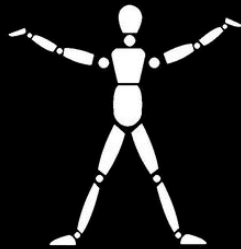


January 2026

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



# ARTS INSIDER



CHARLES COUNTY ARTS ALLIANCE

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Dear CCAA Members and Friends,

Happy New Year!

As I write this letter, the wonderful year-end holidays are coming to a close, and it is bitter cold and windy outside. Nevertheless, I am really looking forward to 2026 - and I hope you are too!

Last month, December 2025, was a truly exciting and historic month for the arts in Charles County. On December 9, the Charles County Commissioners received the briefing and full report on the proposed new "Charles County Public Arts and Cultural Master Plan" that was developed over the past months by the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism (RPT), and it was very well received! This proposed Master Plan builds on the leadership efforts of the Charles County Arts Alliance, when we developed the first-ever strategic plan for the arts in 2008, known as "Arts Vision 2020." Many of you were a part of our own three-year strategic planning effort, and remember it well! At the December 9 Commissioners' public meeting, I was given the opportunity to speak briefly for the record, and I strongly endorsed this proposed Master Plan as the "next logical step" for the arts in Charles County. I spoke on behalf of the CCAA Board of Directors, who were in attendance that day, demonstrating our strong interest and support. The next steps for the new Master Plan will be identified in the weeks and months ahead, and we will keep you posted. In the interim, I invite you to review the RPT presentation and full report and become familiar with it. It will guide our public-private partnership discussions in the future.

This month, we are kicking off our annual CCAA Arts Scholarship Program, which provides a \$2,000 arts scholarship to our Charles County high school students planning to attend a four-year college/university and major in the arts - performing arts, visual arts or literary arts. This is one of our oldest programs in our 38-year history of the CCAA, and we have been so pleased to help launch arts-related careers for many talented young people in our county. Karen McIntyre of our CCAA Board of Directors is chairing our Arts Scholarship Program this year. Please be on the lookout for our CCAA formal announcement coming out later this month.

Next month, we are kicking off our plans for ArtsFest 2026, to be held on Saturday, June 13, 2026, at the Indian Head Village Green and Pavilion. This is another one of our longstanding CCAA programs - our annual free gift to the citizens of Charles County. Please mark your calendars! We promise that this year's event will be even "bigger and better" than last year's very successful event.

Read all about it and more, in this issue of the Arts Insider. Again, Happy New Year!



Diane Rausch  
CCAA President



## *CCAA at Public Briefing to Charles County Commissioners on Dec 9: Rollout of New "Charles County Public Arts and Cultural Master Plan"*



On December 9, 2025, the Charles County Commissioners were formally briefed on the proposed new Charles County Public Arts and Cultural Master Plan that has been in development over the past year. The Charles County Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism (RPT) spearheaded this effort, and used a consultant team, Golob Art, to implement this planning project. Beginning in August 2025, the consultant team reached out for direct engagement, input and data gathering with the Charles County arts community (nonprofit organizations, individual artists, arts educators), and the business community, using a variety of avenues:

- Three virtual Zoom sessions
- Three in-person community input meetings (Indian Head, Waldorf, La Plata)
- Numerous one-on-one interviews
- Countywide arts survey

The above outreach efforts, plus additional research on national/state trends and statistics, resulted in the Charles County Public Arts and Cultural Master Plan. The December 9 public rollout briefing to update the County Commissioners was a great success - the Commissioners were very pleased with this effort. The participants at the table for this important briefing were as follows:

- Sam Drury, Deputy Director, Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism (RPT)
- Ben Yeckley, Planning Supervisor, RPT
- Ashley Chenault, Chief of Tourism, RPT
- Brittney Gray, Tourism Outreach Specialist, RPT
- Alexander Golob, Consultant, Golob Art
- And (by RPT invitation), Diane Rausch, Co-Founder and President, CCAA

The following individuals from the CCAA Board of Directors and membership were also in attendance for the briefing: Robert Medley, Yvonne Medley, Lew McIntyre, Karen McIntyre, Joselle Gilpin and Rich Gilpin, as well as Angelica Jackson, CEO of the Phoenix International School of the Arts.



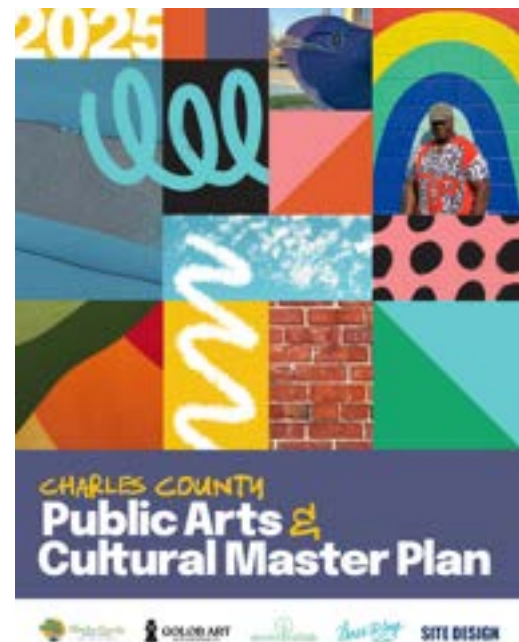
## ***CCAA at Public Briefing to Charles County Commissioners on Dec 9: Rollout of New "Charles County Public Arts and Cultural Master Plan"***

Also present in the room for the briefing was Donald Ely, Golob Art consultant team member, and John Hartline, Executive Director of the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland, which financially supported the Master Plan project via the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund.

In her remarks, Diane stated that the CCAA strongly endorsed this proposed new Master Plan as the "next logical step" in developing the arts infrastructure in Charles County. She noted that this new Master Plan builds on the earlier first-ever strategic plan for the arts in Charles County, "Arts Vision 2020," which the CCAA had spearheaded over a three-year period and publicly presented in 2008.

It was truly an historic day for the arts in Charles County! We will keep you posted on future actions.

Enjoy reviewing these two Master Plan public documents by clicking on the links below.



# ***CCAA at Public Briefing to Charles County Commissioners on Dec 9: Rollout of New "Charles County Public Arts and Cultural Master Plan"***

**Statement by the Charles County Arts Alliance, Inc.**

**Charles County Commissioners Public Meeting  
Briefing on Charles County Public Arts and Cultural Master Plan**

**December 9, 2025**

Good afternoon Commissioners.

My name is Diane Rausch. I am the Co-Founder and President of the Charles County Arts Alliance. We were founded and incorporated in 1987 as a 501-c-3 nonprofit organization with one focused mission: to promote all the arts in Charles County - the performing, visual and literary arts. That is, we support music, drama, dance, visual art and literature.

For the past 38 years, we have served as the "designated arts council" of Charles County, and as the "arts umbrella organization" for over 20 other nonprofit arts organizations in our county. We are an "organization of organizations." Our overall reach is in the thousands - our many artists and the arts-loving public in our county.

To date, we have:

- Awarded over \$1,000,000 in our Arts Grants program to support other nonprofit arts organizations in our county, and the Charles County Public Schools.
- Awarded Arts Scholarships each year to our highly talented county high school students planning future careers in the arts.
- Produced and presented our annual free countywide arts festival, ArtsFest, at various locations in our county.
- And most importantly for today's discussion, we led a three-year community-based effort that produced in 2008 the first-ever strategic plan for the arts in Charles County, known as Arts Vision 2020.

And here we are today, 17 years later, discussing the first-ever county government-based strategic plan for the arts, the Charles County Public Arts and Cultural Master Plan.

Today is a momentous, historic occasion for the arts in Charles County!

The Charles County Arts Alliance is pleased to see such a visionary, ambitious, and exciting Master Plan that the Charles County Government has developed for the arts. It will further elevate and develop the arts infrastructure in our community. It is the "next logical step" for all the arts in Charles County, and will take us higher and higher in the future. It will definitely put Charles County on the "arts and culture map" as a destination in the State of Maryland, and will enhance the overall quality of life for our local citizens. We strongly endorse this visionary Charles County Public Arts and Cultural Master Plan, and extend our congratulations and appreciation to the Charles County Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism, and their consultant team, who worked so diligently to engage our county citizens in this planning process. Their hard work and dedication to excellence has produced a truly outstanding, dynamic and exciting roadmap to chart our county's future in the arts.

The Charles County Arts Alliance offers our full support to help make it happen!



# CCAA ArtsFest 2026 in the Works!

Our CCAA ArtsFest 2026 is still six months away - Saturday, June 13, 2026 - yet excitement is already building for another vibrant celebration of art, music, and community! Our annual countywide free festival brings together talented artists, dynamic performers, and enthusiastic attendees for an unforgettable experience filled with creativity and connection. As our planning begins to take shape, ArtsFest 2026 promises to continue our tradition of showcasing exceptional local and regional talent in an engaging, welcoming environment.



Applications to participate in ArtsFest 2026 will open soon, with "Early Bird" pricing available next month. Artist vendors are encouraged to take advantage of this reduced rate, which will remain open through the end of February. When our "Early Bird" period concludes, standard pricing will begin in March, so your early application is the best way to secure a spot while saving on fees. Additional details about the application process and requirements will be shared as the opening date approaches.

Working once again with such a diverse and passionate group of visual artists and performers in Charles County and across Southern Maryland is something to truly look forward to each year. ArtsFest has always been a collaborative effort, fueled by creativity, professionalism, and community spirit. Each year brings new ideas, fresh talent, and returning favorites that make our annual arts festival stronger and more inspiring.

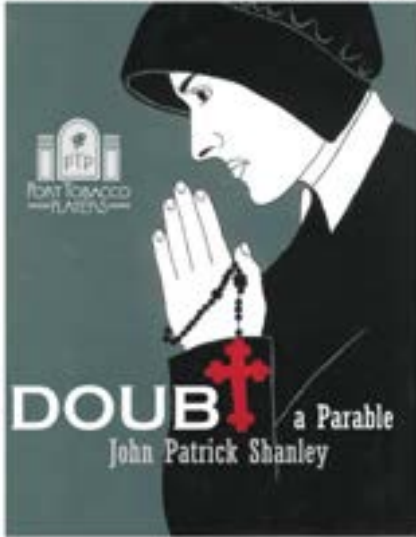
The CCAA will be working diligently to ensure that ArtsFest 2026 is an incredible experience for everyone involved, from participants to patrons. With thoughtful planning, strong partnerships, and a shared commitment to excellence, ArtsFest 2026 is shaping up to be another standout year. Stay tuned for our application announcements and more exciting updates in the near future!



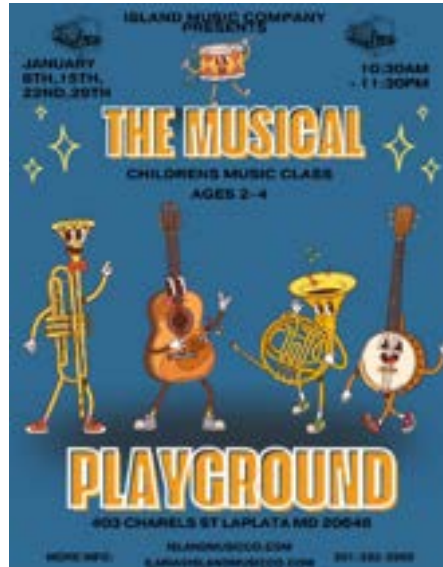


# Celebrate the New Year! - Support Local Arts & Culture!

JAN 16 - FEB 1, 2026



[For Tickets Click Here!](#)



[For More Information Click Here!](#)



[For More Information Click Here!](#)

# Celebrate the New Year! Support Local Arts & Culture!



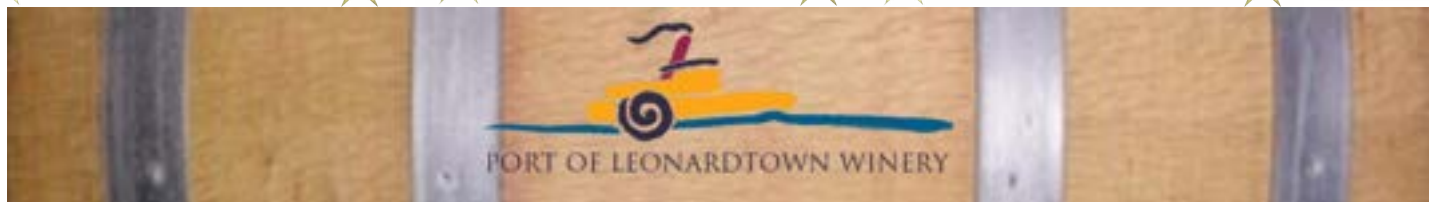
[For More Information Click Here!](#)



[For More Information Click Here!](#)



# *St. Mary's County- Sip & Paint Night @ Port of Leonardtown Winery - Jan 16*



## **Sip & Paint Night @ Port of Leonardtown Winery - Jan 16**



- Admission: \$55
- Time: 6:15 pm to 8:30 pm

Join us at Port of Leonardtown Winery for a cozy winter evening of creativity and great wine!

We'll be painting a beautiful wintery scene (like the one above!) with step-by-step instructions—perfect for all skill levels, even first-time painters.

Your ticket includes:

- All paint and supplies
- Guided instruction to create your winter masterpiece
- One glass of wine or a seasonal warm or cold beverage

Grab your friends, sip something delicious, and unwind with a fun night out at the winery.

Limited seating—reserve your spot now!

### **Sip & Paint Night @ Port of Leonardtown Winery**

23190 Newtowne Neck Rd. Leonardtown, Maryland 20650

- 301-690-2192
- [Website Click Here](#)
- [Buy Tickets Click Here](#)



**Calvert County - Artworks @ 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**Meet the Guest Artist: Sarita Pandey**



**Gallery Reception: Anything Goes**

**January 3, 2026, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

**@ Artworks @7<sup>th</sup> North Beach MD (Calvert County)**

- [Website Click Here](#)
- [Location Click Here](#)



# Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) - "The Council Connect" and Current Grant Opportunities



## THE COUNCIL CONNECT December 2025

For me, the end of the year and holidays inspire reflection and gratitude. These help keep me cozy on the coldest winter days. On December 4th, council members and staff gathered in Bel Air for our final meeting of the year. We heard about the Harford County Cultural Arts Board's great work, toured the Bel Air Arts & Entertainment District, visited the current exhibit at the library branch (our host), and heard from community members about the importance of public funding for the arts. It was my privilege to reflect on and share [our staff's work supporting Maryland's arts sector](#) over the past six months. I look forward to the coming year, working with an incredible team for a truly remarkable, arts-rich state.

Part of my reflection this year is remembering the work and legacy of [Timothy App](#), a pillar of Maryland's visual arts community who [died last month](#). During his time serving as a councilor, Timothy was a fierce advocate for independent artists. Much like [his work](#), his voice in council conversations was restrained but precise and powerful. He could also be unexpected, as when he launched into an impromptu guitar solo to fill the silence during virtual council meetings in the early days of the pandemic. He steered MSAC policy and practices toward inclusiveness while maintaining rigor, and that work will live on in MSAC's programs, a legacy benefiting all Maryland artists.

Happy holidays, and I hope you take some time for your own reflection. There's nothing cozier.

Steven Skerritt-Davis  
Executive Director  
Maryland State Arts Council



### Current Grant Opportunities



#### **AiE Grant (for rostered artists)**

Next deadline: January 5, 2026 (Rolling)

[Learn more about program.](#)

# Maryland Arts Day 2026: Advocacy for the Arts in Annapolis



## Maryland Arts Day 2026: Advocacy for the Arts in Annapolis

CCAA members are invited to participate in **Maryland Arts Day 2026**, hosted by the Maryland Citizens for the Arts (MCA). This annual statewide advocacy event brings together artists, arts leaders, and supporters to speak directly with Maryland lawmakers about the importance of public support for the arts.

**Maryland Arts Day will take place in person on Thursday, February 12, 2026**, beginning with a morning program at **St. John's College in Annapolis**, followed by scheduled visits with state legislators at the Maryland State House. Participants will have the opportunity to represent their local arts communities and help ensure the arts remain a funding and policy priority across the state.

The purpose of Maryland Arts Day is simple: to advocate for continued and increased investment in the arts, culture, and creative community in Maryland. By sharing real stories and community impact, attendees help lawmakers understand why the arts matter to education, community development, tourism, and quality of life.

Space is limited, and early registration is encouraged. Participants are also invited to nominate an individual for the **Sue Hess Arts Advocate of the Year Award**, which is presented during the event.

CCAA encourages members to attend and lend their voices to this important statewide effort. Maryland Arts Day is a meaningful opportunity to connect with elected officials, stand alongside arts advocates from across the state, and champion the future of the arts in Maryland.

[CLICK HERE for more info and to register for MD Arts Day 2026](#)





# Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation - New Strategic Plan: "Imagine Next!"



## Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation New Strategic Plan: "Imagine Next!"

We are so pleased to share our Strategic Plan, "Imagine Next," a brand-new way of facing change and embracing it while centering the voices of the people we serve every day. The input we received from our friends and constituents created the backbone of this plan, and allowed us to better understand how to grow in a way that supports and celebrates the extraordinary creativity of our region.

"Imagine Next" centers local voices, promotes innovation, and reshapes the way we engage with the arts in our region. Shaped by a multi-year listening effort to understand the needs, challenges, insights, and big ideas of the communities we serve, the process combined field engagement, data analysis, and internal reflection to ensure that our new strategic plan is grounded in evidence, collaboration, and care.

A new mission, vision, and values ground our work while focus areas sharpen the lens on what we do – and what we hope to do – as we work towards a more sustainable arts ecosystem.

"Imagine Next" invites our region to dream boldly, collaborate meaningfully, and build a thriving creative future - together!

["Imagine Next": View Strategic Plan Here!](#)



# *Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation - New Director of Programs*



## **Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation - Welcome to Our New Director of Programs**

We are thrilled to introduce our new Director of Programs, Nikki Kirk!

Nikki Kirk (she/her) is a leadership development and cultural equity practitioner, with diverse experience as a facilitator, program developer, grant administrator, project manager, team leader, and advisor. She has lived and worked across the country with arts organizations in the nonprofit, government, and higher education sectors. She has vast experience in program strategy and grantmaking, most recently serving as the Director of Community Impact and Strategic Investment with the Indy Arts Council in Indianapolis. She centers her work on equitable investment in a thriving arts ecosystem, which in turn strengthens and impacts communities.

Nikki earned a Master's Degree in Arts, Festival, and Cultural Management from Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh, Scotland, where she researched the impact of programming at the intersection of arts and social justice. She received a Bachelor's Degree in Political Linguistics from Pitzer College in southern California, where she affirmed her interests in and the significance of language and identity, human rights, and cross-cultural understanding.

Nikki's previous work experiences include Americans for the Arts, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Berklee College of Music, El Sistema USA, and the Center for Arts-Inspired Learning, among others.

Welcome, Nikki!

# THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS!

## PLATINUM CIRCLE

- Lorretta J. Hopkins
- Diane Rausch

## SILVER CIRCLE

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- Keith Linville
- Roy & Kathy Jenkins

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- dbF, a Media Company

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- John & Lucy Snell
- Pamela Vincent
- Chancy & Sandra Wood

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- Nikki Bradburn
- Brooke-Lynn Chapman
- Jaden Hendricks
- Barbara Hufford
- Kenneth Jameson
- Dimitri Nassar
- Deirdre Pender
- Thomas Savoy

## YOUTH

- Ada Donohue
- Mariah Harris
- Munachimso Nkemakolam
- Tobi Ojo
- Julia Pender
- Jael K. Potter
- Alex Urso
- Kristy Wells

## SENIOR

- Burkey W. Boggs
- Thea Bradley
- Claire Brooks
- Toi Brooks
- Carol Y. Charnock
- Carol Corbett
- Jerri Corbett
- Dorothy Crown
- Mary Evelyn Dashiell
- Chris Dudley
- Cecelia Dunay
- Florence Foster
- Richard Gilpin
- Joselle Gilpin
- Sally Marie Goldsmith
- Doris Hall
- Billie Harley
- Ruth Hein
- Elvernetta Henderson
- Renée Jefferson-Copeland
- William Jones
- Rona Kelley
- Robert Kyle
- Carlyle Lancaster
- Dorothy Lancaster
- Addison Likins
- Beverlie J. Ludy
- Mary Mangino
- Ivette Marcucci
- Dr. L. McDonald
- Karen McIntyre
- Lew McIntyre
- Henry McPherson

## SENIOR (cont'd)

- Robert Medley Sr.
- Yvonne J. Medley
- Connie Miller
- Dara Mills
- Kathleen Noel
- Marie C. Parham
- Shirley Ann Perez
- Ann Cameron Siegal
- Dorothea H. Smith
- Jill Smithson
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- Evans Thorne
- Paul Toscano
- Zsuzsanna Volkman
- John Wilson

## NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.

- Charles County Public Library
- Charles County Youth Orchestra
- Chesapeake Choral Arts Society
- Friends of Old Waldorf School
- Ivy & Pearls of Southern Maryland Community Charities
- Life Journeys Writers Guild, Inc.
- Maryland Writers Association
- Mattawoman Creek Art Center
- Music Teachers Association of Charles County
- National Association of American African Dance Teachers
- Neighborhood Creative Arts Center
- Opening Night Productions
- Port Tobacco Players
- Southern Maryland Concert Band
- Southern Maryland Decorative Painters



# CCAA MEMBERSHIP FORM



*The mission of the Charles County Arts Alliance is to stimulate, promote, encourage and provide recognition of the arts and the creative spirit in Charles County, MD*

## Show Your Support for the Arts by Joining or Renewing in 2026!

### The benefits of CCAA membership last year-round:

- CCAA Arts Insider monthly E-newsletter
- CCAA Arts Newsflash weekly E-update of arts events
- CCAA voting privileges
- And most importantly, the satisfaction that comes from actively supporting the arts in Charles County!

### Membership Categories (check one):

Platinum Circle - \$500

Gold Circle - \$300

Silver Circle - \$200

Arts Patron - \$150

Arts Sponsor - \$125

Arts Activist - \$80

Family - \$50

Individual - \$30

Senior (+60) - \$20

Youth (under 18) - \$10

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Date

Submitted:

Full Name:

(Exactly as you wish it to appear in print)

Organization/

Business:

(Only if Applicable)

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Email:

☐ New Member

☐ Renewal

### Business & Nonprofit:

Corporate - \$500

Business - \$250

Nonprofit Organization - \$75

Other (Donations) \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐☐☐

### Want to volunteer? We'd love the help!

☐ ArtsFest

☐ Budget/Finance/Audit

☐ Scholarships

☐ Events

☐ Galleries

☐ Grants

☐ Membership

☐ Outreach/Marketing

☐ Administrative/Office

☐ Technical/IT Support

*The CCAA is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization.*

*All membership dues and donations are 100 percent tax - deductible.*

Charles County Arts Alliance, Inc.

P.O Box 697, White Plains, MD 20695

[www.charlescountyarts.org](http://www.charlescountyarts.org) / 301-392-5900

[info@charlescountyarts.org](mailto:info@charlescountyarts.org)



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