



ARTS & SCIENCE  
COUNCIL

## HISTORY

- Established in 1958, the Charlotte Arts Fund ran a consolidated fund drive for the arts and served as a clearinghouse for cultural events. During its first united arts fund campaign in 1959 the groups raised \$63,000, which supported eight member organizations.
- In 1962, the organization is renamed the United Arts Council and is composed of seven member organizations.
- In 1974, a Cultural *Action* Plan Committee composed of approximately 100 civic leaders recommended the agency be reorganized to meet the growing needs of the arts community. With the support of the city and county, a consultant developed a Cultural *Action* Plan, and a new agency, the current Arts & Science Council-Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Inc. (ASC), was created in June 1975.
- As a result of the plan, the number of organizations served by ASC increased from seven to 45. A Project Pool, consisting of a percentage of campaign funds, was established for one-time grants and new projects. Two new service programs, the Information House and Artist Depot, were created to assist and advise the member organizations.
- The Cultural *Action* Plan also recommended the development of five cultural facilities in the central uptown district. The recommendations included a multi-use arts complex, a Science Exploratorium, an Art Fair, visual artists' studios and galleries, an Afro-American Cultural and Service Center, and an uptown branch of the Mint Museum.
- By 1975, ASC continued to grow with a 25% increase in the Annual Fund Drive. The Council received a \$60,000 National Endowment for the Arts City Arts Grant and at that time was the only Council in the nation to make the match with public, tax-based funds. The Knight Foundation awarded \$75,000 to ASC, the largest private grant received to that date.
- In 1978, ASC initiated a major study with consulting firm C. W. Shaver and Company to develop a consortium to coordinate long-range planning and fiscal management with ASC and five member organizations.

- In 1979, the consortium received a \$500,000 award from the National Endowment for the Arts Challenge Grant. This achievement motivated corporate donors to increase their support for ASC during two subsequent fund drives.
- The ASC Board's Advocacy Committee was instrumental in the passage of a Mecklenburg County Art in Public Places resolution, adopted in November 1980. The voluntary resolution allocates one percent of construction budgets for county facilities to art. The City Council approved a similar resolution the following year, with a voluntary up-to-one percent budget provision for artwork.
- In 1982, ASC conducted its first million-dollar campaign. Contributions totaling \$1,022,000 placed Charlotte among the ten largest of the 51 united arts funds in the nation.
- By 1984, the Annual Fund Drive reached \$1,145,000 – a 12% increase over the previous year.
- In 1986, the Annual Fund Drive grew to \$1.55 million, an increase of 16%. ASC also launched First Night Charlotte in uptown to ring in the New Year. More than 25,000 people attended the inaugural event celebrating the arts.
- Also in 1986, ASC initiated its Emerging Artist Program, awarding \$6,000 to developing Mecklenburg professional artists.
- For the first time, the 1988 Annual Fund Drive received more contributions from individuals than corporations. The first Vanguard Awards program was held, and ASC was the only arts council in the state to receive an award from the Governor's Business Committee on the Arts and Humanities.
- In 1989, ASC conducted its first \$2 million fund drive with more than 26,000 individuals and corporations supporting the campaign.
- From 1989 through 1990, ASC worked very closely with the Performing Arts Center to assist in raising \$25 million dollars from the private sector and to secure a \$10 million dollar endowment for the cultural community. A highlight of that campaign included a \$1 million dollar challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Arts designated for arts education. The grant was the largest ever awarded by the NEA to a local arts council.
- Also in 1990, ASC received a second NEA grant matched by funds from the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Program funds were used for cultural stabilization and regional and collaborative programs.
- In 1991, Charlotte and ASC tackled the community's second cultural plan. The creation and fine-tuning of the Cultural *Action* Plan was an 18-month process involving the entire community.
- In April 1991, Charlotte City Council and the Mecklenburg County Commission officially adopted the Cultural *Action* Planning Committee's recommendations, which

designated ASC as the cultural leader for the community and mandated the restructuring of the Council's Board of Directors.

- The 1992 Annual Fund Drive grew to \$3 million, a 30% increase over the 1991 drive. Mecklenburg County Commissioners increased annual funding to ASC with \$700,000 in new cultural dollars.
- By the end of Fiscal Year 1992, 18 cultural institutions were receiving Basic Operating Grant support, and several more received project support. Direct support for individual artists through the Emerging Artist Grants Program was expanded to fund artists in a four-county area. With the expanded Emerging Artist Program, ASC took its first step toward formalizing regional service—another goal of the Cultural Action Plan.
- The 1993 Annual Fund Drive slightly exceeded its goal by raising \$3.2 million. The successful fund drive, combined with continued support from city, county, state, and federal governments increased the number of Affiliates receiving Basic Operating Grants from 18 to 22. Through four major grant programs, ASC distributed more than \$6 million.
- To ensure the long-term financial health of Affiliates, the ASC Board of Directors voted in the spring 1993 to launch a major cultural endowment campaign to raise \$20-\$30 million.
- 1994 marked the third year of implementation of the Cultural *Action Plan*. ASC established Arts Education as its highest priority for the next three years. ASC was successful in securing over \$600,000 to initiate *A National Model: A Comprehensive Program of Arts Education* in partnership with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Also in 1993-94, the Council launched The Endowment for the Arts & Sciences campaign, recruiting a stellar leadership team.
- In Fiscal Year 1995, with the assistance of its Affiliates, ASC raised \$26.16 million for The Endowment for the Arts & Sciences and \$3.89 million in the Annual Fund Drive. This success resulted in over \$6.4 million in grants to cultural institutions, artists, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools during Fiscal Year 1995.
- ASC and Spirit Square for two consecutive years co-sponsored the Arts Alive Teacher Training Institute. The Council also initiated the Creativity Exchange, a training program for artists, sponsored by Young Audiences. The Premier Celebration of Arts Education in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg public schools was presented in the late spring of 1995.
- The 1996 Annual Fund Drive exceeded the \$4 million mark for the first time in ASC's history, representing a 12% increase over the previous year.
- Also in 1996, ASC received the Governor's Business Award in the Arts and Humanities for leadership in forging partnerships with the business community during the 1995 Endowment for the Arts & Sciences campaign.

- ASC formally approved “An Arts Education Plan for Charlotte Mecklenburg” in 1996, which was a comprehensive, curriculum-based program of arts and cultural education for all ages. In early 1996, the Council hired The Bay Group to undertake the third Cultural *Action Plan*.
- In 1997, the planning process for the third Cultural *Action Plan* was launched with a primary focus on public participation. Based on the recommendations of the Arts Education Plan, the Cultural Education Collaborative was incorporated as a new non-profit organization and began implementation of a program to coordinate most in-school and community-based arts and science education programs.
- ASC achieved a new milestone with its 1997 campaign topping the \$5 million mark at \$5,203,268. This success, however, was adversely impacted by the loss of an allocation from the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners, which resulted in a net loss of \$1.3 million in support for the cultural system.
- In 1997, ASC lost its County funding due to the controversial play “Angels in America,” which was performed by Charlotte Repertory Theatre, an ASC-funded Affiliate. Despite a loss in funding ASC worked to sustain its major operating support to Affiliate organizations in fiscal year 1998, awarding a total of \$8.75 million in grants.
- The 1998 Annual Fund Drive was a phenomenal success, breaking records among united arts funds across the nation. A team of 800 volunteers raised \$6.6 million, representing a 14% increase over the 1998 goal of \$5.7 million.
- Also published in 1998 was the third Cultural *Action Plan* that provided a series of recommendations to expand and enhance Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s cultural system to be implemented throughout the coming years. The plan called for ASC to expand the mission of the agency to support history and heritage organizations in Mecklenburg County.
- ASC, with assistance from the Economics Department at UNC Charlotte, measured the economic impact of the arts in Charlotte. The 1998 study found that collectively cultural groups contribute \$55 million to the local economy.
- In 1999, there were 56 cultural organizations affiliated with ASC. In addition to ticket-based programming such as plays, concerts, and exhibits, many of these groups provided free programs enjoyed by the entire community as well as educational outreach programs in partnership with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System.
- With the success of the 1999 Annual Fund Drive that raised more than \$8.1 million, ASC was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> nationally in both per capita giving and in workplace giving among local united arts agency fund drives.

- In June 1999, the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners restored and increased funding to \$3 million to the Arts & Science Council. In addition, the City of Charlotte continued its steadfast support by raising its allocation to \$2.6 million.
- In 2000, ASC provided support to an array of arts, science, history and heritage organizations and creative individuals. More than \$13 million in operating support and project grants were awarded to 28 funded Affiliates and three project partners. Project partners include the Cultural Education Collaborative, Charlotte Center City Partners and Charlotte Convention & Visitors Bureau.
- ASC launched the Community Cultural Connections program in the spring of 2000 to support neighborhood-based cultural groups and creative projects reaching diverse audiences, awarding 49 grants in the program's first year.
- The 2000 Annual Fund Drive raised a record \$9.2 million with the support of 35,000 donors and more than 800 volunteers. As a result of Charlotte's generosity, the Council's Annual Fund Drive became the second largest united arts fund drives in the United States.
- In the fall of 2000, ASC held its first annual Leadership Lecture to honor leadership in the cultural community with a keynote speaker regarded in the field of art, science or history. ASC honored the leadership of its 28 funded Affiliates and featured Dewitt Jones, a nationally recognized photographer who worked for National Geographic.
- 2001 was another stellar year of growth for the cultural community due to incredible leadership from ASC Board members and the Campaign Cabinet. Hundreds of volunteers collectively raised \$10,023,599 during the 2001 Annual Fund Drive – making Charlotte home to the largest united arts fund in the US. The Annual Fund Drive was also ranked 1<sup>st</sup> nationally in per capita and workplace giving. The 2001 fund drive results represented over 100% growth in private sector giving to ASC since 1996.
- ASC's Public Art Program began work on a Public Art Master Plan to provide a future course of action for an expanded program to address diverse civic identities in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The program brings public art to neighborhoods and serves as a catalyst and collaborator in projected areas of urban growth. Several national calls were issued to identify artists for major artworks ranging from a fire and police training facility to trolley cars traveling through public facilities to a new children's learning center – the latter a joint project of the Public Library, Children's Theatre and private citizens.
- ASC released its 2<sup>nd</sup> economic impact study, conducted by UNC Charlotte, of the cultural community's contribution. The study revealed that the cultural community generated an economic impact of \$95 million on the local economy, employed more than 1,700 people, provided volunteer opportunities to over 8,600 residents and enriched more than 2.9 million lives each year.
- In November 2001, ASC held its second Annual Leadership Lecture, which honored Affiliate board chairs. The featured lecturer was oceanographer Robert Ballard,

Ph.D., a National Geographic Explorer in Residence who discovered the wreckage of the RMS *Titanic* in 1985.

- ASC also initiated one of the field's most comprehensive audience development and marketing studies across all disciplines. ASC and its Affiliates received data to help market to new audiences and strengthen fund raising strategies and board development. A key finding of the study revealed that one of every five households in Charlotte-Mecklenburg was a cultural consumer.
- As a result of its record fund raising in 2001, ASC awarded over \$14 million in grants to arts, science and history organizations across Mecklenburg County in fiscal year 2002. With these awards, ASC grants to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community increased 81% since 1997.
- On behalf of the cultural community, ASC established the McColl Award in 2002 to acknowledge the numerous contributions made by Jane and Hugh McColl. The award is a \$25,000 grant to support the creation of a new work by an Affiliate or collaboration among several Affiliates.
- The ASC Board of Directors set a conservative goal of \$10 million for the 2002 ASC Annual Fund Drive. Once again, ASC's volunteers stepped up to the challenge and raised a record setting \$10,050,507 – for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, the largest united arts fund in the US.
- The 2002 campaign saw an increase in volunteers – more than 1,300 volunteers worked tirelessly to increase the number of donors by 12% to over 38,000.
- In April 2002, ASC adopted the new Public Art Master Plan following 18 months of community-based planning.
- In May 2002, Governor Michael Easley notified ASC it had won a National Governors Association (NGA) Award in the category of Arts Support. The award was presented during the opening plenary session of the NGA Annual Meeting in Boise, Idaho in July, 2002.
- In June 2002, ASC President & CEO Harriet Sanford received the top community arts honor – the Selina Roberts Ottum Award – at the Americans for the Arts national convention in Nashville. Sanford was the third Charlotte arts leader to win the award. Former Spirit Square president Joseph Golden and former ASC head Michael Marsicano are also recipients.
- In October 2002, ASC held its third annual Leadership Lecture, which honored past ASC Board Chairs. The featured lecturer was Dr. Jane Goodall, CBE, noted scientist, humanitarian and UN Messenger of Peace. The program also included the presentation of the inaugural McColl Award to the Carolina Raptor Center.
- In December 2002, ASC established the Foundation for the Arts & Sciences at the Foundation For The Carolinas to advance planned giving opportunities for arts, science and history.

- The ASC Board of Directors set a goal of \$10.1 million for the 2003 Annual Fund Drive. Once again, ASC's volunteers stepped up to the challenge and raised a record setting \$10,116,796 – for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, the largest united arts fund in the US.
- ASC awarded over \$13.8 million in grants to arts, science and history organizations across Mecklenburg County in fiscal year 2003.
- Throughout 2002-03, ASC continued to address the facility needs of local cultural institutions. A new partnership of ASC, the Foundation For The Carolinas and Charlotte Center City Partners joined forces to address this critical issue and commissioned a Cultural Facilities Master Plan. This planning effort, chaired by ASC Board member Dorlisa Flur and longtime cultural advocate Mark Bernstein, involved hundreds of citizens as Blue Ribbon Committee members, interviewees, and town meeting attendees. The plan established a vision for cultural facility development across Mecklenburg County through 2025.
- By the end of fiscal year 2003, the Community Cultural Connections Grants program had extended opportunities for exposure to arts, science and history across Mecklenburg County with more than \$1.2 million in grants distributed to support 184 grantees to develop neighborhood and community cultural programs.
- In October 2003, ASC held its fourth annual Leadership Lecture, which honored outstanding Affiliate volunteers. The featured lecturer was Dr. Maya Angelou, poet, author, educator, producer, director, civil rights activist, playwright, and historian. The program also included the presentation of the McColl Award to Moving Poets Theater of Dance.
- With the adoption of new Public Art Ordinances by Mecklenburg County (December 2002) and the City of Charlotte (May 2003) that provide a new funding mechanism for public art, several national calls to artists were issued to identify artists for artworks at the new Charlotte Arena, parks, libraries, airport, CPCC-West and a water treatment facility.
- The ASC Board of Directors set a goal of \$10.3 million for the 2004 Annual Fund Drive. ASC's volunteers raised a record setting \$10,379,792.
- ASC awarded over \$12.4 million in grants to arts, science and history organizations across Mecklenburg County in 2003-04.
- In January 2004, ASC adopted the final report of the Cultural Facilities Master Plan Blue Ribbon Committee. The Plan provided a vision for cultural facility development across Mecklenburg County through 2025. In May, ASC, in partnership with the Foundation For The Carolinas, Charlotte Center City Partners and the Knight Foundation, proposed a public/private implementation strategy to address projects identified as Priority I during the planning process.
- Throughout 2003-04, ASC worked with volunteer teams to develop cultural action plans for the incorporated municipalities in Mecklenburg County. The North Mecklenburg Cultural *Action* Plan (June 2004) is a partnership with the towns of Cornelius, Davidson and Huntersville. The first phase of the planning effort for the

Matthews Cultural *Action* Plan began in February 2004. ASC hoped to complete plans for the six towns by June 2005. These plans address the cultural needs of the citizens of these rapidly growing communities.

- In October 2004, ASC held its fifth annual Leadership Lecture, which honored outstanding Affiliate volunteers. The featured lecturer was Ken Burns, documentary filmmaker, author, historian and storyteller. The program included presentation of the McColl Award to the Charlotte Symphony.
- The ASC Board of Directors set a goal of \$10.5 million for the 2005 Annual Fund Drive. ASC's volunteers raised a record setting \$10.95 million.
- ASC awarded over \$12.4 million in grants to arts, science and history organizations across Mecklenburg County in 2004-05.
- The North Mecklenburg Cultural *Action* Plan, a partnership with the towns of Cornelius, Davidson and Huntersville, was adopted by ASC and each Town in October 2004 and an implementation plan was adopted in March 2005. The Matthews Cultural *Action* Plan was adopted by ASC and the Town in March 2005 and implementation began in April 2005. Cultural Planning efforts in Mint Hill and Pineville began in January 2005, with completion anticipated by fall 2005.
- Throughout 2004-05, ASC continued efforts to identify a funding strategy for the proposed public/private implementation plan that addressed projects identified as Priority I during the planning process. This work included participating in the Mayor's Task Force on Cultural Facilities and subsequent reviews of the proposed projects. In June 2005, the City Council adopted a resolution recognizing the work of ASC, the need for a funding strategy to move forward and a pledge to identify a funding plan by August 1, 2005.
- In October 2005, ASC held its sixth annual Leadership Lecture, which honored outstanding educators from area schools. The featured lecturer was Rita Moreno, award winning actress, dancer and singer. The program also included the presentation of the McColl Award to the Carolina Voices.
- The ASC Board of Directors set a goal of \$11.1 million for the 2006 Annual Fund Drive. ASC's volunteers raised a record setting \$11.42 million.
- ASC awarded over \$12.9 million in grants to arts, science and history organizations across Mecklenburg County in 2005-06.
- The Mint Hill Cultural *Action* Plan was adopted by ASC and the Town in January 2006 and implementation began in March 2006. The Pineville Cultural *Action* Plan was adopted by ASC and the Town in February 2006 and implementation began in March 2006.
- In May 2006, ASC's first Cultural Leadership Training (CLT) class graduated 29 volunteers following a nine-month program on boardsmanship for cultural organizations. Each graduate was placed as either a board member or an apprentice with a local arts, science or history organization.



- Throughout 2005-06, ASC continued efforts to secure approval for a funding source for the proposed a public/private implementation plan that addressed projects identified as Priority I during the planning process. A bill authorizing an increase in the rental car tax was introduced in the NC General Assembly to support these capital projects. The General Assembly approved the bill in July 2006.
- In October 2006, ASC held a gala celebration to kick-off the Campaign for Cultural Facilities. Co-chaired by Kenneth D. Lewis, James E. Rogers and G. Kennedy Thompson, the \$83 million campaign will raise endowment funds for the Afro-American Cultural Center, Bechtler Art Museum, Discovery Place, Knight Theater, and Mint Museum; endowment and operating funds for the Charlotte Symphony; and complete the fund raising for a new rehearsal and education facility for the North Carolina Dance Theatre. The evening featured performances by numerous area performing artists. The program also included the presentation of the McColl Award to The Light Factory.
- In the fall of 2006, ASC launched a new branding effort, including a new logo. This comprehensive marketing and branding effort also included the February 2007 launch of [www.charlottecultureguide.com](http://www.charlottecultureguide.com), a searchable, online listing of cultural events across Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
- In January 2007, ASC established the Stanford Financial Excellence in Culture Award, sponsored by Stanford Financial Group, to reward cultural organizations for exemplary financial management within their organizations. The annual Award provides unrestricted grants of \$30,000 to an ASC Affiliate organization and \$15,000 to an ASC Associate organization that show sound fiscal management of their finances. The first recipients were Children's Theatre and Davidson Community Players.
- The ASC Board of Directors set a goal of \$11.2 million for the 2007 Annual Fund Drive. ASC's volunteers raised a record setting \$11.5 million.
- ASC awarded over \$13 million in grants to arts, science and history organizations across Mecklenburg County in 2006-07. Additionally, ASC invested over \$500,000 in new marketing and audience development programs and capacity building efforts.
- In May 2007, ASC's Cultural Leadership Training (CLT) class graduated 32 volunteers following a nine-month program on boardsmanship for cultural organizations. Each graduate has been placed as either a board member or an apprentice with a local arts, science or history organization.
- The headline of 2008 was developing ASC's Strategic Plan, the organizational roadmap for 2008-2013. The plan, begun in 2007, is based on input from a broad range of stakeholders including cultural organizations, creative artists, donors and community leaders. ASC's vision - shaping a vibrant cultural life for all – set the tone for the plan. The key priorities of the plan are to broaden community engagement and build long-term sustainability. To achieve these goals, the plan deepens ASC's mission to build appreciation, participation and support for the arts, sciences, history

and heritage throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg by adding eight strategic objectives like advancing excellence in all creative endeavors.

- ASC's Board of Directors set a goal of \$11.2 million for the Annual Fund Drive. In a very difficult economic environment, ASC's volunteers raised \$11.4 million.
- Following a nine-month curriculum on boardmanship for cultural organizations, 31 volunteers graduated from ASC's third Cultural Leadership Training (CLT) class in May 2008. For the first time, a past CLT graduate became a Board Chair with a cultural partner. Each 2008 graduate was placed as either a board member or apprentice with a local arts, science, history or heritage organization.
- CharlotteCultureGuide.com continues to grow. For July 2008, the site boasted 27,601 local unique users and CulturePicks, ASC's weekly e-mail highlighting arts and cultural events, had 5,200 subscribers. The growth was primarily driven by an online advertising plan and a Google Adwords grant. The site was awarded a BOB (Best of the Best) Award by Charlotte Magazine as the best guide for local events and, anecdotally, has become a major ticket sales source for cultural partners.
- ASC awarded nearly \$14.5 million to support Charlotte-Mecklenburg's cultural community for 2007-2008. \$13.9 million was invested in direct funding to support arts, science, history and heritage and public art projects. Over \$548,000 was invested to support both skill and capacity building for cultural institutions and creative individuals as well as audience development. Examples of some of the eight workshops we hosted included: Understanding and Using Research for More Effective Marketing & Audience Development and Marketing Strategies for Artists.
- In April 2008, ASC presented the second Stanford Financial Excellence in Culture Award, sponsored by Stanford Financial Group, to reward cultural organizations for exemplary financial management within their organizations. The annual Award provides unrestricted grants an ASC operating support recipients that show sound fiscal management of their finances and a work by a local artist. 2008 recipients were Festival in the Park, Wing Haven Gardens and Bird Sanctuary and Carolina Raptor Center.
- In November 2007, ASC held its annual Celebration of Creativity to recognize the impact of local artists, scientists and historians to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. The program included the presentation of the McColl Award to Children's Theatre of Charlotte and the announcement of 2 new programs to recognize and support creative individuals – ASC Honors and Creative Renewal Fellowships.
- By June 2008, the Campaign for Cultural Facilities reached \$63 million in contributions against an \$83 million goal. All the projects on South Tryon continued on time and were on or under budget.
- ASC's Board of Directors set a goal of \$11.4 million for the 2009 Annual Fund Drive. In a very difficult economic environment, ASC's volunteers raised \$7.1 million.

- Following a nine-month curriculum on boardmanship for cultural organizations, 34 volunteers graduated from ASC's third Cultural Leadership Training (CLT) class in May 2009. Each 2009 graduate was placed as either a board member or apprentice with a local arts, science, history or heritage organization.
- CharlotteCultureGuide.com continues to grow. For 2008-09, the site boasted 258,504 unique users and CulturePicks, ASC's weekly e-mail highlighting arts and cultural events, had over 9,000 subscribers.
- ASC invested over \$15.4 million to support Charlotte-Mecklenburg's cultural community for 2008-2009. \$14.7 million was awarded in direct grant funding to support arts, science, history and heritage and public art projects. Over \$685,000 was invested to support both skill and capacity building for cultural institutions and creative individuals as well as audience development. New this year was the successful launch of the Artists as an Entrepreneur Institute, a 3-day training in business skills for working artists.
- In October 2008, ASC celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the annual Celebration of Creativity to recognize the impact of local artists, scientists and historians to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. The program included the presentation of the first ASC Honors recognizing lifetime achievement in the arts, sciences or history. The 2009 honorees were Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux & Patricia McBride, Herb Jackson, Dr. Francis Robicsek, Steve Crump and Arthur Smith.
- The Campaign for Cultural Facilities reached \$63 million in contributions against an \$83 million goal. All the projects on South Tryon continued on time and were on or under budget.