

DIANE RICHTER



# ARTSQUEST™

imagine that

RYAN HULVAT



## 2015 Community Impact Report

CRAIG ROBERTS



CRAIG ROBERTS



# A Letter from the President

There is little doubt 2015 was a very successful year for ArtsQuest and our community. From adding new educational programs and community initiatives like the Urban Street Art Festival and 'Greatest Generation' Veterans Day event at SteelStacks, to setting a new attendance record at Christkindlmarkt, the year was marked by many 'firsts' and milestones.

At the heart of ArtsQuest's mission as a community-based nonprofit arts organization is a strong commitment to increasing access to the arts and developing programming that aids in economic development and tourism in our region. Since opening SteelStacks in 2011, we've focused on identifying gaps in programming in our community and developing creative partnerships that have helped us to fill those needs, resulting in new cultural events, educational programs and classes for all ages. And, as an added benefit, we're helping to attract growing numbers of out-of-town visitors to Bethlehem and the Lehigh Valley.

From 2011–15, ArtsQuest presented more than 1,500 concerts at SteelStacks alone, with 66 percent of these shows free to attend, drawing visitors from near and far to the city while providing opportunities for local artists to support their livelihood. We have also offered more than 700 films and 650 comedy shows at the ArtsQuest Center, attracting 230,000 visitors, and hosted all or parts of a dozen festivals on the former steel site.

In addition to attracting tourists and bringing our community together through the arts, we've enhanced our efforts to provide unique educational experiences for our students. Thanks to programs like the Banana Factory's B-Smart after-school enrichment program for middle school students; the Marketing Musikfest class at Bethlehem area high schools; and the ArtsQuest scholarship program, which helps to provide free visual arts classes to children and families in-need, we've been able to create dozens of new opportunities for young people to learn through the arts.

Today, our arts programming at SteelStacks and the Banana Factory touches the lives of more than 35,000 children annually. And, I'm proud to say, ArtsQuest is looking to create additional educational programs for our community in the years to come now that we have added the first Director of Education & Outreach thanks to the support of two generous donors.

From the economic development perspective, we are starting to see some strong signs that the work we are collectively doing is having a positive effect on our community. Just a few examples include the opening of St. Stanislaus Artist Housing Development on the SouthSide; the new Social Still, the first project completed as part of the city's CRIZ zone; and the opening of the Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts, which relocated to the city's SouthSide, in large part, so it could be close to the creative environment of SteelStacks.



Another strong indicator that our work is having a profound impact on our community is the growth in hotel occupancy rates in Northampton County over the past three years. From 2012–14, the annual occupancy rate rose from 65 to more than 75 percent, an increase of 15 percent.

Thanks to the tremendous growth in programming at SteelStacks over the past four years, annual attendance at the site has increased steadily, with more than 800,000 people visiting the campus in 2015. Combined, our programming now has a total economic impact of \$117 million on Bethlehem and the Lehigh Valley, while touching the lives of more than 1.8 million people annually.

And while it's this same programming that grabs most of the headlines, the real story in all this is how our community has rallied behind our city and our organization over the past few years. Thanks to the support of ArtsQuest's 2,500 supporting members, 2,000 volunteers, 175 corporate partners and hundreds of community partners, our organization is able to not only add new programming for our community every year, but also continue to draw more and more people to our city and our region.

We are excited to continue our journey together with all of you, creating new opportunities to shine the spotlight on our community and providing new ways for everyone to experience the arts. Thank you for all of your support this past year and every year – your dedication and hard work have made our city and our region one of the best places in the nation to live, work and play!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kassie Hilgert'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Kassie Hilgert

ArtsQuest President and CEO

# Education and Outreach

In 1965, Dr. Martin Luther King helped organize the historic Civil Rights marches from Selma to Montgomery, Ala., highlighting racial inequality in the South and paving the way for the passage of the landmark Voting Rights Act prohibiting discrimination in voting.

On Jan. 19, 2015 — Martin Luther King Day — ArtsQuest's Frank Banko Alehouse Cinemas presented free student screenings of the Oscar-nominated *Selma*, with nearly 550 people coming out to see the film. Following the screenings, 100 guests stayed to engage in a discussion led by Social Justice Educators Sharon A. Brown, Camilla Greene and Dr. Deborah Appler. The evening touched the lives of young and old alike, while shining the spotlight on an important time in our nation's history.

"Offering free screenings on films such as *Selma* educates audiences and engages them in learning about topics that affect us as a society," says Felicite Gibson, who organized the discussion along with Stephanie Floyd Brooks. "Holding discussion groups allows people to share multiple perspectives of such a pivotal period in American history and empowers them to get involved with current issues."

The free *Selma* screenings are an example of the many ways ArtsQuest tries to provide unique arts and educational experiences for area residents throughout the year. In 2015, more than 10,000 people benefitted from the nonprofit's educational experiences through diverse programming like:



Middle school students learn photography skills in the Faces of the SouthSide program



Step Outdoors

## Faces of the SouthSide

Pairing middle school students with a professional photographer to learn photography and job skills, this program helps participants celebrate their lives and cultures through photographing family, friends and neighbors.

## B-Smart Afterschool Enrichment Program

This unique afterschool program delivers quality arts education programming to more than 200 Bethlehem Area School District middle school students throughout the year.

## Artists Among Us

This educational series, showcasing renowned artists from the Lehigh Valley region, returned in October with a presentation by broadcast news pioneer Melba Tolliver, the first African-American to anchor a network news program.

## Step Outdoors Festival

This new summer festival introduced 1,500 children and adults to outdoors activities and local conservation and nature groups through two days of free programs and hands-on activities.

## Musikfest Backstage Tours

Through the support of PNC Bank, area youth enjoyed backstage tours of the Sands Steel Stage for the Darius Rucker and Snoop Dogg shows. The unique educational initiative gave them an inside look at career options in the music world as well as what it takes to put on a major concert.

## Penn State Musikfest Video Camp

Eight high school students enjoyed exclusive backstage access at Musikfest as they learned to make their own videos at this new summer camp led by Penn State Lehigh Valley instructor and former CBS3 reporter Liz Keptner.

# Education and Outreach

## Great Partners, Great Programs!

**SteelStacks Partnership for Education & Outreach has helped fund 100 programs in south Bethlehem since 2008.**

From sharing the joy of reading with hundreds of Bethlehem-area elementary school students to providing free arts and cultural programming to nearly 10,000 people annually at SteelStacks' Sabor Latin Festival, a unique public-private partnership has quietly played a key role in helping transform Bethlehem's SouthSide over the past eight years.

Started in 2008, the SteelStacks Partnership for Education and Outreach is an education-based initiative uniting five corporate partners with the nonprofits ArtsQuest and PBS39. Over a 10-year period, the funding partners — Air Products, C.F. Martin & Co. Inc., Lehigh Gas Corp., PNC Bank and PPL Corp. — are investing \$4.2 million in arts and education programs at SteelStacks that are designed to help spur economic

development on Bethlehem's SouthSide and enhance the quality of life of Bethlehem-area school students, as well as all residents of Bethlehem and surrounding communities.

During the first eight years of the 10-year program, the partnership has committed \$3.85 million to helping deliver more than 100 arts, education and cultural programs — all of them free — to residents of Bethlehem and beyond. In addition, it has played an important role in supporting economic development in the Lehigh Valley. Through the development of the SteelStacks campus and its programming, more than 300 direct and indirect construction jobs were generated, while 125-plus full-time, part-time and seasonal jobs have been created at the arts and cultural campus since its opening in 2011.

The SteelStacks Partnership for Education and Outreach is made possible through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Neighborhood Partnership Program.



KEITH HUYLEBROECK

# Visual Arts

As someone who's passionate about music and art, Orefield's Jeremy Gipson was thrilled to learn about the new ArtPop High School Billboard Competition launched by Adams Outdoor Advertising and ArtsQuest in fall 2015. For several weeks in October and November, the Parkland High School senior worked on an original drawing to enter in the competition, with the result a stunning graphite on paper work called "REACH."

"After I saw the proportions required for this contest, I knew I had to start something that would work with the 24' x 6' format," says Gipson. "Knowing that it was a billboard contest, I wanted to make the final version contain more realism so that the driving viewer could easily interpret it."

In December, Gipson was rewarded for his efforts as he was named the inaugural winner of the competition. A few weeks later, his work was installed on an Adams billboard in Allentown, visible to the thousands of motorists who passed by it daily.

"I was so excited to win and I'm very humbled that people liked my art enough to make a massive print of it and put it on a billboard," says Gipson, who, as a volunteer, also painted murals in the Lehigh Valley Children's Cancer Center and the Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital. "Opportunities like this just make me want to create more."

While winning ArtPop was a huge honor for Gipson, the competition also played a key role in helping him get into the prestigious Maryland Institute College of Art. The 18-year-old applied to 10 art schools and was accepted at all of them, ultimately deciding on MICA because of its foundation program that allows new students to focus on multiple mediums.

"My ArtPop experience was shared with each school and with each update, I feel, ArtPop made my attending their school more desirable," Gipson says.

The ArtPop High School Billboard Competition is just one of the many ways ArtsQuest's visual arts programming touches the community. In 2015 the nonprofit also:

- Offered more than 300 classes and workshops attended by 2,880 individuals.
- Partnered with Olympus America on the InVision Photo Festival, presenting dynamic photo workshops, lectures and presentations by photographers like Rick Smolan and Nick Kelsh. More than 2,000 people attended the 6th-annual festival.
- Launched the new Urban Street Art Festival, featuring 20 artists and arts organizations while exposing the community to diverse art forms such as 3-D illusion art, body painting, metal sculpting and tattoo art.
- Presented 23 dynamic exhibitions including "Mikayla's Voice," highlighting the work of Mikayla Resh, a young woman with severe, permanent brain damage who has learned to create large acrylic paintings using the wheels of her wheelchair.

## Visual Arts Partners 2015:

Allentown Art Museum  
Alternative Gallery  
Baum School of Art  
Bethlehem House Gallery  
Eagle Nest Gallery  
Easton Hospital Gallery  
Florent Studio Project  
Fox Optical  
Hillcrest Camera Club  
Lehigh University  
Lehigh Valley Charter High School  
Lehigh Valley Photography Club  
Moravian College  
Nazareth Center for the Arts  
Northampton Community College  
Santa Bannon Fine Art Gallery  
Silver Images  
State Theatre Easton



Jeremy Gipson's ArtPop Artwork on an Adams Billboard

# Performing Arts

In 2015, the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of Musikfest, guests from across the nation and around the globe made their way to Bethlehem to enjoy 10 days of free music, art and family entertainment.

A year of risk and reward for the nation's largest free music festival, the 2015 event featured the first headlining comedian, first preview night, a new stage presented by Hotel Bethlehem and more. By the time fireworks closed out the festival on Sunday night, more than 1.1 million people attended the event, making it one of the most successful in the festival's history.

Founded in 1984, Musikfest was designed to elevate the spirit of the struggling industrial city and attract visitors to the area to help boost the local economy. In its first year, the festival featured 295 performances on six stages, attracting 180,000 people to historic Bethlehem. Over

the past three decades, the event has evolved into one of the largest and most diverse music festivals in the United States, with the 2015 event featuring 550 shows by 348 performers on 14 stages.

Musikfest 2015's many firsts included a brand new preview night Aug. 6 headlined by Duran Duran and a headlining comedy show by icon Jerry Seinfeld Aug. 10. The event also expanded its performing arts programming by adding visiting artists in residence such as Wireless Disco and Polyglot Theatre's production of "Ants," as well as new buskers to entertain the crowds. The combination of new programming and 'fest favorites turned out to be a big hit, with guests visiting the event from 42 states and 12 countries, having a major impact on tourism and the economy.



2015 was the first year for the official Hotel Bethlehem Platz at Musikfest

## Did You Know?

As a community arts organization, ArtsQuest is committed to supporting and presenting hundreds of local artists, performers and businesses annually.

- 30 percent of the performers at Musikfest 2015 were from the Lehigh Valley, while 70 percent came from the Mid-Atlantic Region.
- 60 percent of the food vendors at the festival are local
- The event now has an economic impact of \$55 million annually on the region

## Other 2015 Performing Arts Highlights included:

- 20,000 people attending the free Oktoberfest presented by Yuengling
- The Sands Steel Stage was ranked No. 68 in attendance in *Pollstar's* Top 100 Amphitheatres, while the Musikfest Café came in at No. 114 in the Top 200 Clubs list.
- 13 area high schools competed in the SteelStacks High School Jazz Band Showcase, with the winner - North Penn Navy Jazz Band - opening for Dirty Dozen Brass Band at RiverJazz.
- More than 700 improv comedians and guests came together for the 2nd-annual SteelStacks Improv Comedy Festival.

# Performing Arts Partners 2015

Accent School of Dance  
Acoustic Road Show  
Allegro Dance Company  
America on Wheels Museum  
Arts Academy Charter School  
Belvidere High School  
Bethlehem Public Library  
Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania  
Blue Ribbon Cloggers  
Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center  
Brandywine Heights Choir  
Bucks County Folk Society  
Camelot for Children  
Cantabile Children's Choir  
Child Care Information Services of Lehigh County  
Community Music School  
Corinne Mammana Music Studio  
Cutters Bike Shop  
Da Vinci Science Center  
Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor  
Delaware Valley Orienteering Association  
Dieruff High School Jazz Band  
Ducks Unlimited  
Dutch Springs  
East Hills Middle School 6th Grade Chorus  
East Hills Middle School Guitar Ensemble  
Easton High School Jazz Band  
Emmaus High School Choral Department  
Farmersville Elementary School Chorus  
Freedom High School Les Chanteurs  
Freedom High School Jazz Band  
Girl Scouts of Eastern PA  
Greater Lehigh Valley Music Association  
Godfrey Daniels  
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary  
Hispanic American League of Artists (HALA)  
Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites  
Holy Infancy Strings  
Harrison Morton School Choir  
Irish Stars Parker School of Irish Dance  
Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center  
Jacobsburg Historical Society  
Joe's Jazz Cafe  
Keystone DockDogs  
Keystone Elk Country Alliance  
La Ola  
Lehigh River Stocking Association  
Lehigh Valley Academy Chorus  
Lehigh Valley Audubon Society  
Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts  
Lehigh Valley Cloggers  
Lehigh Valley Community Music School  
Lehigh Valley Disc Golf Club  
Lehigh Valley Folk Music Society  
Lehigh Valley Junior Bassmasters  
Lehigh Valley Music Teachers Association  
Lehigh Valley Zoo  
Let's Play Books  
Lopatcong Middle School Chorus  
Lower Macungie Middle School  
Mercy Special Learning Center Tone Chime Choir  
Miller-Keystone Blood Center  
Monarch Dance Company  
Moravian College and Lehigh University Clarinet Choir  
Moravian Flute Troupe  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
Nazareth Middle School Choir  
Nazareth High School Chamber Strings Group  
Nockamixon Sail Club  
Northampton Community College  
North Penn High School Jazz Band  
O'Grady Quinlan Academy of Irish Dance  
Palisades High School Choir (Madrigal Singers)  
Pennridge High School  
Penn State Extension Master Gardeners  
Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards  
Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission  
Pennsylvania Game Commission  
Philadelphia Songwriters Project  
Philipsburg High School Jazz Band  
Pinebrook Family Answers  
Pocono Mountain East High School Jazz Band  
Pohatcong School  
Pride of the Lehigh Valley  
Quakertown High School Jazz Band  
Reading High School Jazz Band  
Ruffed Grouse Society  
Saucon Valley High School Choir  
Saucon Valley High School Jazz Band  
Saucon Valley Music  
School of Rock  
Sharon Plessl School of Dance  
Sierra Club  
Sing Dance and Play Music Together  
South Mountain Middle School Choir  
State Theatre Easton  
Superstar Dance Company  
The Lesson Center  
Trout Unlimited  
Twin River String Ensemble  
United Bowhunters of Pennsylvania  
Valley Preferred Cycling Center  
ValLEy Suzuki Strings  
Violin Studio of Rosalie Keddington  
Warren Hills High School Jazz Band  
West End Music and Lesson Studios  
Wildlands Conservancy  
William Allen High School Chorale  
Young Musician's Club



JONATHAN DAVIES

# Levitt Pavilion SteelStacks

## 50 free performances every summer!

No matter how you look at it, that's a pretty substantial goal, and one that can't be achieved without the support of the entire community.

Since opening in 2011, the Levitt Pavilion SteelStacks has presented more than 250 free concerts for the community, including award-winning and emerging artists like Marcia Ball, the Duke Ellington Legacy Band, Lake Street Dive, The Drifters, The Smithereens, Tab Benoit, Luke Wade of *The Voice* and more. And while 20 percent of the funds for this annual summer concert series come from the Mortimer and Mimi Levitt Foundation, the other 80 percent is raised locally thanks to the corporate partners, grants and 'pass the bucket' donation collections at every Levitt show.

With each passing year, the community has become more and more invested in this unique outdoor venue at the base of the former Bethlehem Steel blast furnaces. From an initial attendance of 25,000 in the Levitt Pavilion's first year, visitation has grown by nearly 250 percent, culminating with a record 85,000 people attending in 2015.

In addition to the Levitt's overarching mission of providing the community with access to a broad spectrum of musical and cultural experiences, the Friends of the Levitt Pavilion Board of Directors has committed itself to offering unique educational opportunities for the underserved populations in our community. To this end, the board has added several unique family and community programming elements over the past few years. Among these are:

### 2012–2015

Partnering with the Sabor Latin Festival to present Friday and Saturday headlining shows on the Levitt stage.

### 2014

Adding the Levitt Family Movie Series, with 10 free movies shown on the Levitt screen during the summer.

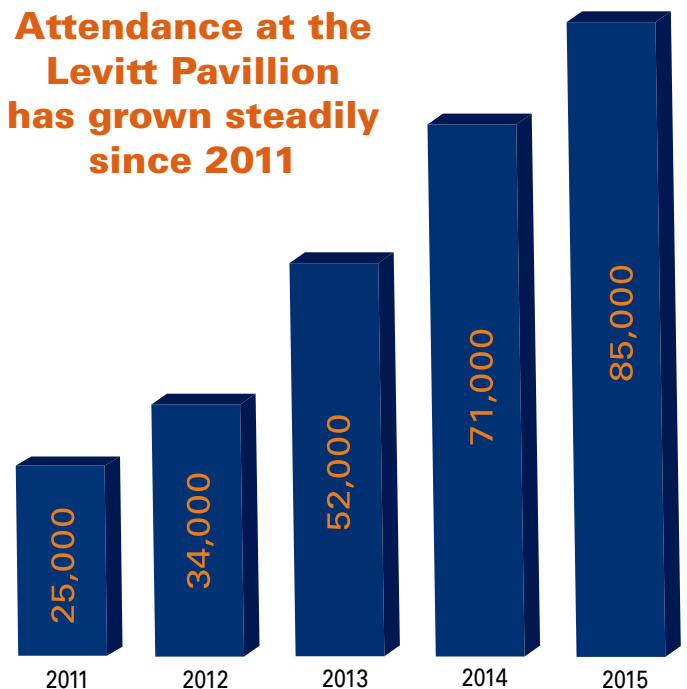
### 2015

Establishing an Education and Outreach Program supporting neighborhood schools. The acclaimed Black Violin offered a workshop to the Broughal Middle School Band, with students performing on stage with the duo before their show.

Thanks to the Lehigh Valley's support, the Levitt Pavilion continues to grow. And, with the continued investment of everyone, there's no telling how far this unique community resource will take us.



## Attendance at the Levitt Pavillion has grown steadily since 2011





# Levitt Pavilion SteelStacks

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# Cultural Events

For nearly a quarter-century, Christkindlmarkt has drawn visitors from near and far to Bethlehem, making it one of the anchors of the city's popular Christmas tourism season. A holiday experience unlike any other, the marketplace offers guests the opportunity to stroll aisles upon aisles of handmade works by the nation's finest artisans, while enjoying live holiday music, delicious food and more.

Twice recognized as one of the best holiday markets by *Travel + Leisure*, Christkindlmarkt continued to garner national attention in 2015 as it was named one of the best holiday markets in the world by *USA Today Travel* and made the *10 Best List* for holiday events in the country. The event has always focused on providing opportunities for the region's artists to support their livelihood, and in 2015 the marketplace featured 135 different vendors, with some coming from as far away as Florida, Maine and New Hampshire. Most importantly, a record number of visitors - 64,612 - attended the market during its five-week run, with many of them staying in town to experience all the Christmas City has to offer.

Christkindlmarkt's strong run in 2015 was a boon for music and arts programming in the region, since the event is one of the primary revenue sources supporting ArtsQuest's free festivals and educational programs for the community. As a result of Christkindlmarkt's steady growth over the past few years, ArtsQuest has identified the holiday market as a programming element that offers excellent opportunities for expansion in the years to come, providing even more opportunities to draw visitors to the Christmas City during the Christmas season.



## SteelStacks - The Community's Campus

As it was being developed, SteelStacks was envisioned as a location that would bring the community together for a variety of events and celebrations throughout the year. At no time was this more evident than in 2015, when the campus hosted more than 200 total events, ranging from half-marathons and 5Ks to culinary fundraisers benefitting area nonprofits. A few of the many highlights included:

### Woman's World Cup Viewing Party

More than 25,000 attendees came out to watch the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team compete in the world's biggest soccer tournament, with 8,500 people packing PNC Plaza to see the U.S. take on Japan in the finals.

### Sabor Latin Festival

Highlighted by sensational performances by Pablo Batista and Michael Stuart, the Sabor Latin Festival was a resounding success in its 5<sup>th</sup> year. Since its debut, the annual attendance for this festival has continued to climb, with a record 11,500 people attending in 2015.

### Papal Mass Viewing

In September, the Diocese of Allentown partnered with ArtsQuest to present a Papal Mass Viewing for those who were unable to visit Philadelphia to see Pope John Francis. In addition to showing the mass on a large outdoor screen, the afternoon included a variety of food, family activities and fellowship, providing imaginative, new ways to use the campus and its spaces.

### Monster Energy BMX Team

Tailwhips, backflips and other high-flying feats were the order of the day as the Monster Energy BMX Team performed July 11. Made possible thanks to Coca-Cola Bottling Company of the Lehigh Valley and Monster Energy drinks, the event attracted hundreds of teens and millennials to SteelStacks, introducing a whole, new audience to the campus and its programming.

### Girl Scout Cookie Crunch

In February, ArtsQuest, Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania and 15 area restaurants came together for the first Cookie Crunch, featuring sweet and savory offerings made with Girl Scout Cookies. Proceeds benefitted both ArtsQuest and Girl Scouts.

# In Memoriam



## Charles "Bud" Berge

In 2015, ArtsQuest said goodbye to two longtime family members when Charles "Bud" Berge, Christkindlmarkt's iconic St. Nicholas, and the legendary Jolly Joe Timer passed away within a few days of each other.

As the jolly, old man who welcomed guests to Christkindlmarkt, Bud touched the lives of thousands of people, both young and old. His friendly wave and warm smile made every child feel welcome, and he had the uncanny ability to remember almost every boy and girl who visited him, often to the surprise and delight of their parents.



## "Jolly" Joe Timmer

Over the years, few artists were as closely tied to Musikfest as Joe Timmer. From his first notes at the initial festival in 1984 to his orchestra's performances at Musikfest in recent years, Joe and his band delighted countless guests with the joyous sounds of the polkas. For many, they were one of the iconic sights and sounds of the festival.

While they are no longer with us, these two gentlemen will forever be in our hearts and our memories. We'll carry their kindness, compassion and their love for the community with us always.

**Rest in Peace**

# ArtsQuest Volunteers- Making an Impact

**To the 2,039 volunteers who donated a staggering 41,462 hours of their time in 2015, ArtsQuest thanks you!**

ArtsQuest volunteers have helped provide our community with exceptional artistic, cultural and educational experiences since the very beginning. Starting with the first Musikfest in 1984, 18,000 individual volunteers have given their time and talent to the organization - it is thanks to the hard work and dedication of both our volunteers and volunteer leadership that we are able to reach more than 1.8 million people each year throughout the Lehigh Valley and beyond.

These individuals come from not only Lehigh and Northampton counties, but also more than 10 states including California, Florida, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and North Carolina, all to promote the mission and values of our nonprofit organization. From taking tickets at Musikfest and greeting movie-goers at the ArtsQuest Center cinemas, to helping children make crafts and explore the arts at the Banana Factory, each and every one of these roles is integral to the success of ArtsQuest.



**THANK YOU! WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!**

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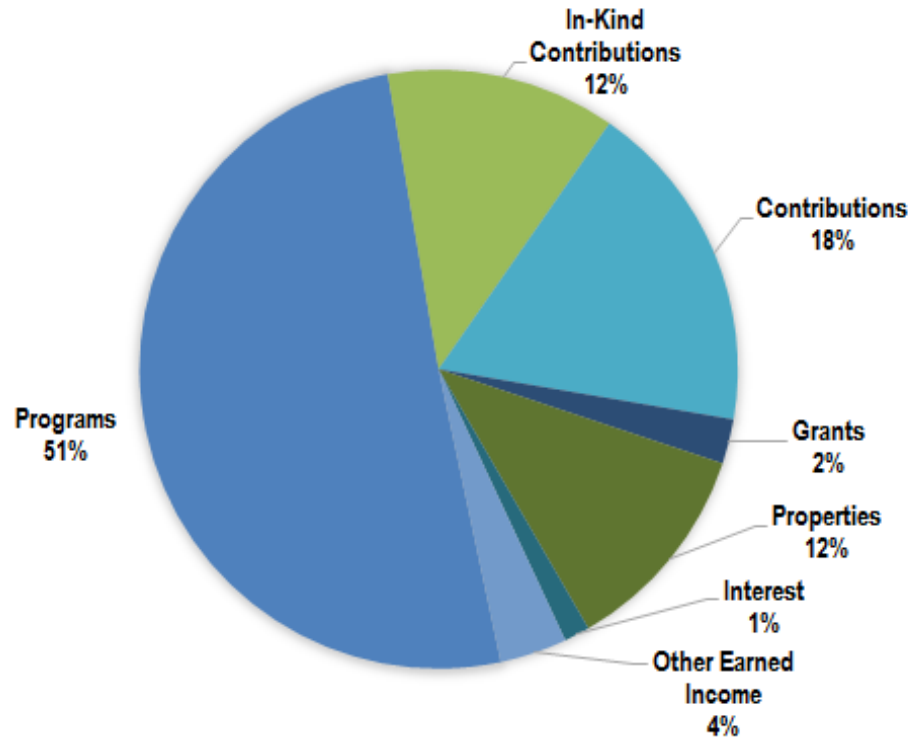
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ArtsQuest reports its results using Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), which require the organization to record income based on the year funds are raised, not in the year designated for use, among other requirements.

## 2015 OPERATING INCOME \$21.9 MILLION



## 2015 OPERATING EXPENSES \$21.8 MILLION

