

Removing Barriers to Connect all Children in Summer Camp Program

FY2021 Strategic Partnership Grants

Asheville Community Theatre

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35 E. Walnut
Asheville, NC 28801

O: 828-254-1320

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Asheville, NC 28801

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Application Form

INSTRUCTIONS

As part of the FY2021 Strategic Partnership Grants program, Buncombe County requests proposals for community-based projects working toward outcomes in alignment with Strategic Plan focus areas.

Please refer to the Grant Guidelines published on the Strategic Partnership Grants website at buncombecounty.org/grants for complete information about the grant program, including: Purpose; Funding; Eligibility; Timeline; Grant writing workshop; Review process; Awards; and more.

Applications are due by 5:00 on February 14, 2020.

BASIC INFORMATION

BASIC INFORMATION – Before completing the application, please tell us a little about the request.

Project Name*

Removing Barriers to Connect all Children in Summer Camp Program

Strategy*

Recognizing that some projects will use more than one strategy, select the strategy that most closely applies to this project:

- Environmental Stewardship - High quality air, water, farmland and renewable energy for future generations
- Educated & Capable Community - A county where all people thrive and demonstrate resilience throughout their lives
- Vibrant Economy - A robust and sustainable economy that builds on homegrown industries/talent and provides economic mobility for all
- Resident Well-Being - A county where residents are safe, healthy, and engaged in their community

Educated & Capable Community

Funding Request*

How much funding is this project requesting for FY2021?

\$6,560.00

Grant Guidelines*

Have you read and understand the information presented in the FY2021 Grant Guidelines Strategic Partnership Grants?

Click here for the Grant Guidelines.

If no, please contact County staff to request assistance: Rachael Nygaard, (828) 250-6536 or rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org.

Yes

Nonprofit Status*

Upload proof of nonprofit status, such as IRS Determination Letter or documentation from the North Carolina Secretary of State. If this documentation is not available, briefly state the reason.

501c3 (1).pdf

Board of Directors*

Upload a current list of your organization's Board of Directors. If your organization does not have a board of directors, briefly state the reason.

19-20 Board Roster with affiliations (1).doc

APPLICATION

APPLICATION QUESTIONS – Responses to these questions will be scored by the grant committee. Each question is worth 10% of the final score.

Organization*

Tell us about your organization. What is your mission? Highlight two or three key facts and accomplishments that best define your organization.

The mission of Asheville Community Theatre is to provide entertainment, enrichment, and education through the practice and celebration of the theatre arts. Asheville Community Theatre (ACT) is a 73-year-old non-profit community theatre in the heart of downtown Asheville, NC. Formed in 1946 by community members, ACT is the oldest continuously operating theatre in Asheville and one of the oldest community theatres in the nation. In 2002, ACT became the permanent home of Tanglewood, a children's theatre program. Started in 1959, Tanglewood is a program that empowers children to be creative and collaborative, and inspires responsibility, hard work, and dedication to craft.

ACT has seen tremendous growth in the past decade with an 86% increase in ticket sales. ACT earns 85% of its income. In the 2018-2019 season, 7,218 children participated in education programs - a 54% increase

from two years ago when 4,700 kids participated. Our education programs are open to every child on a first-come, first-served basis without regard for ability to pay- and we build those scholarships into our annual budget. Our education programs are the core of what ACT does, and we know it is successful at creating children who actively listen, problem-solve creatively, and exhibit leadership skills. In our 2018 survey of parents of ACT participants 31.76% reported improvement in performance in school/grades, 11.9% reported improved attendance at school, and 27% showed an increased interest in attending college. In the same survey, 74% of parents reported their kids showed increased interest in other group activities (like sports and clubs) after participating in ACT programs, with 35% actually increasing their participation in sports and other physical activities. Over 56% of parents reported a stronger work ethic in their child after they participated in an ACT education program, and a staggering 91% reported greater self-confidence in their child.

Need for the Project*

What is the main issue this project is established to address? What data or qualitative factors/stories are available to show that need?

More than 300 children participate in summer camp at ACT each year. That number will grow in 2020 with our increased space at UNC-Asheville. Each year, the number of Spanish-speaking children in our program and requesting spots in our program grows, as does the number of children who come to us with disclosed diagnoses of autism, ADHD, anxiety and other behavioral concerns. In order to meet the needs of these children, we are seeking to hire a Spanish-speaking instructor and an instructor with a background in counseling in an education setting.

Kids cannot learn when their basic needs are not being met. Communication – the basic ability to understand and to be understood – is very much a basic need that must be met for success in any learning environment. When our staff cannot communicate with the children in our programs or with their families, it becomes not only an issue of discomfort for the child, but also a safety concern.

In December, 2019, ACT received a donation of \$10000 specifically earmarked for scholarships for minority students to participate in our camps and other educational programs. Hiring a Spanish-speaking instructor will allow us to use those scholarships to ensure Latinx children wishing to participate have no barrier to doing so.

Our summer camp teachers are trained educators and arts professionals. While they care deeply about the well-being of every child in our programs, they do not have mental health and counseling backgrounds, and are not always equipped to help children manage the internal emotional struggles they may face. Having a trained counselor at summer camp will create a safe place for those students and allow them to reach their full potential like every other child in our programs.

Project*

Explain the project and how it will work. Include the overall purpose and any models or evidence-based practices that will be included. What specific activities and milestones are included in the project plan?

Asheville Community Theatre (ACT) will hire two instructors for the Summer Camp 2020 2nd Session (July 13-24, 2020) and for the 2021 1st Session (Mid-June, 2021). One of these instructors will be Spanish-speaking and one will have a background in counseling in a childhood educational setting. These additions will allow our camps to better serve every child in Buncombe County who wants to participate.

This project is modeled on school and other educational settings where great response has been seen when these two specialties are added to the staff. Numerous studies have shown that employing Spanish-

speaking teachers in classrooms helps close the achievement gap for Latinx students. And having highly qualified counselors on staff reduces stress and anxiety levels and increases feelings of safety and security among students.

Milestones will include the following: recruiting educators with the two needed specialties; integrating them into camp planning and curriculum; marketing and outreach to the Latinx community to ensure their opportunity for enrollment prior to camps filling up; evaluation of all camp activities in English and Spanish for students, families, and instructors; Course design moving forward will take these experiences and evaluations into account.

People Served*

How many people will be served by this project? Describe the people served, including demographics such as geography, income, race & ethnicity, age, etc.

Each year, ACT's summer camps sell out very quickly, partially due to a lack of space for more classes. For ACT's summer camp sessions in 2020 and 2021, we have entered into an agreement with UNC-Asheville to provide additional space. With this agreement, ACT will be able to open up summer camp slots to 300 children.

ACT enrolls children in all of our education programs on a first-come, first-served basis without regard for ability to pay, and we will never turn away a student due to inability to pay.

ACT serves the entire community, and our education programs are open to all children on a first-come, first-served basis without regard for ability to pay. We know that having access to the arts is important for low-income children. A study produced by the NEA, and conducted by researchers from UCLA, LSU, and the University of New York, showed that low-income students with high arts participation are 5 times less likely to drop out of school than their peers with low arts participation. Americans for the Arts has published research showing that students who participate in arts programs are 3 times more likely to win an award for school attendance, and 4 times more likely to participate in a science or math fair. In 2015, The College Board published evidence that students who took four years of art classes in high school scored an average of 92 points higher on their SATs than students who took a half year or less. Despite this and other research proving the value of arts in education, arts programs are increasingly being cut from public schools. ACT provides a place for children to develop empathy and compassion through the arts, to connect with peers from across the region, and to interact with adults in positive ways.

Results*

What results do you hope to achieve with this project? Be specific about how much impact the project will have in line with Commissioner focus areas.

The biggest result ACT plans to see from this project are children who feel safe, accepted, and who are connecting with their peers. We anticipate an increase in Spanish-speaking children enrolling in our summer camp, and a decrease in children whose anxiety or other concerns prevent them from participating fully in camp activities.

ACT's programs empower children to be creative, collaborative, responsible, and hard working. One parent speaking about their child participating in a production at ACT said, "I watched him develop a work ethic I didn't know he was ready to wear at ten years old. I've never been more proud of him than the days I dropped him at the stage door and watched him bounce in with a smile every single time."

One young person who began participating at ACT at the age of 13 said, "ACT has prepared me for high school more than any class I could have taken. I developed discipline, time management, and, most importantly, I learned to get things done quickly and efficiently." Theatre can provide a unique way for youth to connect to the world around them, and can offer them a voice they previously lacked. As one student put it,

"On or off stage, I can walk into this space and know that I am welcomed. Everything that makes me who I am is respected."

ACT provides the most comprehensive youth arts education program in our region. This is, in part, why our programs remain in such high demand year after year. Our staff and volunteers work tirelessly to make sure our students are learning and growing with every class, in more than just theatre skills. As one parent put it, "Confidence, social, and happiness levels are at their highest while at ACT."

Another parent says, "ACT is one of Asheville's few resources for building a child's confidence and intellectual growth while having fun and accepting race/gender/religious differences. ACT is the best all around for our wonderful children to grow into strong and good community leaders."

Evaluation*

How will you know you have succeeded? Explain the project evaluation process, including specific measures that will be tracked.

At the end of each class or program, participants and their parents/guardians are surveyed to get feedback on what they learned, how they felt about the class, what skills they gained or improved, and more. These evaluations ask open-ended questions like "What did you learn?" to allow students and parents to give feedback that is meaningful to them. For student matinees, teachers are surveyed to get feedback on everything from the content of the shows to the ease of parking.

By using surveys after each show and/or class, we are able to incorporate feedback quickly for the next session. Also, once each year, we send a broader survey to all participants/parents. This is a more in-depth tool that takes our respondents more time to complete but gives us important feedback.

In addition to formal surveys, there is also a constant stream of informal feedback being gathered through interactions with students and parents. Our Education Program Director is accessible and always willing to speak with students or parents. Sometimes the best feedback we receive is in these more informal conversations.

Evaluations are used by our staff to improve class design and delivery and in show selection for student matinees. For example, when it was brought to our attention that schools were wanting to have more options for older students to attend, that was factored in to show selection by ACT and our matinee-producing partners like Bright Star Theatre.

Collaboration*

List any formal and/or supportive partners. Describe their roles in the project. How will they make it stronger?

Our Partners in education include Bright Star Children's Theatre, Big Brothers Big Sisters, CAYLA, and the University of North Carolina - Asheville. Our Education Program Sponsors giving financial support to the program for the current year are Arby's, Packs Tavern, and WNC Bridge Foundation. We also received a grant from an individual this year specifically earmarked to provide scholarship support for students of color to participate in programming. As stated above, we are partnering with UNC-Asheville for additional space for summer camp programming for 2020 and 2021. We host student matinees with school groups coming from Henderson, Buncombe, Haywood, Swain, Transylvania, Burke, McDowell, and Jackson Counties, as well as school groups from Durham, NC and Chatham, GA. After each program we also survey students, teachers, and chaperones on their experience.

Budget*

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

Explain how grant funds will be used, specifically what type of expenses will be covered by County funds. Describe other sources of revenue, including type of funding, source, restrictions and status.

ACT BC SP Grant Budget Form FINAL.xlsx

Funds requested in this application will be used for the following:

1. Hire one summer camp instructor with a youth counseling background (preferably in an education setting) (\$3,520 @ \$20/hr; 4 weeks at 8 hours per day for 5 days plus 2 planning days)
2. Hire one Spanish-speaking summer camp instructor (\$2,640 @ \$15/hr; 4 weeks at 8 hours per day for 5 days plus 2 planning days)
3. Market the summer camp program to Spanish-speaking families and throughout the school systems through counselors (\$400)

Other County Funding*

List all other Buncombe County funding that is provided to your organization. For each item, list the project being funded, amount of funding, source (grant, departmental contract, etc.) and whether funding is to be renewed for FY2021.

Although ACT has been fortunate to receive funds from Buncombe County in past years for scholarships for our education programs, we are currently not receiving any County funds.

Sustainability*

How will the project continue to succeed after the funding of the grant? Explain your plan for making this an ongoing effort.

Asheville Community Theatre (ACT) is a financially stable non-profit earning 85% of its annual income. ACT has an Endowment Fund at the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina that provides annual operating income, and we have a planned giving program in place which exists to grow that endowment.

Funding strategies for education programs include foundation proposals like this one, requests to individual donors, and business sponsorships. Through the generosity of funders (like Buncombe County) ACT has been able to meet the need for scholarship requests each year. While there may always be a need for scholarship funding, ACT remains dedicated to serving as many children as we can, regardless of their ability to pay.

Interest in education programs at ACT has grown steadily over the past decade and shows no signs of slowing down. While the number of children we were able to serve last year rose from 4,700 to 7,218, an additional 2,758 children still remained on waiting lists. The programs we deliver continue to be highly sought after. The only limitations on the sustainability of our programs are funding for those who cannot afford tuition and space to house additional children.

The first of these limitations is being addressed by our increased fundraising for scholarships, and the second by our agreement with UNC-Asheville for space and our current capital campaign to build a dedicated education complex and 150-seat second performance space. Once complete, this addition will not only allow us to serve more children, it will also increase our ability to raise earned income through space rentals, additional revenue-generating productions, and more. This will also help alleviate the need to raise scholarship funds through grant applications in the long-term.

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

OPTIONAL INFORMATION – This information will not impact grant scoring but will be helpful to the committee.

Partial Funding

If the project were to be offered a grant for partial funding, what factors would need to be considered?

This project is one ACT is committed to, because we see the value in our community theatre serving every member of the community to our best ability. Should funding not be available from Buncombe County this year, ACT will seek funding from other sources, although this may postpone implementation until 2021.

Resource Support

Beyond this grant request, how can Buncombe County support your organization with this project and in strengthening your work?

ACT is always looking for ways to strengthen our outreach to low-income communities and communities of color. It is important to us that every child have a chance to explore their creativity and build leadership skills. We would appreciate any connections the County and Commission can help us make in communities where our presence may not be as strong.

Other

Is there anything else that you want the committee to know?

AnnualReport201819_color2 (1).pdf

ACT appreciates your consideration of this request.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- 501c3 (1).pdf
- 19-20 Board Roster with affiliations (1).doc
- ACT BC SP Grant Budget Form FINAL.xlsx
- AnnualReport201819_color2 (1).pdf

Internal Revenue Service

Department of the Treasury

**P. O. Box 2508
Cincinnati, OH 45201**

Date: September 26, 2001

Asheville Community Theatre, Inc.
35 Walnut St.
Asheville, NC 28801

Person to Contact:

Cheryl Skaggs 31-04010
Customer Service Representative

Toll Free Telephone Number:

8:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. EST

877-829-5500

Fax Number:

513-263-3756

Federal Identification Number:

56-6002669

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter is in response to your request for a copy of your organization's determination letter. This letter will take the place of the copy you requested.

Our records indicate that a determination letter issued in July 1997, granted your organization exemption from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. That letter is still in effect.

Based on information subsequently submitted, we classified your organization as one that is not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because it is an organization described in section 509(a)(2).

This classification was based on the assumption that your organization's operations would continue as stated in the application. If your organization's sources of support, or its character, method of operations, or purposes have changed, please let us know so we can consider the effect of the change on the exempt status and foundation status of your organization.

Your organization is required to file Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, only if its gross receipts each year are normally more than \$25,000. If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of the organization's annual accounting period. The law imposes a penalty of \$20 a day, up to a maximum of \$10,000, when a return is filed late, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay.

All exempt organizations (unless specifically excluded) are liable for taxes under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (social security taxes) on remuneration of \$100 or more paid to each employee during a calendar year. Your organization is not liable for the tax imposed under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA).

Organizations that are not private foundations are not subject to the excise taxes under Chapter 42 of the Code. However, these organizations are not automatically exempt from other federal excise taxes.

Donors may deduct contributions to your organization as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to your organization or for its use are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Asheville Community Theatre, Inc.
56-6002669

Your organization is not required to file federal income tax returns unless it is subject to the tax on unrelated business income under section 511 of the Code. If your organization is subject to this tax, it must file an income tax return on the Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return. In this letter, we are not determining whether any of your organization's present or proposed activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in section 513 of the Code.


The law requires you to make your organization's annual return available for public inspection without charge for three years after the due date of the return. You are also required to make available for public inspection a copy of your organization's exemption application, any supporting documents and the exemption letter to any individual who requests such documents in person or in writing. You can charge only a reasonable fee for reproduction and actual postage costs for the copied materials. The law does not require you to provide copies of public inspection documents that are widely available, such as by posting them on the Internet (World Wide Web). You may be liable for a penalty of \$20 a day for each day you do not make these documents available for public inspection (up to a maximum of \$10,000 in the case of an annual return).

Because this letter could help resolve any questions about your organization's exempt status and foundation status, you should keep it with the organization's permanent records.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

This letter affirms your organization's exempt status.

Sincerely,



John E. Ricketts, Director, TE/GE
Customer Account Services

Asheville Community Theatre

2019-20 Board Roster with Affiliations

Steve Bennett

Treasurer
CPA - Retired

Barbara Blomberg

Casting Director – Retired

Murphy Funkhouser Capps

Partner, Kudzu Brands

LaNita Cloninger

Secretary
Realtor, Beverly Hanks

Rebecca Crandall

Lawyer, McGuire Wood & Bissette

Al Davis

Member at Large
Certified Financial Planner

Doug Hauschild

Vice President
Owner, Weaverville Eye Associates

McRae Hilliard

Past President
Realtor, Beverly Hanks

Elizabeth Huddleston

Clinical Psychologist, retired

Craig Justus

Lawyer, Van Winkle Law Firm

Rick Manheim

President
Retired educator

Honor Moor

Professional Fundraiser

Robin Oswald

Senior Producer – Bonesteel Films

Joe Scully

Owner – Chestnut, Corner Kitchen and Corner
Kitchen Catering

Sandra Smith

Certified Enneagram Consultant / Teacher

David Whilden

Senior Trust Officer – Boys Arnold

Strategic Partnership Grants

Proposed FY2021 Project Budget (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)

Organization Name:	Asheville Community Theatre
Project Name:	Removing Barriers to Connect all Children in Summer Camp Program
Grant Amount Requested:	\$6,560

FY2021 Proposed Project Revenue	Amount	Committed or Pending?
Proposed Buncombe County Strategic Partnerships Grant	\$ 6,560	Pending
List other sources: Session 1 (student fees and donated scholarship funds applied to program)	\$ 22,000	Pending based on past performance & scholarship fund requests from students
List other sources: Session 2 (student fees and donated scholarship funds applied to program)	\$ 36,000	Pending based on past performance & scholarship fund requests from students
List other sources: Advanced Camp (student fees & donated scholarship funds applied to program)	\$ 9,500	Pending based on past performance
List other sources: T-Shirt Sales	\$ 1,000	Pending based on past performance
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
Total	\$ 75,060	

FY2021 Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Grant	Other Funds	Total	Notes
Personnel		\$ 54,973	\$ 54,973	15% Ed. Director; Camp teachers, teaching assts. Payroll, Taxes, Fringe
Training			\$ -	
Travel			\$ -	
Supplies / Materials		\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	All summer camp supplies
Meetings (Food, Interpreting, Child Care, etc.)			\$ -	
Equipment / Furniture			\$ -	
Printing / Marketing	\$ 400	\$ 650	\$ 1,050	Grant funds (\$650) for outreach to Spanish-speaking families & school counselors
Licensing / Memberships / Dues / Subscriptions		\$ 1,745	\$ 1,745	5% annual cost allocated to Camp
Client Support			\$ -	
Contracts	\$ 6,160		\$ 6,160	1 teacher w/counseling background and 1 Spanish-speaking (4wks+2days)
Professional Services (Legal, Accounting, etc.)			\$ -	
Insurance and Bonds		\$ 625	\$ 625	5% annual cost allocated to Camp
Building Maintenance (Rent, Utilities, Repairs, etc.)		\$ 7,973	\$ 7,973	\$750 space rental; remainder is 5% annual bldg&maint. expenses allocated to Camp
List other costs: Scholarships (full & partial tuition as needed)		\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	ACT never turns a child away&increases this as needed to meet all schol. requests
List other costs: Designers & Stage Mngr. & Tech Director		\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	
List other costs: Royalties & Advance Camp Production Costs		\$ 650	\$ 650	
List other costs: Guest Speakers		\$ 200	\$ 200	
Total			\$ 87,726	

Overall Organization Budget	Amount	Notes
FY2019 Actual Year-End Revenue	\$ 983,439	\$20,219 raised to meet operating expenses through capital campaign donations
FY2019 Actual Year-End Expenses	\$ 983,439	
FY2020 Adopted Budget Amount	\$ 1,074,173	
FY2021 Proposed Budget Amount	\$ 1,127,882	

Asheville Community Theatre

Annual Report 2018-19



This year, Asheville Community Theatre was awarded the Certificate of Excellence Hall of Fame award from TripAdvisor (ACT is currently ranked #6 out of 166 Things to Do in Asheville!) and 1st Place in the "Best Local Theater" category in the Mountain Xpress.

FUN FACT: Only approximately 10% of businesses on TripAdvisor receive a Certificate of Excellence!



"Oh my gosh, this was honestly amazing, I came on a trip with my parents, they are from England and one thing they wanted to do was see a show! I am thoroughly glad we came. The show was fantastic all the way through, the performers were very professional and it did not seem like an amateur production at all. Honestly well done!"

EDUCATION IS ENORMOUS!

Summer Camp sold out in 7 hours this year! Our classes, camps, and matinees are hugely popular!



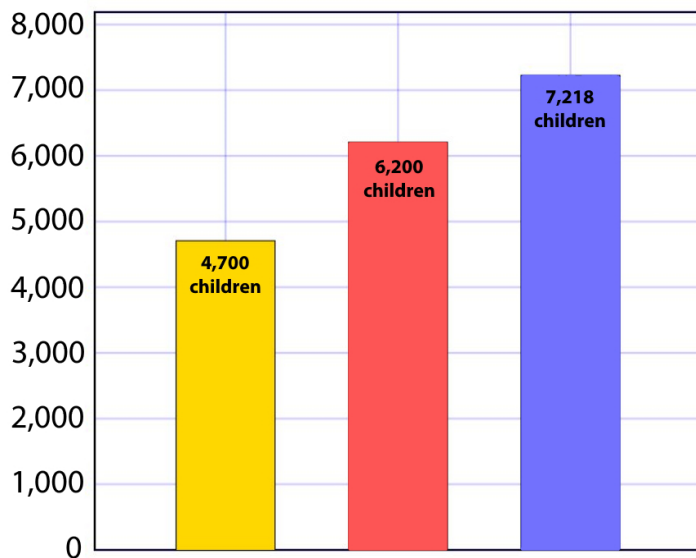
7,218

children participated in:

13 semester-long classes * 33 student matinees
2 summer camp sessions * 11 Saturdays at ACT

2,758

children remained on a waitlist



Growth in Education Participation Over the Last 3 Years

SPOTLIGHT ON:

OUR USHERS!

ACT has an usher corp of **225** people who worked **734** shifts for a total of **2,075** hours!

TALKBACKS!

We hosted **6** post-show talkbacks after Mainstage performances and our very first Coffee and Conversation, a pre-show discussion with the show's director! Thank you to Stephanie Hickling Beckman for going first!



STAGES AND PAGES



Avenue Q



Alice in Wonderland



Hands on a Hardbody

On our stages, we celebrate the power and importance of human connection. Through these stories, we watched strangers turn into friends and people decide to listen to each other. We opened our minds to infinite possibilities, we understood what folks are struggling with and through, and we experienced hope, grace, joy, grief, and love. Despite this complex and imperfect world, where we often feel lost and uncertain, we found that we are not alone.

We ask our casts and crews: "What would you tell others about ACT?"

"It is a wonderful place where happiness surrounds you." - *Alice in Wonderland* cast/crew member

"Be a part of ACT in whatever capacity you are able. Start from the ground up and learn EVERYTHING. Whether you have designs on a professional career or not, you will see all aspects of how a theater works in a professional capacity." - *Avenue Q* cast/crew member

221
people
participated in
producing
6
Mainstage
productions

FUN-RAISING!



In our 8th year of *Costume Drama*, we paid \$4,350 to local artists who create and produce this show!

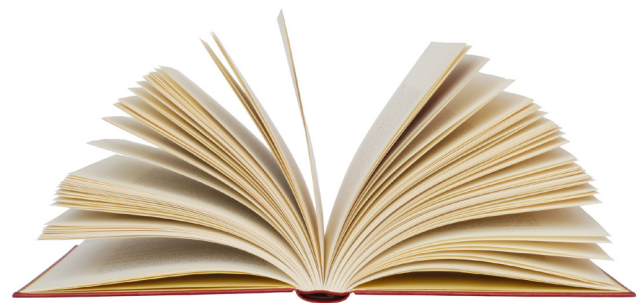


A Gala in Wonderland, our first gala in decades, netted \$80,000 to support operations and education!

DOWNSTAIRS IN 35below

57 participants produced **56** performances of **9** fully staged productions + **11** performances of *Listen to This!*

THE AUTUMN PLAYERS



18 performances of **6** staged readings produced by **110** volunteers for total audiences of **860** (with one more weekend of performances!)

Each month, **42** members read poetry at **14** different care facilities each month! Over the year, they touch the lives of **2,652** people with this program alone!

The Autumn Players presented plays to **800** children in Buncombe County Schools!

\$1,047,759

projected year end income
(14.9% contributed)