



WCA WAYNE CENTER
FOR THE ARTS
ESTABLISHED 1973

2023-2026

STRATEGIC PLAN

ARTS ACCESS
ARTS EDUCATION
QUALITY OF LIFE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Executive Summary



With Wayne Center for the Arts' 50th anniversary in 2023, the timing is right to launch a new strategic plan that will guide the organization's future. Communities are also facing complex challenges including inflation and increased cost of living, the labor shortage, lingering impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, and lack of housing stock. It is more important than ever to work collaboratively to improve the quality of life for Wayne County residents and businesses.

WCA strategic planning took place in fall and early winter 2022, consisting of six community engagement sessions including 65 participants, a goal-setting retreat with the Board of Directors, and several additional strategic planning meetings with WCA Board and Staff. The resulting plan identified strategic pillars, which are the areas of focus that define the organization; 3-year goals for community impact; internal, organizational goals; and the pathways forward towards achieving those goals.

The plan is founded on core principles of collaboration, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and community and belonging, while continuing to ensure accessibility to programming that is creative and innovative.

Based in the City of Wooster in Wayne County, OH, WCA aims in the next three years to modernize programming and add new programming around STEAM, multimedia, digital arts, and music. The Arts Center will expand and extend its reach into new communities. The team will further invest in activities and programming to support downtown economic development in Wooster. And the Center will grow their active participation in partnerships with mental health, rehabilitation, and recovery agencies to improve the quality of life of residents across the County.

Mission and Vision

Mission

Enriching lives and strengthening communities through art.

Vision

Wayne Center for the Arts inspires artistic creativity, builds community and celebrates a collaborative, inclusive and vibrant culture.



History



Wayne Center for the Arts is the area's oldest and most comprehensive visual and performing arts organization. For nearly 50 years the Center has made art and art education available to the citizens of Wayne County.

Since its beginning in 1973 on the campus of The College of Wooster, Wayne Center for the Arts has been offering culturally stimulating arts experiences to the residents of Wayne County. Founded as the Wooster Arts Center in the basement of the college art museum, the organization was one of the first community arts centers housed on a college campus.

In 1983, the Rubbermaid Foundation purchased the abandoned Walnut Street School, renovated the building and provided the Center with a new home. In November 1984, the doors of the new location were opened to the public. At that time the center also changed its name to Wayne Center for the Arts in order to better reflect the constituent area served.

The Rubbermaid Foundation donated the Walnut Street building to Wayne Center for the Arts in June of 1999, assuring the community that the cultural arts center would continue to thrive in the downtown Wooster area. Since that time, the organization has continued to grow and evolve offering numerous activities throughout the year including classes, special events, performances and exhibits.



Old photos from WCA's rich history have been collected as the 50th anniversary approaches.

Photos: A painting by Don Jeffrey (left); A drawing class from the College of Wooster, taught by Pierre Gour.



Current impact and future opportunities

Current impact in the community

The Wayne Center for the Arts is dedicated to providing a variety of high-quality educational opportunities for students of all ages throughout our community in the traditional disciplines of Ceramics, Visual Arts, Dance, Music, Theater, and Creative Writing. They are also expanding opportunities to explore digital arts and media.

While many know about the classes offered in downtown Wooster, the Arts Center is also increasingly active throughout Wayne County. In collaboration with several other local organizations the Arts Center provides programs that can engage, heal, and inspire, while exposing a wider audience to the arts.

In 2022 alone, the Arts Center partnered with AnaZao, Boys & Girls Club of Wooster, Orrville and Rittman, the Counseling Center of Wayne and Holmes County, NAMI of Wayne and Holmes Counties, One-Eighty, The Village Network and the YMCA for afterschool programming, summer camps, and adult classes. Over 2,500 individuals, who may not have had the opportunity otherwise, experienced the power of art thanks to our Community Outreach Program. By partaking in these classes and workshops, participants gained confidence and found a positive creative outlet, improving lives through the healing benefits and mindfulness that come from art.

Our opportunity for tomorrow



In 2023, the Arts Center celebrates 50 years of history. As such, this is a vital time to shape organizational goals toward future success of the institution as well as the community. This will be achieved through expanding accessibility, building existing and new partnerships, increasing individual and community resilience, and bringing measurable value to our community. Inward-facing goals will focus on fortifying management, developing internal systems, deploying strategic fundraising and marketing efforts, supporting staff retention and development and formalizing ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.



The Plan: 2023 – 2026

WCA Plan Summary

Strategic pillars

Arts Access	Arts Education	Quality of Life	Community Development
Provide arts for everyone.	Build skills for creative interaction with our community.	Improve quality of life through personal engagement with the arts.	Enhance the vitality of the community by creating opportunities for engagement with the arts.

Goals

Goal 1 Expand partnerships to increase geographic access and greater inclusion of previously underrepresented groups, ensuring arts for everyone.	Goal 2 Expand and modernize programming to represent the current art interests of students and adults.	Goal 3 Develop and participate in active partnerships with agencies engaged in mental health, recovery, and rehabilitation.	Goal 4 Contribute to economic development downtown through special events and leadership in the Arts District Council.
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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



The Plan: 2023 – 2026

Goal 1

Expand partnerships to increase geographic access and greater inclusion of previously underrepresented groups, ensuring arts for everyone.

Objective: Remove real and perceived barriers to arts access.

Strategy:

- Identify and develop outreach partnerships with 2 underrepresented populations.
- Expand geographic access outside of Wooster.
- By developing opportunities for passive arts interaction within downtown Wooster, increase arts exposure to underrepresented groups.

Performance metrics:

- Two (2) new underrepresented demographics have been identified as areas of sustainable programming.
- Our presence has been increased and relationships have expanded in one (1) community outside of Wooster.
- An off-site program model and packages have been developed for nonprofits and corporations.
- Increase number and visibility of accessible programs in the community



The Plan: 2023 – 2026

Goal 2

Expand and modernize programming to represent the current interests of students and adults, while structuring classes to allow for progression of expertise.

Objective: Increase organizational sustainability.

Strategy:

- Assess current portfolio of programs and keep, eliminate, or expand based upon community interests.
- Develop new programming around STEAM, multimedia, digital arts, and music.
- Increase enrollment and participation through expanded marketing and partnerships.

Performance metrics:

- Over three years, total participants in programs, outreach and events have increased by 20%.
- Survey has been implemented and community interests are regularly assessed to gauge demand and interests.
- Program portfolio has been assessed and only in-demand programs remain.
- Funding has been obtained and a media lab has been equipped with necessary hardware and software to increase programming.
- New STEAM, multimedia, and digital arts programming are successfully implemented.
- In years 2-3, music and video programming are expanded.



The Plan: 2023 – 2026

Goal 3

Develop and participate in active partnerships with agencies engaged in mental health, recovery, and rehabilitation.

Objective: Foster creativity to build individual and community resilience.

Strategy:

- Develop and participate in active partnerships with agencies engaged in recovery and rehabilitation.
- Offer programming which creates opportunities for self-expression and creative exploration to support positive mental health benefits.
- Provide safe spaces for collaboration and pro-social interactions.

Performance metrics:

- Partnerships have been strengthened with organizations with similar values and collaborative funding has been obtained.
- Stories have been collected and shared from a wider diversity of individuals engaged in outreach programs.
- Partnerships formalized with targeted organizations to share resources.
- In years 2-3 of the plan, programming has been expanded in partnership with targeted nonprofits or agencies.
- Programs developed to encourage pro-social interactions for at-risk youth or those in transition.



The Plan: 2023 – 2026

Goal 4

Contribute to economic development downtown through special events and leadership in the Arts District Council.

Objective: Bring visibility and measurable value to our community.

Strategy:

Develop special events, activities, and infrastructure to drive more traffic to WCA and downtown.

Strategy 2: Fill a leadership role in the Arts District Council and partner to obtain funding for a staff person to drive continued development.

Strategy 3: Partner with local businesses to develop community culture and pride, leading to a better quality of life and improved workforce retention.

Performance metrics:

- An assessment has been completed to prioritize high value, high interest community events and entertainment programming that is cost-effective.
- Eighteen community events have been implemented.
- Funding obtained and park renovation completed.
- In partnership with the Arts District Council, funding is secured for a staff position for the Arts District.
- In years 2-3 in collaboration with partners, street festivals / outdoor events have been developed to bring more traffic to the Arts District.



Internal organizational management goals

Internal Organization Goal 1:

Build and diversify our base of annual support to increase financial sustainability.

Strategy:

- Organize and cultivate historical data on all donors, identifying touch-points for donors and motivations for giving.
- Develop and implement major gifts, planned and corporate giving programs.
- Assess and update current campaigns and membership structure.
- Update pricing model for programs to reflect a greater percentage of overhead costs and ensure increased financial sustainability.

Performance metrics:

- Customer relationship management (CRM) is obtained, updated and maintained.
- A capital improvement plan with shovel-ready projects is written.
- Major gift, planned, and corporate giving programs are implemented.
- Campaign and membership structures are updated.
- Revenues increased across all categories to align with rising expenses.
- Program pricing has been updated.



Internal organizational management goals

Internal Organization Goal 2:

Develop and implement a marketing and engagement strategy.

Strategy:

- Identify and segment audiences for targeted marketing.
- Identify opportunities for outreach.
- Strategically plan and implement a year-long marketing and social media engagement plan.

Performance metrics:

- CRM has been utilized to generate market identification and segmentation.
- Website redesign completed.
- Rebrand completed, contingent upon it being funded.
- Marketing plan has been implemented, outcomes tracked, and necessary adjustments enacted.



Internal organizational management goals

Internal Organization Goal 3:

Increase opportunities for staff development to build skills, satisfaction, and retention.

Strategy:

- Search for capacity building grant opportunities to fund professional development.
- Plan regular team building exercises.

Performance metrics:

- Professional development opportunities for staff are funded.
- Program staff are supported and expanded to be able to administer healthy programs.
- Regular team building exercises are implemented at the outset of each quarterly session.



Internal organizational management goals

Internal Organization Goal 4:

Continue to build and expand capacity and actions around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI).

Strategy:

- Identify priority steps to ensure the DEI statement is actionable.
- Institute a guide for diversifying hiring practices.
- Research community demographics and institute board recruitment strategies which are representative of the population.

Performance metrics:

- A DEI statement is crafted with Board and staff input.
- Funding is obtained for a Board and Staff DEI training.
- An actionable guide for diversifying hiring practices is developed and instituted.
- Board diversity is expanded to be representative of the population.

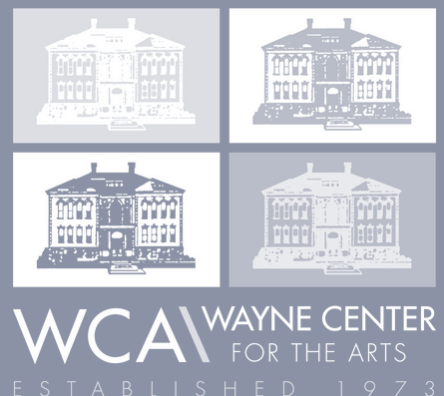
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