



## **A Letter from Shannon Henry, Interim President & CEO**

Dear supporter,

This year, the Arts Council of Winston-Salem & Forsyth County has celebrated a milestone few organizations can claim: our **75th anniversary** as the first arts council in the nation. Since 1949, we've championed the artists, organizations, and cultural experiences that define our region, providing funding, facilities, visibility, and opportunities that allow creativity to flourish and communities to thrive.



Together, we've built something extraordinary. But today, we must speak honestly about where we are and where we must go.

Like many nonprofits, we are facing an extraordinarily difficult financial moment. Despite our history of giving more than \$1 million annually in grants, operational support, and subsidies, this year we've had to make painful decisions, limiting or pausing funding to partners who have come to count on us. These decisions have been deeply felt, and we acknowledge that we could have communicated more clearly and consistently about our financial challenges and been more vocal about the urgency of our need for support.

We're struggling with the same pressures that impact many of the groups we serve, including funding cuts, rising costs, and facilities in need of urgent attention. And yet, even in this moment, we are focused not just on what's behind us, but on what's ahead.

### **We have a bold vision for the future.**

Guided by a strategic roadmap shaped by artists, donors, educators, and neighbors, we're working to usher in a new era for the Arts Council, one grounded in access, collaboration, and innovation. We envision a community where:

- **Every resident sees the value of creative expression**, and where the arts are part of everyday life, from classrooms to wellness centers;
- **Fresh voices are uplifted**, and the next generation of artists, thinkers, and changemakers are nurtured through meaningful engagement;
- **Creativity connects and heals us**, helping us imagine new ways forward, together.

Together, we can grow Winston-Salem's identity—not only as the **City of Arts and Innovation**, but as a true **City of Creators**.

Your support makes this future possible.

**Please make a gift to celebrate 75 years  
and to secure the next 75.**

Donate online at [www.intothearts.org/75anniversarycelebration](http://www.intothearts.org/75anniversarycelebration)

**Your gift today will help us:**



Sustain programs that empower youth, promote healing, and ignite creative possibility.



Restore critical funding to artists and organizations who make this community vibrant



Preserve and strengthen the



Activate a broader cultural

venues that serve as creative  
homes for thousands

movement grounded in inclusion,  
access, and shared investment

If the Arts Council has ever touched your life, or if you believe in a community where arts and culture belong to everyone, please stand with us now.

With deep gratitude and hope,



**Shannon Henry**

Interim President & CEO

Arts Council of Winston-Salem & Forsyth County

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Arts Council opens in 1949.



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