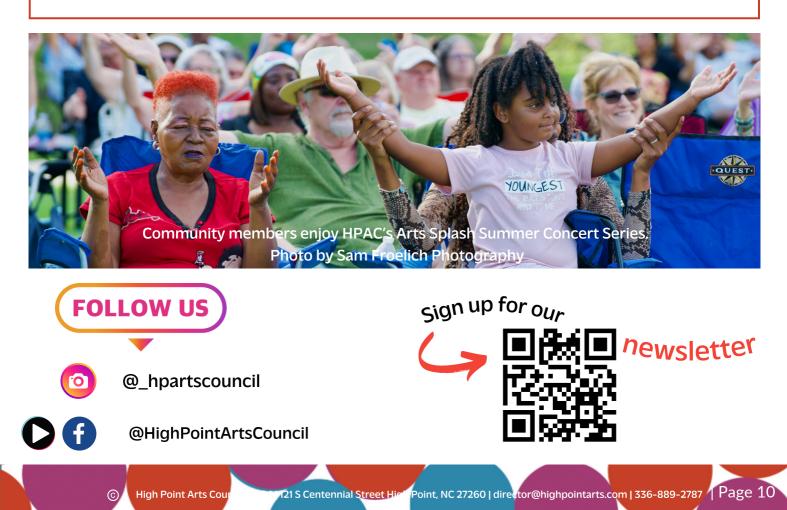
The High Point Arts Council seeks to boost its digital presence a robust marketing plan, utilizing digital platforms for greater engagement, implementing SEO strategies, appointing a dedicated staff member for digital marketing, and launching an email campaign. The desired outcomes include increased online visibility, enhanced search engine optimization, and effective staff resource allocation.

Objective 2.4. Create Systems and Processes for Digital Monitoring and Analysis.

This objective involves the establishment of a monitoring and analysis process. This process includes implementing tools to track brand mentions and online engagement. This initiative seeks a clear understanding of brand awareness and engagement, with a specific focus on regularly assessing sentiment and the level of brand engagement.

#### Objective 2.5. Be a Voice for Artists in the High Point community.

We aim to elevate the artistic community in High Point by being a strong advocate for local artists. This involves various initiatives aimed at spotlighting artists, promoting arts events regardless of HPAC affiliation, and enhancing accessibility to cultural events.



## Strategic Priorities in Focus

#### **Financial and Human Resources Sustainability**



#### **Priority 3: Financial and Human Resources Sustainability**

There are dual goals related to the enhancement of our financial and human resource sustainability. The first is to secure financial stability and sustainability for the Arts Council over the next five years. This means increasing annual fundraising sources, diversifying fundraising sources, and increasing earned revenue through program growth. The second is to secure human resource sustainability for the Arts Council over the next five years. This means there is enough staffing resources to successfully run the business of the arts council, that staff are operating within a performance improvement framework, training needs are addressed, and plans are in place for succession planning.

Objective 3.1. Increase financial sustainability through increased fundraising revenue.

We aim to enhance financial sustainability by analyzing past fundraising initiatives to gain a detailed understanding and identify areas for improvement. We will develop targeted fundraising campaigns aligned with organizational goals to increase visibility, engagement, and donor participation rates. The objective is to achieve increases in fundraising revenue while fostering enhanced donor engagement through strategic events and campaigns. Objective 3.2. Increase financial sustainability by diversifying funding sources.

At HPAC, we recognize that we can only serve the community if we operate as a financially sustainable organization. This objective aims to enhance financial sustainability by diversifying funding sources through strategic initiatives. This includes exploring new fundraising channels, gradually increasing revenue from new sources annually. Additionally, the plan involves cultivating donor relationships, assessing their giving capacity, and dedicating resources to grant writing and reporting.

Objective 3.3. Increase earned revenue through
program growth.

Objective 3.4. Build financial stability and reserves.

This objective aims to boost earned revenue by conducting a comprehensive program assessment to identify gaps and opportunities, while considering workload considerations. In addition, the objective is to introduce new programs when appropriate, based on a revenue generation matrix. We aim to build financial stability and reserves through a structured approach that involves assessing existing reserves and operational needs, implementing strategies for increasing operational reserves, establishing a dedicated emergency fund, and enforcing policies related to contributions.

Objective 3.5. Establish an endowment for long-term sustainability.	Objective 3.6. Refine building revenue structure.	
Ensure financial sustainability by establishing an endowment and implementing a legacy giving plan to provide a foundation for exigent circumstances.	Optimize building revenue structure by developing models for kitchen and theater rentals, space allocation, and evaluating event revenue through market comparisons for effective pricing strategies.	
Objective 3.7. Assess staffing needs to ensure human resource sustainability and optimal organizational performance.	Objective 3.8. Align staff roles to organizational goals for enhanced efficiency and impact.	
HPAC is developing initiatives to ensure staff skills are aligned with current and future needs for sustained organizational growth and impact. These include thorough annual assessment of staffing requirements to identify skill gaps, training needs, and workload considerations. Data will be used to inform annual strategic resource allocation, informed decision- making on hiring, and development initiatives, addressing the identified gaps in staff and ensuring adequate human resources to support the HPAC's mission and vision.	At HPAC, we understand that our future success hinges on our people. To achieve this, we will update job descriptions for clarity, emphasizing the crucial contributions each role makes to our organizational goals. Additionally, we'll establish individual staff goals, fostering a profound understanding of how each member's role contributes to our organization's future. All job descriptions will be refined to explicitly align with our goals, with a comprehensive tracking system ensuring the completion of staff goals.	
Objective 3.9. Enhance staff performance through development to promote organizational excellence.	Objective 3.10. Strategic workforce planning for sustainable organizational success.	
HPAC aims to optimize staff performance by nurturing staff member individual growth. This objective involves the creation and implementation of performance appraisals and a structured evaluation process linked to each modified job description, promoting improved understanding of individual strengths, areas for development, and goal alignment. Additionally, these initiatives will include the implementation or engagement of training programs and professional development opportunities to enhance organizational alignment and skill development. Expected outcomes include a culture of constructive feedback during performance reviews, leading to increased motivation, engagement, and a growth-oriented environment. Furthermore, this initiative anticipates improved staff competence in roles aligned with organizational objectives, as evidenced by an increase in employees participating in targeted training programs following performance reviews and improvement in overall performance ratings and goal attainment rates.	Within the realm of long-term workforce planning, HPAC strives to strategically align its human capital with future organizational needs for enduring success. This objective entails the meticulous analysis of current and long-term organizational requirements to identify critical roles essential for sustained growth. Additionally, the initiative involves the development of comprehensive strategies for talent pipeline management, succession planning, and internal promotions. The proactive identification of future workforce requirements aims to enhance the accuracy of long-term forecasts compared to actual staffing needs, ensuring the organization remains agile and responsive. Simultaneously, the establishment of a pipeline of skilled individuals ready to fill key roles is integral to the objective, with success measured by the effectiveness of succession planning, as evidenced by internal promotions and seamless transitions. The success of this strategic workforce planning initiative will be gauged by the alignment of workforce capabilities with the evolving needs of the organization, fostering resilience and longevity.	
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## Strategic Priorities in Focus Enhance and Strengthen Operational Infrastructure

#### **Priority 4: Enhance and Strengthen Operational Infrastructure**

This strategic priority focuses on enhancing the organization's foundational elements to ensure smooth functioning and increased efficiency. The emphasis is on building robust business processes that establish as well as enhance internal efficiency. The emphasis is further actively creating necessary policies and procedures for staff, volunteers, the board, and external stakeholders, including building use for organizational arts affiliates and private rentals. Efficient policies and procedures contribute to the organization's ability to deliver value consistently, positively impacting artists, the community, and affiliate partners.

Objective 4.2. Optimize organizational efficiency through business process management.
With a commitment to continuous operational improvement, HPAC sets out to enhance organizational efficiency by identifying key processes for optimization. This strategic objective involves a thorough exploration of cutting-edge tools and methodologies, including the potential implementation of process automation tools and LEAN processing methodologies. The goal is to streamline operations, ensuring that our processes align with industry best practices and contribute to a more agile and effective organizational structure.
Objective 4.4. Optimize facility management for sustained infrastructure excellence.
In pursuit of heightened operational efficiency, HPAC aims to institute robust policies and processes governing building maintenance, accompanied by the establishment of a comprehensive maintenance schedule. This objective further involves evaluating the intrinsic value of the organization's facilities through a thorough annual assessment. To ensure the seamless execution of key operations management responsibilities, there will be a strategic allocation of staff resources, which may include hiring or relocating personnel.

the drafting and adoption of a cultural equity policy.



## **Plan For Success**



#### HPAC's Yearly Work Plan

The planning process of High Point Arts Council is agile and responsive. This strategic plan will be merged with annual action plans, aligning with the values and objectives outlined in this strategic plan to the best of our ability. On an annual basis, HPAC leadership will initiate a condensed strategic planning process to assess our accomplishments and determine the direction we need to take. The annual action plans will set out shorter-term time-bound action steps for achieving our long-term strategic priorities and objectives.

A comprehensive review of High Point Arts Council's overall strategy will occur every five years. This review will occur annually in June aligning with the end of the fiscal year. In doing so, this will provide us with the hindsight to recognize achievements, an understanding of present opportunities and challenges, and foresight gained from listening to the needs of our partners and constituents.

# Acknowledgements

On behalf of the High Point Arts Council, we want to take the time to acknowledge several individuals that helped make this strategic plan possible. First and foremost, thank you to Dr. Madelynn Stackhouse of Stackhouse Management Solutions for working tirelessly with the HPAC team to create this strategic plan. Thank you to both Visit High Point and the North Carolina Arts Council for granting us the funds to be able to hire Dr. Stackhouse as our consultant, thus making it possible to have this plan. Thank you to the entire HPAC staff and board who invested several hours of their time and talent to bring this plan to life. Thank you to the sponsors of our New Hue rebrand party: Wright Brothers Catering, Courtyard at Marriott, Andmore, Jones & Peacock, The High Point Market Authority, and Stickermule.

Finally, thank you for being the community voice we needed to help shape this strategic plan and determine the future of the High Point Arts Council based on the needs of greater High Point.



#### **High Point Arts Council Board of Directors**

Raven Jefferson – Board Chair Community Affiliation: High Point Schools Partnership

Alexandra Arpajian – President and Executive Director, High Point Arts Council

Pam Baldwin Community Affiliation: Women in Motion of High Point

Anique Oliver Brewer Community Affiliation: ABA Creative Consulting; John Coltrane Project

Cerise W. Collins, Community Affiliation: CeRest LLC

Jennifer Hance - Secretary Community Affiliation: Greensboro Parks and Recreation

Jordan Lessard Community Affiliation: Edward Jones

Abigail Lind Community Affiliation: Stratagon, Inc.

Courtney Lowe Community Affiliation: High Point Community Theatre

Julie Luecht Community Affiliation: High Point Parks & Recreation Dr. Scott MacLeod Community Affiliation: High Point University

Dan Manross Community Affiliation: Actor

David McCoy Community Affiliation: Retired

Jim Morgan – Emeritus Board Member Community Affiliation: Morgan, Herring, Morgan

Carlos Olvera - Past Chair Community Affiliation: ServPro of High Point

Lucy Ortiz Community Affiliation: Pinnacle Financial Partners

Dr. David Pittman Community Affiliation: GTCC Dean

Erin Rogers - Secretary Community Affiliation: Hillcrest Realty Group

Becky Wray – Treasurer Community Affiliation: Retired

Martha Yarborough Community Affiliation: Retired





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# **Get involved!**

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Community members enjoy HPAC's Arts Splash Summer Concert Seri Photo by Sam Froelich Photography





## Support



