



Oklahoma Arts Council

FY2024 Impact Report



Samyia Portillo from Lawton with the Comanche Youth Dancers at the 2023 Oklahoma Arts Conference

Foreword

Amber Sharples, Executive Director

For the Oklahoma Arts Council, fiscal year 2024 began with a fevered pitch of activity, ignited by state leaders' approval of \$10 million in state American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the arts sector. Having faced the depths of the pandemic, the sector had endured months of whirlwind news about transformative relief funding that seemed promising one moment, ominous the next. As the spring 2024 legislative session ended and the \$10 million in ARPA funds for the arts became a sudden reality, our team hit the ground running, swiftly putting into motion a plan for launching a new grant program to administer these historic funds. The help that hundreds of organizations had patiently awaited was finally becoming a reality. Within a few short months, we would devise the structure and terms of a new grant program, adopt a new system for managing the grants, delight in a newfound spirit of collaboration with our grant partners Allied Arts OKC and Arts Alliance Tulsa, and exhaustively review more than 200 submissions by organizations requesting funding. In all, we were able to award 182 grants to Oklahoma organizations. Our efforts to distribute these grant dollars is ongoing.



Fiscal year 2024 will forever be defined by the landmark investment that was ARPA. Yet, while our staff spent a significant part of the year on this historic effort, there were many other achievements. As demonstrated in this report, the Oklahoma Arts Council boosted funding for arts education benefiting school children and for arts learning programs benefiting the health and well-being of older adults. We laid groundwork for building up Route 66 communities ahead of the highway's centennial. Our workforce development continued through the Oklahoma Arts Conference and Leadership Arts programs. And, we strengthened our service to Oklahoma's Native communities and to the state's military communities.

Finally, while we celebrate a year's worth of accomplishments, we also reflect on the life of Betty Price, former longtime Oklahoma Arts Council executive director who passed away in October 2023. Her decades of service created a foundation on which we continue to build.

About the Oklahoma Arts Council ---

History

Established in 1965 by Governor Henry Bellmon and the Oklahoma State Legislature, the Oklahoma Arts Council was created as part of a national movement to bring the arts to communities across America. For more than half a century, the Oklahoma Arts Council has carried out its mission through various innovative programs created to meet the evolving needs of Oklahomans. Reflected in this impact report are programs and activities through which accomplishments of the agency were achieved in its most recent fiscal year.

How We Make an Impact

Oklahoma Arts Council programs and activities are designed around one or more functions of the agency. This report highlights our work under the following functions:



Supporting

Supporting Oklahoma's thriving arts sector through grants

Oklahoma Arts Council grant funding makes arts programs possible in communities and schools across the state. A rigorous panel review process using national industry standards ensures funded programs meet agency guidelines and are accountable to taxpayers. In FY24, we invested:

474 grants in
289 schools and organizations
across **110** Oklahoma communities

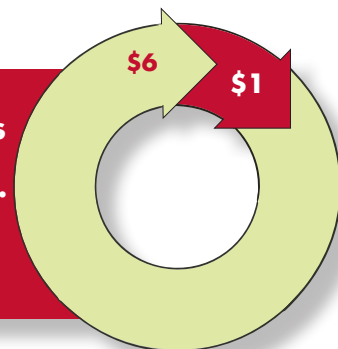
Return on Investment

The Oklahoma Arts Council leads in the support and development of a sector that produces excellent return-on-investment. According to a report released in 2017, Oklahoma Arts Council grantees and their audiences:

- Had a \$241 million impact*
- Generated \$22.9 million in state and local tax revenues*
- Supported more than 8,100 full-time equivalent jobs*

\$1 in Oklahoma Arts Council funding helps generate \$6 in state and local tax revenue.

* From *The Economic Impact of the Oklahoma Arts Council's Grantees and Their Audiences*





A record crowd squeezed into the Capitol rotunda in April to celebrate state leaders' transformative investment of \$10 million in federal pandemic relief funds to rebuild the arts sector. Nearly 200 organizations awarded funding by the Oklahoma Arts Council and its partners on the grant, Allied Arts OKC and Arts Alliance Tulsa, sent personnel to express their thanks and help demonstrate the significant reach of this investment.



Deepening our impact on the state's future workforce, the agency expanded its arts education grants in FY24, offering **increased financial support** for in-school and out-of-school programs with hands-on arts education led by qualified teaching artists.



Our Oklahoma Creative Aging Initiative received a major boost through a \$250,000 grant award from the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET). Renewable for a total of up to three years, the funding is an endorsement of the power of the arts to make **a real difference in the health and well-being** of older Oklahomans.

Photo courtesy of OKC Ballet

Developing

Developing robust rural and community infrastructure through programs

The Oklahoma Arts Council is the backbone organization for creative infrastructure development. The agency's programs generate and equip leadership, provide expertise and technical assistance to the field, and broker valuable resources and relationships for the sector.



In FY24, we convened more than 400 people working in our state's arts sector for the **Oklahoma Arts Conference** in Lawton. Three days of professional development sessions, networking, and more showcased new, promising possibilities for the arts to put Oklahoma on a path toward a more prosperous future.



The day-long **Oklahoma Arts and the Military Summit** was presented by the agency in FY24. The summit featured award-winning author and Marine veteran Dewaine Farria and other guest speakers. It also featured group discussions and a creative writing workshop. Our vision is to nurture cross-sector collaborative programs serving Oklahomans across the military spectrum.



Members of **Leadership Arts XII** graduated in FY24. A special ceremony at the Oklahoma Arts Conference recognized the new alumni. Program graduates, who represent various professional backgrounds and sectors, are better equipped to lead their communities using the knowledge of how the arts robust affect the economy, education, and quality of life.



With the centennial of America's "Mother Road" approaching in 2026, the Oklahoma Arts Council partnered with Oklahoma Main Street Center and more than a dozen other statewide entities to launch the **Kickstart 66 Tour**, bringing resources to Route 66 communities.



As part of the agency's ongoing focus on engaging and serving citizens of tribal nations, a **Native American Artist Forum** brought together Native artists from across the state in Lawton to share about available resources to support their work and creative practice.

Educating

Educating Oklahomans of all ages and abilities to build a creative workforce

Through programs of the Oklahoma Arts Council, resources are made available to meet the educational needs of individuals of all ages and abilities. Research confirms the strong connection between arts education and improved academic outcomes in schools. Studies also show the benefits of community arts learning programs in the health and well-being of adults.

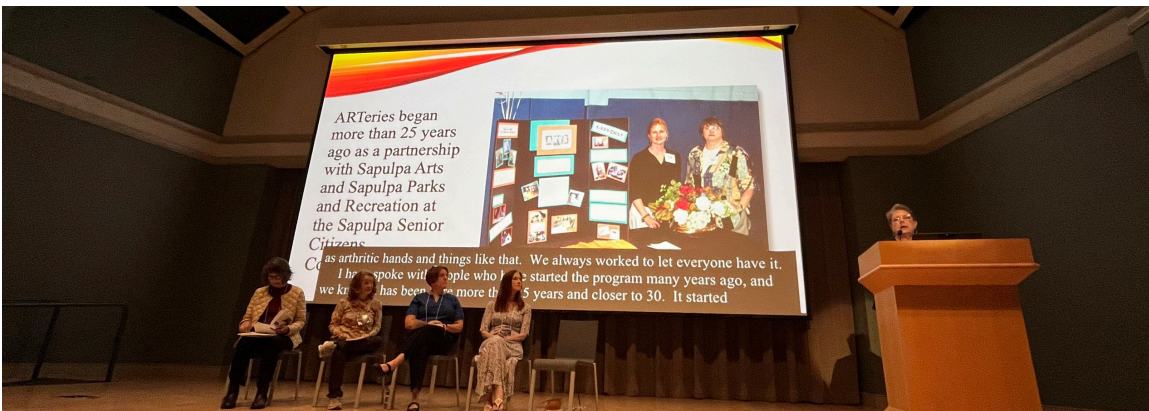


From FY22 to FY24, our investment of funding in **alternative education grew 550%** after we introduced new grant programs that leverage the arts' unique ability to positively shape outcomes for this specific group of students. The grant programs, initially made possible by federal ARP-ESSER funds to address learning loss and disruptions caused by the pandemic, are an agency priority for which we seek sustained support.



In FY24, we launched Capitol Art Field Trip Grants, reimbursing schools statewide for travel to bring students to the Capitol for once-in-a-lifetime experiences in Oklahoma history, art, and government. The program's first year saw **461 students and 111 teachers** receive this incredible opportunity.

Through the support of the Oklahoma Arts Council, **Oklahoma State Poet Laureate Jay Snider** led a workshop for students at Northwest Classen High School in Oklahoma City. Citing a student who had recently lost a parent, the teacher said the workshop was the first time the student had spoken or written about the loss.



Looking to expand capacity across the state for arts programs that improve the health and well-being of older adults, the Oklahoma Arts Council presented the **Oklahoma Creative Aging Exchange II** in the spring in Tulsa. The program equipped teaching artists, arts organizations, and social service organizations with essential tools for offering classes and workshops for this growing segment of our population.

Preserving

Preserving the history and heritage of the people of our state

The Oklahoma Arts Council is a steward of the history and cultural heritage of the people of Oklahoma. The agency manages the collections of artwork at the Oklahoma State Capitol, administers the state's public art program, and commemorates Oklahomans who have influenced and shaped our state.



An overflow crowd gathered in the fourth-floor rotunda of the Oklahoma State Capitol in January to celebrate the efforts of 13 individuals and four organizations honored at the 45th Oklahoma **Governor's Arts Awards**. In his remarks, Governor Stitt praised the honorees for helping create communities where people want to live, saying, "Top-ten states have several things in common, and one of those things is having a dynamic arts scene."



Works of art honoring **Hannah Atkins and Clara Luper**—two consequential figures in Oklahoma Black history—were dedicated at the Oklahoma State Capitol in February, with members from each family in attendance. The busts are now on display in their permanent locations on the Capitol’s first floor.



In April, the agency held a dedication for the **Medal of Honor Plaque** in the Hall of Heroes at the Capitol. The only one of its kind nationwide, the plaque honors the 36 Oklahomans who have earned the medal, bestowed for uncommon bravery, courage, sacrifice, and integrity. Two of the three living Oklahoma recipients were in attendance along with Congressman Tom Cole, Congresswoman Stephanie Bice, and other state leaders.



Former longtime executive director of the Oklahoma Arts Council, Betty Price passed away in October 2023. Over her nearly 30-year career, Price laid a foundation for **passionate public service in the arts** and was the force behind the commissioning of countless Capitol artworks. Her legacy lives on with the agency today.



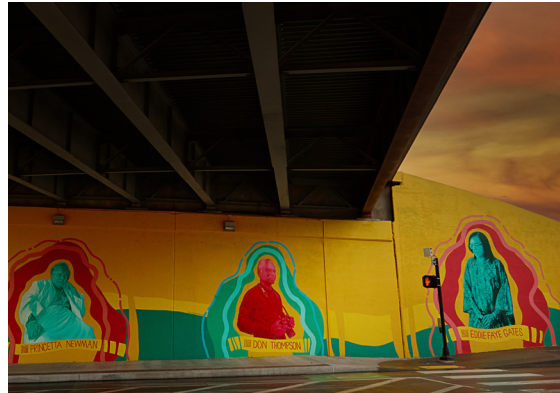
The Oklahoma Arts Council celebrated **Indigenous Peoples' Day at the Capitol** in FY24. The gathering commemorated new Capitol artworks and featured remarks by premier Native artists who created them.



Our planning and work to thoughtfully reinstall the artwork at the Capitol—years in the making—was recognized with an **Outstanding Special Project** award from the Oklahoma Museums Association.



The “Queen of Rockabilly,” Wanda Jackson, took center stage for the dedication of her **Capitol Art Collection portrait** in FY24. In 2018, Jackson was designated as the 13th Oklahoma Cultural Treasure. An inductee of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Jackson is a pioneering figure of the popular music genre who has influenced generations of women artists and other musicians.

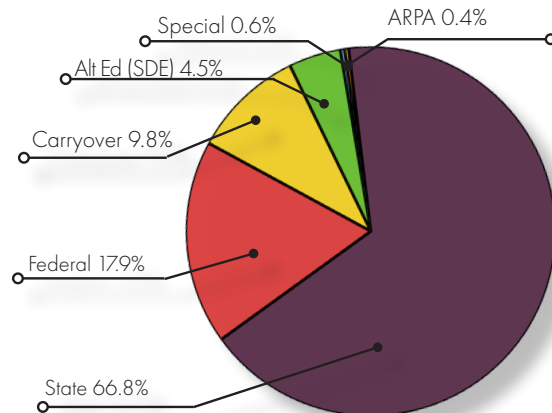


The **Pathway to Hope Public Art Trail** began taking shape along Interstate 244 in Tulsa’s Greenwood District in early 2024. Commissioned through the Oklahoma Art in Public Places program in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, the trail will feature six dynamic, large-scale artworks in various mediums installed on underpasses that are important points of connection between north Tulsa and the surrounding areas, including Black Wall Street near downtown. Featured themes are creativity, resilience, vision, justice, hope, and remembrance.

Oklahoma Arts Council FY24 Grants and Programs

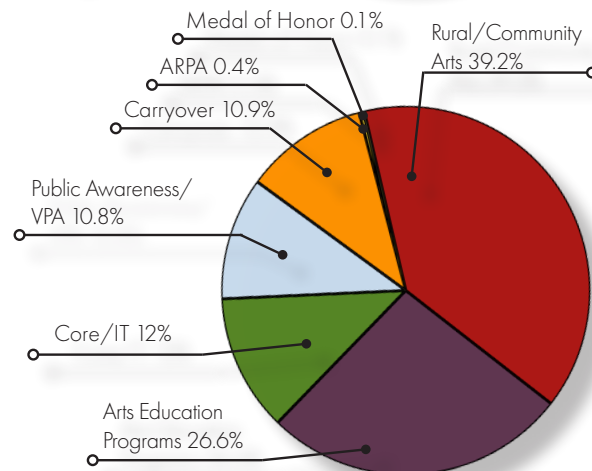
FY24 Funding Sources

State Appropriations	\$3,730,030
Federal - NEA	997,100
FY23 Carryover	548,853
Arts in Alternative Education (SDE)	254,001
ARPA Grant Administration	20,614
Special Initiatives (Revolving)	34,491
Total	\$5,585,089



FY24 Expenditures by Program

Rural/Community Arts	\$2,186,575
Arts Education Programs	1,493,133
Core Operations/IT	671,235
Public Awareness/Visual & Public Art	601,950
Estimated FY24 Carryover	606,582
ARPA Grant Administration	20,614
Congressional Medal of Honor	5,000
Total	\$5,585,089



State Appropriations

Appropriated funds from the Oklahoma State Legislature.

Federal NEA

State partnership grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Only available to the Oklahoma Arts Council as the official state arts agency.

FY23 Carryover

Provides funding for grants, travel expenses, professional fees, professional development and contingency funds for agency relocation.

ARPA Grant Administration

State investment of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to rebuild the arts sector.

Arts in Alternative Education (SDE)

Grant programs, partnerships, and services to provide vulnerable youth with high quality arts education experiences that increase classroom engagement and improve high school graduation rates.

Special Initiatives (Revolving)

Provides funding for the Arts and the Military Summit, Creative Aging program, and Visual and Public Art commissions.

Arts Education Programs (AES/ALC)

Administration of grants and programs for arts instruction in PreK-12 schools and programs for arts instruction in community settings, serving Oklahomans of all ages and abilities.

Community Arts (CAP)

Administration of grants for audience-based programs; administration of rural and community development grants and programs.

Public Awareness/Capitol Art

Administration of communications (digital and print publications, marketing activities, media relations, events). Administration of activities related to managing and preserving artwork at State Capitol.

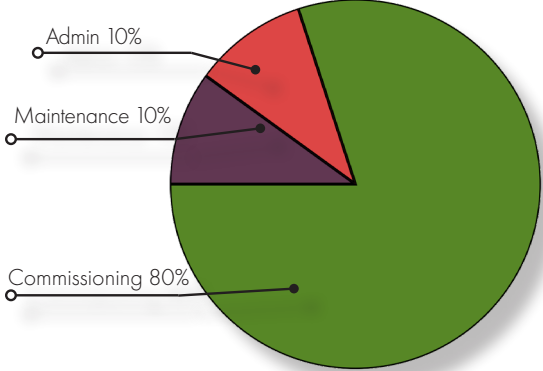
Core Operations/IT

Administration of agency mission, including oversight and evaluation of programs, fiscal management, compliance, implementation of staff work plans.

Oklahoma Arts Council FY24 Art in Public Places

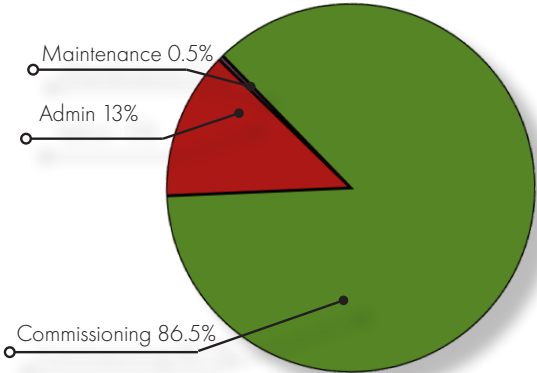
FY24 Art in Public Places Revenue

Administrative	\$147,983
Maintenance	147,983
Commissioning	1,183,868
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Balance	1,479,834
FY23 Fund Balances	3,656,598
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Total	\$5,136,432



FY24 Art in Public Places Expenditures

Administrative	\$249,924
Maintenance	8,817
Commissioning	1,667,763
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Total	\$1,926,504



Art in Public Places Program (AIPP) Commissioning

Commissioning funds are utilized for the preservation of existing work on site and/or the creation of new artwork for the participating capital expenditure project.

AIPP Administrative

Funds dedicated to the administration of the Art in Public Places program support the creation of educational materials and dedication events for completed artwork. Funds are also applied to workforce expenditures to administer the program.

AIPP Maintenance

The program reserves funds from each Art in Public Places assessment for ongoing maintenance needs of the Oklahoma Public Art Collection, a strategic investment for the long-term preservation of the artwork.

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