



**Final Report to the Town of Cornelius
September 29, 2023**

Financial Narrative

Cain Center for the Arts experienced a large transition year during FY23. The fiscal year brought about the completion of Cain Center construction, closing of the capital campaign, launch of the new Center (including programs and enhanced staffing), and increased community impact. The year was a large 'learning year', which was expected. The initial FY23 budget was built on many assumptions due to planning for a building and programs that had never been operated before. Overall, the year was a success financially. Both Expenses and Revenues saw some goals exceeded and some goals not reached. Because of the fiscal responsibility of our organization, we were able to access reserves that were held as a contingency for the learning that would be required.

Some notable items from our FY23 Fiscal Year include:

- Successful completion of our \$25MM Capital Campaign on January 3rd 2023
- Overall Revenue for the year exceeded budget by \$85,866
- Cost of Revenue and Expenses exceeded budget by \$252,043
 - Drivers of this were Contract Labor, Marketing, Audit Fees, and Expenses associated with the Grand Opening Week. These were funded from restricted and reserved funds that had been held for the year (\$255,610)

September 2023 Update to Relevance & Participation Narrative:

a. What benefit does your organization's work provide the Cornelius community?

Cain Center for the Arts has created a space for entertainment, education, inspiration, and community in the Lake Norman region. With a 401-seat theater, classrooms, gallery space, event space, and a community green space, the facility and its grounds are providing the region with access to arts, education, and a platform for community gathering. In FY23, Cain Center for the Arts featured national touring companies and world-renowned entertainers in addition to local productions and grassroots performers. There were also a range of visual arts exhibits, and diverse classes for youth and adults held at both facilities (Cain Center and Cornelius Arts Center) during FY23.

Cain Center for the Arts also offered Community Impact Programs, including Community Music Lessons, Arts in Schools, Arts in Community, Community Ticket Access, and Scholarships for Summer Camps & Classes. Brief descriptions of these include:

- Community Music Lessons: Cain Center hires Learn Music, a Cornelius-based small business that provides music lessons, for its Community Music Lessons program. The program provides fully funded private music lessons to children in the area who have a passion for music but are lacking the financial means to pursue professional training. The lessons are taught by Learn Music instructors (many of whom are also musicians). Students who attend all the lessons and perform twice publicly will receive a free instrument.
- Arts in Schools: Cain Center for the Arts contracts organizations like Children's Theatre of Charlotte, Charlotte Ballet, and Charlotte Symphony to bring free shows into local schools. These include shows for elementary school students, middle school students, and high school students.
- Arts in Community: These are free activities with educational components that are offered to children, families, and other special groups (ex. story time for children, activities at festivals, bi-lingual painting class for seniors, etc.)
- Community Ticket Access: Cain Center for the Arts provides this program and offers free tickets to children and families in need. In FY23, tickets were offered to children and families associated with The Ada Jenkins Center, Neighborhood C.A.R.E., and local schools.
- Scholarships for Summer Camps and Classes: During the summer, Cain Center offers scholarships for our summer camps, which provide educational and entertaining activities for children. Staff evaluates programs and contract experienced Instructors and artistically inclined Camp Counselors for a variety of summer camps. Staff also received scholarships applications for classes throughout the year and grants scholarships to recipients that meet criteria.

In addition to facility functions, Cain Center for the Arts has become a landmark for downtown Cornelius. Cain Center has also contributed to economic growth with employment opportunities for its full- and part-time, which included eight full-time staffers and two part-time staffers in FY23. Cain Center also offered FY23 contracting positions for bartenders (15 on rotation for events), cleaning crews (around four individuals who work for two different cleaning crews), caterers (20+ on rotation for events), technicians (16 on rotation for events), Security (24 on rotation for events), and more.

Cain Center for the Arts also had contracted positions including 18 visual arts instructors, and five camp counselors. 200 artists were also given a platform for selling and sharing their art, and around 10 local performing artists were hired for special functions. In this way, Cain Center is

contributing to sustainable economic growth for the community. The facility is also open to the public during operating hours. This includes free lobby and patio spaces that can be utilized as workspace and/or for meetings.

b. Define your audience. In what ways are you seeking to expand or evolve the audience you serve in the coming year(s)?

The audience that we aim to serve is a primary market of a 25-mile diameter circle that surrounds Downtown Cornelius. This includes North Mecklenburg, South Iredell, East Lincoln, and West Cabarrus counties. With our new ticketing software, ETIX (in use from July 2022 to present) we are now able to track zip codes of ticket buyers / class registrants for the use of analytics and data tracking. Cain Center staff will continue to research data mining capabilities and the use of surveys to better capture patron demographics and preferences.

In FY23, Cain Center's audiences were as follows: Location demographics for classes and camps included 38% from Cornelius, 27% from Huntersville, 17% from Davidson and 18% from other nearby locations. Location demographics for shows included 50.72% from Cornelius, 13.85% from Davidson, 12.20% from Huntersville, 7.07% from Mooresville and 16.16% from other nearby locations.

c. How do you build meaningful relationships with community partners, audiences, visitors, participants, etc.?

Cain Center for the Arts continues to build meaningful relationships with donors, patrons, community partners, and community members at-large. The organization strives to serve as an outlet where voices are heard, and everyone has a place. Regarding our programming, we have focused on Presenting, Exhibitions, Education & Community Impact. For the latter (Community Impact), relationships were built with The Ada Jenkins Center, Neighborhood C.A.R.E, Learn Music, and Davidson-Cornelius Child Development Center. These relationships have helped us to connect with children/individuals/families who were less likely to have access to the arts. We have been able to offer free or low-cost programming and full scholarships for our Community Music Lessons and Summer Camp Scholarships.

Cain Center for the Arts presented a range of diverse performances for its Inaugural Season and will continue to offer different types of performers so that the community feels connected and drawn to the center.

Cain Center for the Arts also presented a range of exhibitions including regional/national artists and local artists. These exhibits have served to attract and connect the community to visual arts in meaningful ways. Cain Center staff has had the pleasure of watching students become exhibitors for local exhibits at the facility.

d. Describe how your organization has prioritized becoming more accessible, inclusive, and equitable. What initiatives are currently underway, and what are you learning in the process? What strategies are you putting in place for the coming fiscal year?

Cain Center continues to be committed to inclusion, equity, and accessibility in all aspects of its operations and programming. Cain Center continues to provide

scholarships of up to 100% of the cost of programs to anyone who requests them and meets the financial requirements. In FY23, a scholarship sub-committee was formed to proactively work in the community to reduce and eliminate barriers to participation in programs.

Cain Center's Inaugural Season included performers from all backgrounds, highlighting artists of various ethnicities, ages, sexual/gender identity, and more. In addition, Cain Center's current board is reflective of the community in the Town of Cornelius, with 6% of its members identifying as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). Cain Center's staff is even more diverse, with 22% of its staff identifying as BIPOC. Several members of Cain Center's team are bilingual, which enhances our ability to offer services.

Cain Center for the Arts is deeply committed to presenting a diverse array of programming throughout the year in order to be inclusive and welcoming to everyone in the community. The organization will continue to engage with all areas of the community in order to receive input and plan for future programming and initiatives.

e. Participation: Please discuss any changes, fluctuation, or trends in total annual/participation? How do you measure feedback from participants/audience, and how do you incorporate feedback?

Since Cain Center for the Arts opened this January, there has been an increase of attendees visiting the facility. This includes attendees for shows, exhibits, classes, summer camps, rentals, and special events. The community is using the space as intended and there is a sense that a stronger community is developing through the power of the arts.

In addition to being able to offer performing arts in a 401-seat theater, the additional gallery in the new facility allows for an increase in visual arts. The Cornelius Arts Center is also still used for ceramics classes, open studio, and exhibits. This has led to an increase in opening receptions and public support.

There are more details regarding demographics in the summary below. Our volunteer program, Cain Center Champions, has also increased. Currently, we have 170 active volunteers (not including our Board). This is an increase from last fiscal year when we had around 15 active volunteers (not including our Board). On show nights, we typically have anywhere from 10-15 volunteers assisting.

In terms of measuring feedback from participants/audiences, we have a suggestion box in the building, and we monitor social media channels and email. We are also looking into surveys through SurveyMonkey (which we have used in the past) and ETIX, the current ticketing software being used. Cain Center encourages feedback and has also received a variety of feedback by word of mouth. This feedback has been discussed and, when appropriate, changes have been made to better serve visitors and patrons.

Every year our Visual Arts & Education Director sits with our community partners to establish goals for the next year. These meetings traditionally happen toward the end of the 'season of program' while Cain Center is in budget planning. At that time, goals and plans are set for increasing the number of participants for certain programs, launching new initiatives, and increasing the depth of existing programs. Once the programs are launched, we keep ongoing communications with our partners to ensure proper

execution of the program while also monitoring the number of participants, engagement, and any issues that may arise.

Summary of FY23 Cain Center for the Arts Programming

FY23 has been a busy time at Cain Center for the Arts. Not only did the facility open to the public in January 2023, but, in doing so, it increased its programming drastically. Balancing performing arts, exhibitions, classes/camps, community impact programs, special events, rentals, and more has been a priority at both the new facility and at the Cornelius Arts Center. More importantly though, Cain Center for the Arts has embraced the challenge of being a place that connects the community to the arts. In doing so, more than just numbers are increasing. Those who have visited Cain Center have seen firsthand the benefits, beauty, and joy of operating a facility that is uniting residents in the Lake Norman region. Below you will see descriptions of Cain Center's FY23 programming and what has been accomplished during its inaugural season.

Classes/Camps:

Cain Center for the Arts had a total of seven education sessions including Fall A, Fall B, Winter, Spring A, Spring B, Summer A, Summer B, and Summer Camps.

These included the following:

Youth classes: School of Color, Create with Clay, Comics & Cartooning, Open Studio, Drawing 3D

Adult classes: All Level Hand Building, All Level Wheel Throwing, Big Pots: Dynamic Forms, Expressive Figurative Painting, Visual Arts Painters Studio, Creative Concepts, Creative Layering, Beginner & Intermediate Watercolor, Oil Painting Basics, Pre-Drawing & Composition for Future Painters, Mixed Media, Figurative & Animal Sculpture

Summer Camps: 5 Instruments in 5 Days (Week 1), Ceramics for Teens (Week 1 – a.m. session), Lego Masters (Week 1), Open Studio (Week 1), Ceramics for Teens (Week 1 – p.m. session), Game On (Week 1), Joy of Art Adventure (Week 1), Paint! Paint! Paint! (Week 1), Singers Camp (Week 1), Ceramics for Teens (Week 2 – a.m. session), Creative Contemporary Crafts (Week 2), Icky Sticky Art (Week 2), Kids Yoga Camp (Week 2), Lego Mash Up (Week 2), Animal Art (Week 2), Ceramics for Teens (Week 2 – p.m. session), Fun with Fiber (Week 2), Musical Theater Camp (Week 2), Sports Mania (Week 2), Teen Yoga Camp (Week 2), Ceramics for Teens (Week 3 – a.m. session), Extreme Ninjas (Week 3), Let's Paint (Week 3), Ceramics for Teens (Week 3 – p.m. session), Jammin' Jewelry (Week 3), Minecraft (Mining & Crafting) (Week 3), Ceramics for Teens (Week 4 – a.m. session), FooDelicious Fun (Week 4 – a.m. session), Painting the Landscape (Week 4), Pirates Adventure (Week 4), Ceramics for Teens (Week 4 – p.m. session), FooDelicious Fun (Week 4 – p.m. session),), Jurassic 'Brick' Land (Week 4), Painting the Portrait (Week 4), Abstract Painting (Week 5), Ceramics for Teens (Week 5 – a.m. session), Lego

Pokémon (Week 5), Artifacts Around the World (Week 5), Ceramics for Teens (Week 5 – p.m. session), Space Adventures (Week 5)

For FY23, class and camp admissions totaled 1,200. Location demographics included 38% from Cornelius, 27% from Huntersville, 17% from Davidson and 18% from other nearby locations.

Performances:

At the start of FY23, Cain Center for the Arts kicked off its Music at the Mill concert series with three artists performing in the intimate setting of Cornelius Arts Center. There was a total of 254 attendees for these shows. Demographics of locations for the attendees included North Carolina locations of Cornelius (66%), Davidson, Huntersville, Mooresville, Concord, Salisbury, Belmont, Durham, and Stanley, in addition to out-of-state locations like Johnson City, TN., Atlanta, GA., Spartanburg, SC, Charleston, SC, and Kittery, MN.

In January of 2023, Cain Center kicked off its Inaugural Season at the new Cain Center facility which included 20 shows, seven of which sold out, with over 5,730 attendees. Location demographics for shows included 50.72% from Cornelius, 13.85% from Davidson, 12.20% from Huntersville, 7.07% from Mooresville and 16.16% from other nearby locations.

Cain Centers inaugural performances included Christian Sands (jazz), Forever Young (two shows, musical), Jon Reep (two shows, comedy), Sons of Serendip (classical ensemble), Breach of Peace: Stories of the 1961 Freedom Riders (educational), Martin Sexton (Americana/rock), Tartan Terrors (Celtic rock), Dragons & Mythical Beasts (two youth shows), Charlotte Ballet's Under the Lights (dance/ballet), Gina Chavez (Latin rock), The Verve Pipe (Alternative rock), The Gruffalo (two youth shows), Davina and the Vagabonds (Jazz/Blues rock), Charlotte Symphony (classical)

Visual Arts:

For FY23, Cain Center presented seven exhibitions – four of which were held at Cornelius Arts Center and three at Cain Center. Locations and estimated attendance specifically for opening receptions (and not including visitors that see the exhibits during public hours, at shows or at special events through the course of the exhibits run date) include the following: Cornelius Arts Center included: *Mud at the Mill*, a community-focused exhibit with an estimated attendance of 450; *Through Our Lens*, a curated exhibit with featured artists and an estimated attendance of 300; *Home Grown*, a community exhibit with an estimated attendance 100-250; and the Cain Center Instructor exhibit, featuring local instructors with an estimated attendance of 50-250. Cain Center for the Arts included: *ColorWave*, a featured artist exhibit with glass works and an estimated attendance of over 1,000 attendees; the *Irvin Law Group & Friends* exhibit featuring local, regional, and national artists and an estimated attendance of over 350 attendees; and the *ArtPop Street Gallery 10-Year Anniversary* exhibit featuring local artists from ArtPop Street Gallery, a local initiative that showcases artists and provides a platform for increased accessibility. This exhibit reception had an estimated attendance of over 350 attendees. In addition to receptions, our galleries are open to the public during the week and the Cain Center

for the Arts gallery is open during most performing arts shows and for special events at the facility.

Community Impact Programs:

Our Community Music Lesson Program for FY23 began on September 1, 2023, and there were 21 students who enrolled. The total for the music lessons and instruments awarded to scholarship recipients who met requirements for the program was \$27,854.86. Our Summer Camp Scholarship Program featured 60 scholarship recipients and a total of \$8,250.00 in scholarships.

Children enrolled in the Community Music Lessons included 11 from Cornelius, six from Mooresville, two from Davidson, one from Huntersville, and one from Denver. The location demographics for summer camps included 95% from Cornelius, 2% from Huntersville, 1% from Davidson, and 3% from other surrounding areas (Mooresville, Denver, Concord).

Our Arts & Community Projects included two Ada Jenkins Center Family Enrichment Workshops (with a total of 130 attendees combined), a Senior Citizen Art Class (with six attendees), an Art Activity at Davidson-Cornelius Child Development Center (with 27 attendees), a giveaway of books (*The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson) for children at *The Gruffalo* shows, as well as participation in the Smithville Back to School Bash, participation in the Town of Cornelius Black History event, and a continuation of Cocoa with Santa (formerly offered by the Town's Parks & Rec Department) at the Cornelius Arts Center.

Cain Center also offered three Community Ticket Access shows including tickets for Sons of Serendip (note that tickets were offered to those enrolled in Community Music Lessons and their families), *Breach of Peace: Stories of the 1961 Freedom Riders* (note that students from Community School of Davidson attended a show and Q&A session), and *Dragons & Mythical Beasts* (note that families from The Ada Jenkins Center and Neighborhood C.A.R.E. were invited and there was a free balloon activity for children).

For our Arts in Schools program, we had approximately 2,000 children attending shows by Children's Theatre of Charlotte. These shows included *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*, *Confessions of a Former Bully*, and *Lion & Little Red Bird*. Schools visited included Cornelius Elementary School (Cornelius), Lakeside Charter Academy (Cornelius), Barnette Elementary School (Huntersville), Torrence Creek Elementary (Huntersville), and Woodlawn School (Mooresville).

Other Events/Rentals:

During FY23 Cain Center for the Arts partnered with the Town of Cornelius for several community events. It also softly launched its rentals program. Below you will find community events and rentals along with estimated attendees.

Eight Town of Cornelius Events with estimated 451 attendees

- 1/23/23 – Teddy Bear Breakfast (Classroom 115) – 28
- 1/24/23 – Neighborhood Advisory Committee Meeting (Classroom 115) - 25
- 2/9/23 – Budget Planning Session (Board Room) – 18
- 2/25/23 – Black History Month event (Theater) – 150
- 4/25/23 – Town Talk (Classroom 115) – 35
- 4/27/23 – 4-Town Dinner Lobby Tour - 15
- 5/29/23 – Memorial Day Program (Theater & Classroom 115) – 150
- 6/28/23 – Puzzle Palooza (Classroom 115) – 30

Eleven Community Events/Rentals with estimated 1,041 attendees (excluding Community Open House and 2nd Friday)

- 1/3/23 – Community Open House, Grand Opening Week
- 2/14/23 – Edward Jones Estate Planning Seminar (Board Room) – 20
- 2/22/23 – WDAV Strategic Planning (Classroom 115) – 18
- 3/1/23 – Visit LKN (Board Room) – 18
- 4/23/23-4/29/23 – Charlotte Conservatory Theatre rental (Theater) – 800
- 6/1/23 – Davidsonians for Freedom of Thought and Discourse (Theater) – 50
- 6/3/23 – Serena Barringer piano/voice recital – 50
- 6/9/23 – 2nd Friday on the patio with Adam Wilson, Learn Music
- 6/20/23 – Corrective Chiropractic International Yoga Day event (Plaza) – 15
- 6/27/23 – LKN Chamber Event – Leagues & Legends (Board Room) – 20
- 6/29/23 – CrossFit 926 (Plaza) – 50

In January, Cain Center for the Arts held its Public Grand Opening with an estimated 1,500 attendees visiting the facility throughout the day. There were also more than 1,000 attendees for Founders' Society events and Grand Opening of the center combined.

Cain Center also began opening its bar and patio for 2nd Fridays in May and June of 2023 to offer acoustic performances by local musicians. It has become a popular community gathering spot during these events.

Cain Center also began renting its theater to Love LKN for church services starting in February. On average, there are around 200 attendees attending the church services every Sunday.

Closing

We at Cain Center for the Arts hope that this FY23 Report captures the benefits of having an arts center in the heart of downtown Cornelius. We will continue to expose the Lake Norman region and beyond to quality arts and entertainment, programming, and more. In addition to the summary above, Cain Center for the Arts has also accepted the following awards: the Centralina Region of Excellence Award for Improving Quality of Life, Neighborhood C.A.R.E.'s Community Impact Award, Artfields' Exhibition Award, and Charlotte Business Journal's 40

Under 40 Award, which honored Executive Director Justin A. Dionne. We appreciate all the support that Cain Center has received from the Town of Cornelius. Thank you for believing in the power of the arts and for your commitment to making downtown Cornelius and the Lake Norman region thrive.