



2024-2025

IMPACT REPORT

Connecting the cultural community and developing an audience for jazz through quality education, performance excellence and musician support.



A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP



Dear JazzArts Friends and Supporters,

Fifteen years ago, JazzArts Charlotte® began with a simple yet powerful vision: to build a community where jazz could inspire, educate, and connect people of all ages and backgrounds. Today, our vision continues to thrive – resonating stronger than ever.

This past year has been a defining chapter in our organization's journey. As we celebrated our 15th anniversary, we reflected not only on the milestones that brought us here but also on the countless stories that define JazzArts – the students discovering improvisation in the JazzArts Academy, our audiences thrilled by exciting and unforgettable JAZZ ROOM performances, and our partnerships that have expanded our reach across schools and communities.

From introducing JazzSLAM through Jazz in Schools to launching new collaborations and continuing our cultural jazz journey to Cuba, JazzArts Charlotte® continues to grow as a creative hub and educational resource for the Southeast. These accomplishments reflect our belief that jazz is more than music – it's our collective culture, our shared legacy, history, and a bridge to our shared humanity.

Our achievements and impact this year – and over the past 15 years – would not have been possible without our dedicated team of staff, board members, artists, volunteers, donors, and community partners. You have been the heartbeat of this organization, helping us create spaces where the music thrives.

As we look ahead, we do so with excitement and renewed commitment to inspire future generations, to build deeper connections, and to keep Charlotte's jazz story alive for decades to come.

Thank you for being an essential part of the JazzArts' story. Together, we are not just preserving jazz – we are moving it forward.

Lonnie Davis
President and CEO



As JazzArts Charlotte's® Board Chair, I am proud to celebrate our 15th anniversary as a year that strengthened our foundation and allowed us to broaden our vision. This milestone was marked by the launch of our Band Director Academy, a new professional development program for music educators, and by deepening educational partnerships with organizations like Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and UNC Charlotte.

We continued to innovate with program offerings such as Jazz in Schools and the introduction of JazzSLAM, which connects music to language, arts, and math for young learners. Our largest-attended Summer Music Camp welcomed special guest artists and clinicians, providing students with transformative experiences and new opportunities for growth.

Furthermore, we participated in the Jazz Education Network National Conference and the North Carolina Music Educators Association annual conference, further showcasing the vibrancy of Charlotte's jazz scene. Our strategic plan remains focused on expanding access, supporting educators, and fostering lifelong engagement with jazz.

I am deeply grateful for the dedication of our board, staff, volunteers, donors, and partners. Your support enables us to build a resilient organization and create meaningful connections throughout our city and beyond.

Together, we are shaping a legacy that will inspire future generations. Thank you for being part of our journey.

Karen Bernhardt
FY24-FY25 Board Chair

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS: BUILDING A LEGACY

This year, JazzArts Charlotte® proudly celebrates 15 years of enriching lives through the transformative power of jazz. What began in 2009 as a few free performances and small classes has grown into a leading cultural institution – serving thousands each year through concerts, workshops, and education programs that build community and inspire creativity across the region.

Our flagship series, THE JAZZ ROOM, has evolved into one monthly show with four sets in a weekend, presenting acclaimed local and national artists who connect audiences of all ages and backgrounds. Diversity, inclusion, and accessibility remain at the heart of everything we do.

Education continues to drive our mission. The JazzArts Academy reached record enrollment, while programs like WeBop, Jazz in Schools, and our Summer Music Camp continue to spark creativity from preschoolers to teens. Through partnerships with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, CATS, CLT Airport, and others, we've brought jazz into classrooms, public spaces, and community stages.

As our alumni return as performers and mentors, the legacy of JazzArts Charlotte® comes full circle. With gratitude to our educators, artists, donors, and partners, we celebrate 15 years of impact—and look ahead with renewed purpose to inspire generations to come.



NEW TO JAZZARTS



JazzArts introduced Michael Reichman as its new Development Director. He was previously Vice President of Artistic Operations at the Charlotte Symphony. During his tenure, he was central to planning their CSO Roadshow mobile stage and immersive 360° experiences hosted at Blumenthal's Blume Studios. He now serves on the Levine JCC's Development Committee for their 40th Anniversary Campaign.

Before moving to North Carolina, Michael was Executive Director of the York Symphony Orchestra in Pennsylvania. As CEO, his team increased concerts by 40%, education programs by 37%, subscriptions by 30%, ticket sales by 52%, donations by 67%, and tripled their endowment by

raising over \$3.1 million.

In 2021, he was named in Central Penn Business Journal's Forty Under 40. Michael was a clinician for the Pennsylvania Music Educator Association and a guest music instructor at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County.

After graduating from New England Conservatory, Michael's earned an Emerging Leaders fellowship from the League of American Orchestras and the Margaret Stewart Lindsay Award for Arts Leadership by NPR's From the Top.

Originally from Kansas City, he received his Bachelor's from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and lives with his wife and two sons in Charlotte.



ALUMNI CELEBRATION: THE FUTURE WE'VE BUILT

In fall 2024, JazzArts Charlotte® celebrated its 15th anniversary by welcoming alumni, faculty, and supporters back home to honor the organization's legacy and lasting impact.

The reunion featured JazzArts Academy graduates from 2011 to 2020, including Malcolm Charles (King Noli), Braxton Bateman, Sean Mason, Emanuel Wynter, Taylor Scott, Lovell "Skip" Bradford Jr., and others who shared their stories and filled the stage with inspiring performances.

Elijah Freeman reflected, "When I first came to JazzArts, I saw 50 other kids who loved this music as much as I did. That was inspirational. JazzArts gave me a community, a sense of purpose, and a place to belong. It shaped who I am today."

Braxton Bateman added, "The instructors were like family ...



They'd say, 'We've got this gig on Saturday. I'm not even going to be there. You figure out what you're going to play.' That kind of trust forced us to grow up fast. JazzArts created a safe space for us to become better people, better musicians, and better professionals."

JazzArts also hosted a holiday alumni jam session

for returning college students, bringing old friends together and strengthening the JazzArts bond beyond graduation. These gatherings celebrated the growing network of alumni – many now returning as guest artists, educators, and mentors – continuing a virtuous cycle of inspiration for the next generation.



JazzArts alumni, circa fall 2014.

"JazzArts didn't just give me my first professional gigs, they taught me the spirit of the music and made sure we felt the rawness of jazz's cultural roots. That's something even some of the top music schools miss. That's the kind of impact JazzArts has." —Sean Mason

JAZZ IN SCHOOLS INTRODUCES JazzSLAM

With education and outreach programs designed to engage everyone from school aged children to adults, we serve as a resource for schools, young musicians, and the community. We provide age-appropriate assembly programs which are tailored for elementary, middle, or high school students with no music background required. These exciting and informative 45-90-minute performance presentations include audience participation and a question-and-answer session for students and teachers!

92 students received scholarships! Scholarship recipients grew by 35%.

A new offering to our “Jazz in Schools” programming, the JazzArts Academy introduced “JazzSLAM.” JazzSLAM supports teachers in the disciplines of language, arts, and math and is designed to support teachers’

efforts to raise student’s standardized test scores. JazzSLAM motivates students to learn how to express themselves within the confines of a given form and provides tactile benefits by supporting teaching with the aural, visual, and advantages of music. This year, through a partnership with Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, we presented “JazzSLAM,” throughout Charlotte area schools.



The JazzArts Academy had over 380 students registered for education programs!



Luke

Gabriela

Jameson

2025-26 JAZZARTS MERIT SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

JazzArts was proud to once again host a merit-based scholarship opportunity for JazzArts Academy students, in addition to current financial support scholarships. Winners received a scholarship that cover fall and spring semester of Youth Ensembles + Workshops and Summer Music Camp for the 2025-2026 academic year.

Many students applied through an initial video audition submission, and the judges identified six student finalists. These students led a professional ensemble in the live final round performance, free and open to the public, with immediate

feedback and critique from the adjudicators. Each student shined brightly as they showcased their talents. In the end, three students emerged to receive the year-long scholarship opportunity.

Congratulations to all our finalists and to our scholarship winners Jameson, Luke, and Gabby. It was a privilege for JazzArts to be able to offer this opportunity to our young, dedicated musicians. Scholarships like this are only possible because of the generous investments our donors make in support of our students.

NUESTRO TIEMPO RETURNS

Nuestro Tiempo Latin Jazz Youth Orchestra is a group of students, ranging from grades 7-12, who are committed to enhancing Latin culture and various musical styles. Nuestro Tiempo Latin Jazz Youth Orchestra students play repertoire in a Latin Jazz orchestra and learn fundamentals such as clave rhythms, improvisational theory, and Latin jazz history. This is a unique opportunity for student musicians to study an exciting facet of jazz that combines the chords and improvisational techniques of traditional jazz with Latin instruments and rhythms.



Over 25 students participated in Nuestro Tiempo Latin Jazz Youth Orchestra! Enrollment grew by 20%.

JAZZARTS YOUTH ENSEMBLES + WORKSHOPS



This applied program is offered to students who want to continue improving their individual skills within the context of a small jazz ensemble. These sessions provide students with the opportunity to grow their individual skills within a supportive and relaxed ensemble environment, with a concentration on exploring jazz styles, standard repertoire, jazz improvisation, and history. The ensembles are open to all instruments and bring students together from a variety of backgrounds and skill levels to create a fun and motivating applied learning experience. Student participants also perform for events across the community, including a free end-of-session public concert.



Over 75 students participated in our Youth Ensembles + Workshops program! Enrollment grew by 34% in FY25.

JAZZARTS SUMMER MUSIC CAMP



During the last week in June, students learned jazz history, improvisation, and performance all while gaining self-confidence and creativity! Each day, our students were guided by some of the best jazz performers and educators in the region. Additionally, they were joined by special guest instructor and Charlotte-native, Ashlin Parker, and special guest camp clinician, bassist Philip Norris! An intensive week of study culminated with a final concert where many students performed jazz for the very first time! We are grateful to our sponsors, donors, and UNC Charlotte for helping make our summer music camp a huge success.

2025 marked our highest summer music camp enrollment in program history! Enrollment grew by 49%.



NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT: JAZZARTS YOUTH ENSEMBLE ALL-STARS AT JEN

In January 2025, JazzArts All-Star Ensemble traveled to the Jazz Education Network (JEN) Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, to participate in JENerations Jazz Festival. In addition to their performance, the group immersed themselves in jazz performances, presentations, and lectures as part of the conference. It was a life-changing experience for all involved!



FREE EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

To deepen the interaction of our national jazz performing artists with the local music community, JazzArts Charlotte® welcomes student musicians from the Charlotte area and beyond to learn from our

Over 100 students across the Charlotte region and beyond registered for our FREE jazz workshops!

artists featured in THE JAZZ ROOM. In 2025, we were thrilled for our students to have the opportunity to learn from and work alongside artists such as Pedro Martinez, Camille Thurman, and Emmet Cohen! This unique opportunity brings local students with world-class jazz performers, that these students would not

otherwise have access to. The experience of interacting with some of the best jazz musicians in the world is a distinctive opportunity that the JazzArts Academy provides to students in the Charlotte region and beyond!



EMPOWERING EDUCATORS: JAZZARTS BAND DIRECTOR ACADEMY

For the first time ever, JazzArts Academy presented their Band Director Academy, a professional development workshop for middle and high school band directors. Led by special guest clinician, Julius Tolentino and assisted by JazzArts Academy faculty members, this program focused on the essentials of teaching jazz while incorporating practical and hands-on learning techniques.

Through this experience, music educators gained confidence in their ability to teach beginning jazz techniques while building on their current knowledge and pedagogical techniques. This workshop partnered JazzArts Charlotte®, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), and National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The JazzArts Academy served students in 53 ZIP codes. That number increased by 51% in FY25.



THE JAZZ ROOM

THE JAZZ ROOM has been established as an electrifying, yet cool hot spot for live music, featuring today's top artists and creating immersive educational experiences for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

This year welcomed an extraordinary lineup of world-class musicians including:

Joey Alexander

Chart-topping jazz pianist by age 13 and Lincoln Center gala soloist at 10.

Herlin Riley

Long-time collaborator with Wynton Marsalis and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra.

Pedrito Martinez

7-time Jazz Percussionist of the Year & Latin Grammy nominee.

Adrian Crutchfield

Charlotte's own & last musician to lead Prince's New Power Generation horn section.

Kenny Garrett

NEA Jazz Master and Grammy-winning saxophonist.

Emmet Cohen

Winner of the 2019 American Pianists Awards.

Etienne Charles

Guggenheim Fellow and acclaimed trumpeter.

Sasha Masakowski

Named a "rising star" by DownBeat Magazine.

Chief aTunde Adjuah

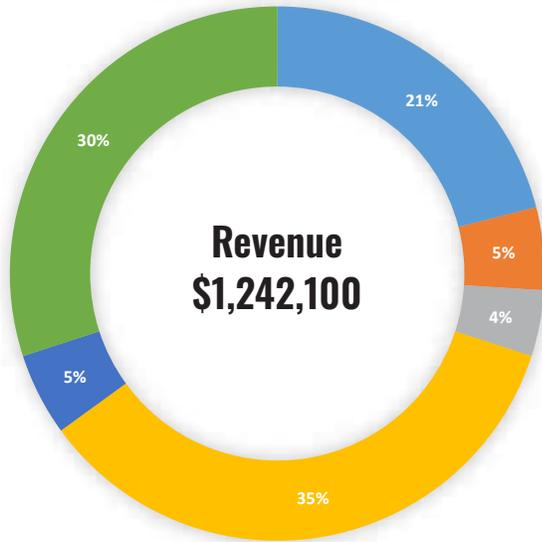
Two-time Edison Award winner & six-time Grammy-nominated trumpeter & composer.

Camille Thurman

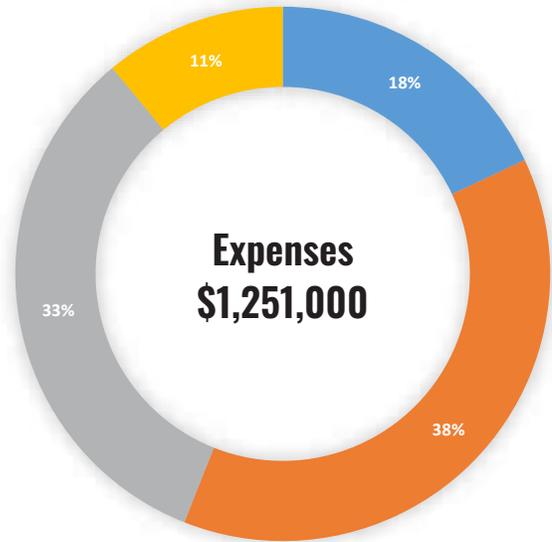
First woman to perform full-time with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra.



REVENUE AND EXPENSES



	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	21%
	CORPORATE GIVING & SPONSORSHIPS	5%
	IN-KIND GOODS & SERVICES	4%
	GRANTS	35%
	OTHER REVENUE	5%
	EARNED REVENUE	30%



	JAZZARTS ACADEMY	18%
	PERFORMANCES & MUSICIAN SUPPORT	38%
	GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE	33%
	DEVELOPMENT	11%

JazzArts Charlotte's® annual budget operates on a fiscal year, July 1-June 30.

YOUR GENEROSITY MADE A DIFFERENCE

This year, we were deeply moved by the generosity of our community. Donors from across the region stepped forward in record amounts, helping us achieve an unprecedented level of individual contributions during our landmark 15th anniversary celebration. Their support not only affirmed the value of our mission – it empowered us to reach further, serve more, and dream bigger.

Each household that made a gift played a vital role in sustaining our programs, from world-class performances to transformative educational opportunities for students of all ages. These contributions directly support scholarships, artist engagement, and community outreach, ensuring that jazz remains accessible, inclusive, and vibrant in Charlotte.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to every donor who chose to invest in the power of music and the promise of young talent. Your belief in our work fuels everything we do.



Thank you to all our volunteers who have given 586 hours of their time and talent to JazzArts Charlotte® this year.

JAZZARTS SUPPORTERS

Thank you for being a part of the JazzArts family! We are humbled by the generosity of our supporters and sponsors. Without you none of this would be possible.

Sustainers (\$10,000 & above)

Oscar & Heide Groomes
Jacqueline Jefferies Estate
James & Nicole Bissell

Benefactors (\$5,000 – \$9,999)

Bill & Julie Abt
Ron Baldwin
Karen Bernhardt & Marc Tiegel
Paul Brooks
Jo Brown
Ronnie Bryant
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Lorine & Ray Edwards
David Goodstein
Peter Guild
David & Sharon Lampke
Linda May & James Juhl
Brad & Kathy Keller
Tom & Julie Kowick
Arthur & Joanne Rogers
The Scott & Tracey Tozier Fund

Maestros (\$2,500-\$4,999)

Howard Adams & Carol McPhee
Barbara Birge
Christopher & Page Curtin
Joycelyn & Tyron Eason
Bernadette & Gene Flavors
Drs. Jean Kois & Jose Pena
Angela & Michael Friedland
Michael & Sarah Masci
Richard Mei
Kurt Waldthausen & Patricia Sciarra
Irving Welchons

Arrangers (\$1,000-\$2,499)

Ron & Pam Ancrum
Anonymus
Lynn Avampato & Kurt King
Linda Bain-Clark
Bob & Angela Baron
Hana Biru
Susan Carr
Miriam Dixon
Stephen Duniec
Lisa & Stephen Fadero
Matteo Fregosi
Nicholas Forest
Steve & Patty Ghertner
Betsy Grant-Kaperonis &
George Kaperonis
Michelle & Mark Hamilton
Adam & Vicky Holtzschue
Jerri Kallam
Ken & Nikki Leahy
Vincent & Dana Luciani
JC & Pam McKenzie
Paul & Natalie Murphy
Eva Nove

Anil & Miriam Patel
Kevin Patterson & Charlene
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Jay Payne
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Bo & Carolyn Proctor
Kelsey Rector & Greg Dills
Thomas & Rita Robinson
Sharon Rogillio & Britton Kosmo
Frank & Lindsay Schall
Marlo & John Scheitler
Wayne & Vaneta Smiley
Joseph Smith & Brianna Hendryx-Smith
Rebecca & Jay Thomas
Cassandra Triggs-Tucker
Aaron & Rebecca Valenstein
Heather & Jason Ward
Barbara & Alan Williams
Sandra & Robert Wolf
William Zimmerman

Composers (\$500-\$999)

Sandro Aristil
Patricia Bialecki
Robert & Deborah Bove
John & Annamarie Collier
William & Jan Cook
Jeff Cravotta & Ayisha McMillan Cravotta
Donna DeCesare
Patricia Fisher
Martin & Francene Greene
Drs. Daniel Handel & Nicole Chao
Michael & Nancy Heafner
Pam & Brian Hegner
Thomas & Lynne Hennig
Patricia Joslin
Mary & Peter Kelly
John & Beverly Lassiter
Dr. Sonya Manor
Leah & Dan Miller
Henry Murphy & Requel
Matthews-Murphy
Santosh Rao
Herb & Rosalia Peck

Coleen Postilio & Ed Jones
Carlo Purefoy
Brian Smith & Michelle Monteilh
John & Marsha Small
Leslie Stanfield
Jason Steiner
Elizabeth Teagarden & Scott Anderson
Sharon Walters
Mark Walker
Karen York & James Elder

Soloists (\$250-\$499)

Dave Arone & Shirley Xu
Andrew & Christine Beloni
Kelly Bruno & Keehn Powell
Jennifer Clark
John Clark
Margaret Cleveland
Julie & Pascal de Hesselle
Robert & Laurie Fisher
Gary & Victoria Frenette
Ronald & Evelyn Hardy
Ben Hinchey
Isabelle & Peter Kalshoven
Jim & Deborah Keenan
Michael & Sheri Knaebel
Leslie & Drew Ladau
Richard Lancaster
Tim & Marianne LeVigne
Justin Lyons
Michael Pepper
Elizabeth & Simon Purdy
Betty Rash
Joan Rasmussen & Morry Alter
Karen Sentelle
Jeffrey & Karla Stovall
Linwood & Lisa Toppin
Heidi & Tim Weatherspoon
Drs. Adelle Anthony-Williams &
Jerome Williams
Ethan & Kate Uslan

*Includes individual contributions received
July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.*



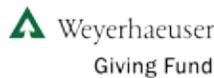


VAPA Center
 Attn: JazzArts Charlotte®
 700 N. Tryon St.
 Charlotte, NC 28202



www.thejazzarts.org

Thank you to our funders, donors, and partners who make fulfilling our mission possible. Your generosity and dedication to jazz education, performance and musician support make a difference in the lives of people every day.



WANT MORE INFORMATION?

If you would like more information about JazzArts Charlotte® and our programs, please visit www.TheJazzArts.org or contact the Development Office at development@thejazzarts.org or 704.503.9565.