



2025

IMPACT REPORT

Enriching our community through artistic experiences

THANK YOU.

GROWTH: When I think of what the Arts Council has accomplished in the past year, this is the one word that comes to mind. As we moved into our new space — the Big Sky Center for the Arts — we've been able to offer much more to the community. Since February 2024, we've partnered with more than 40 organizations to bring 75 public events to life here in our building. We've hosted everything from intimate classical concerts to fun, cultural events with a few hundred people. In short, our new home has allowed us to spread our wings.

Last summer we offered 10 weeks of youth art camp, for ***the first time ever***. We've also added classes and workshops in floral design, mosaic, watercolor, sewing, drawing and more—all because we have the space for multiple classes at the same time. This has allowed our pottery studio (still in the BASE Community Center) to flourish, where we've added a middle school class, and advanced classes and workshops on glazing and more refined techniques. Our youth programming now includes PIR Days (when kids don't have school) and holiday camps, allowing local parents and young artists to take advantage of time off from school. Our staff has grown, too, adding a new development team member and several art instructors.

All of these efforts would not be possible without the support of our community, including our donors, business sponsors, grantors and event attendees. We are **extremely thankful** for this support, and we are passionate about continuing our mission *to enrich the community through artistic experiences*. And although our new home has given us an exciting vision for the future, we realize the hard work that still remains—but we're ready to dig our heels in and help transform our town with the power of the arts. We invite you to join us as we work toward a vision of *a community connected to and inspired by art*.

We're excited to continue our growth in the coming year, including the planned start of the the Center for the Arts remodel later this fall. Our free summer concert series kicks off on **June 25**, and our spring and summer are packed with a wide variety of art classes, workshops and other events including the annual **Big Sky Artisan Festival** on July 18. We hope to see you soon, and *thank you* for your continued support of the Arts Council!

Sincerely,



Brian Hurlbut

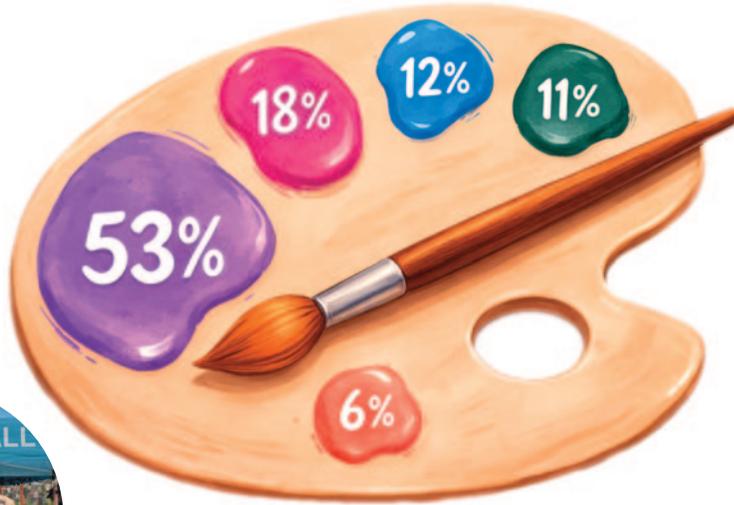
Executive Director, Arts Council of Big Sky

bigskyarts.org



On the Front Cover: Big Sky's first large-scale public mural adorns the pedestrian tunnel under Highway 64. The artwork was created by Apsáalooke (Crow) artist Stella Nall, after gathering input from community members and local students about inventive "beings" that might inhabit Big Sky.

OUR PALETTE OF SUPPORT



Total Income \$2,005,754
Donations 53%
Program Income 18%
Resort Tax Funding 12%
Grants 11%
Sponsorship 6%

Total Income includes \$700,000 in restricted Public Art donations for capital asset purchases



Total Expenses \$1,439,542
Programs 90%
Fundraising 7%
Administrative 3%



The Arts Council is a platinum-level Guidestar participant, recognized for our commitment to transparency.



EVENTS

the year in **excitement**

Hosted 12 **free concerts** in Len Hill Park

Auction for the Arts raised **\$100K** for programs and directly supported more than **75 working artists**

Music in the Mountains awarded **best annual event**

Hosted **4 film festival screenings** at the Waypoint

Presented **3 classical concerts** as part of annual Bravo! Big Sky series

Partnered with more than **40 organizations** to host **75 programs** in the Center for the Arts

Offered **other annual events** like Shakespeare in the Parks, Skull and Roses Ball and the Madrigal Dinner

Hosted more than **75 vendors** at our annual Artisan Festival

More than **60,000 people** attended our events in 2025

Supported by **80 volunteers** who donated **1,000 hours**

Expanded **Dia de Muertos event** brought more than 250 people together to celebrate traditional Latino culture





EDUCATION

the year in **growth**



More than 2,000 kids participated in our youth **ARTventure** activities



Collaborated with Montana Ballet on **Discover Dance** student outreach program at local schools

Hosted **Mariachi Zavala** for Artist in Residence student programs at local schools

Offered our first ever full-time summer **youth art camp** for 10 weeks

Hosted our **first culinary class** with celebrated Native American chef Mariah Gladstone



More than **250** art classes and workshops offered!

785 total class registrations; **379** youth registrations
59% of all class participants used a reduced fee when offered
85% of all youth registrations used a discount when offered



PUBLIC ART

the year in **creation**



Installed Montana-born artist Brad Rude's
To the Skyland wolf sculpture in Fire Pit Park

Created a new pocket park and installed Bozeman
artist Zak Zakovi's **Menhir** in the Town Center

Completed Big Sky's first-ever **large-scale public mural**, made by Apsáalooke (Crow) artist Stella Nall

Partnered with the Big Sky Town Center to install
more than **50 new trash can wraps** around town



Stella Nall's Mural by the Numbers

103 gallons of paint

120 hours of work

50 community input submissions

3,240 square feet of coverage

GRATITUDE

The Arts Council is supported by the following grantmaking foundations and organizations



 | Our pottery program is turning out some fun and creative ceramic art.





MUSIC IN THE MOUNTAINS

in black & white

2025

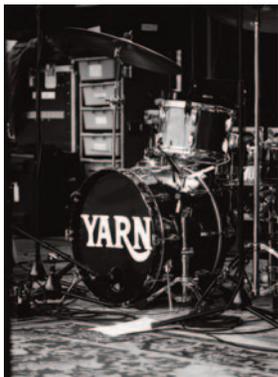


Photo by Melanie Nashan



Photo by Melanie Nashan



Photo by Melanie Nashan

BIG SKY CENTER FOR THE ARTS



The building that formerly housed the Choppers Restaurant features a central location and ample space for a variety of creative uses.

In early 2025 we officially made the move into the **Big Sky Center for the Arts**, the building we acquired toward the end of 2024. It now houses our administrative offices, a youth classroom, additional workshop space, and an event venue that can hold up to 200 people. Simply put, the building has **transformed** what we can offer to the community.

Our vision of a community gathering space is coming to fruition, as we have hosted more than **75 programs** put on by more than **40 local organizations**. From high school prom to pop-up art exhibits and community information sessions, the space has proved a valuable asset in the short time since we opened the doors. The building also allows us to host more than one art class at a time, and allows our pottery studio in the BASE community center to focus more on ceramics. In short, the Center for the Arts is a busy place, allowing us to grow our programming while expanding the options for community space rental and usage.

We have even bigger plans for the art center and our **capital campaign** is already in full swing, which will create even more options, including a radio station, several multipurpose classrooms, an expanded pottery studio, a rooftop event space, music recording studios and practice rooms, and much, much more.

Please contact us to learn more about the project or to schedule a tour of the art center!



SPOTLIGHT: DIA DE MUERTOS

DIA DE MUERTOS has a special place within the Latino community, and the Arts Council was proud to help make this annual fall celebration one to remember for everyone involved.

The event is a way to remember and celebrate those family members and friends who have passed away. We partnered with Latino community members to create a authentic offrenda—an altar adorned with photos and objects of the dearly departed, which was open to the public during the week leading up to the event. Community members were invited to place their own items to remember loved ones.

For the event itself, we brought in Utah's Mariachi Zavala, who provided beautiful Mexican mariachi music to the crowd as they danced throughout the day. Local Latino-owned businesses and individuals provided delicious food and drinks, making for a fun and festive atmos-

phere. More than 250 people came through the doors of the Center for the Arts throughout the day. Attendees could also make their own artwork to place on the offrenda.



The members of Maricahi Zavala also spent two days in the local schools, sharing the history of and playing traditional Mexican music to elementary, middle and high-school students. This

was part of our annual Artist-in-Residence Program, where we bring in a cultural and educational element to supplement the school's art curriculum.

This event was a true collaboration between many sectors of the community, proving once again that the arts have the power to unite. We look forward to carrying on and building on this tradition in the years to come.

The Dia de Muertos event and Artist in Residence program was supported by the Montana Arts Council, which is funded in part through the National Endowment for the Arts. It was also supported by a local grant from the Spanish Peaks Community Foundation.



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

MONTANA
ARTS COUNCIL

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT OF ARTS

SPOTLIGHT: SUMMER ART CAMP



2025 WAS A MILESTONE for our education program. For the first time ever, the Arts Council was able to offer a full 10 weeks of summer art camp for kids—and each week was at capacity for the duration of the summer. Each camp had a different theme, including sewing, painting, sculpture, nature, potter, collage, photography and more. A highlight was a songwriting and DJ-themed week where we partnered with KGLT, the Montana State Univer-

sity radio station in Bozeman, where kids learned basic performing and recording skills, created their own podcasts, and learned about different roles in the music industry.

“The KGLT Kids and Arts Council of Big Sky summer camp successfully helped students build confidence and find their voice through music creation,” said instructor and professional musician Brian Kassay. “I observed genuine growth in self-confidence and friendships, and it fostered collaboration and communication.”

The camp was a success in large part because of our affordable Contribute-What-You-Can fee structure, designed to make our

art programs accessible for anyone, especially local families. It was also a success because of our new building, the Big Sky Center for the Arts. This exciting new space has allowed us to offer concurrent programs and classes—something we have not been able to do in the past because of space limitations. In short, it allows us to bring *more* art to *more* people!

Plans are already underway for another great summer of youth art camp in 2026. We can’t wait!

Our education programs are funded in part through grants from the Spanish Peaks, Yellowstone Club and Moonlight Community Foundations, as well as the Morgridge Family Foundation and individual contributors.



80 hours of instruction

38 individual kids

75% used reduced fee option

reached **33%** of local elementary school population

CONTRIBUTORS

Includes donations made from January 1 – December 31, 2025

Transformational Donors (\$100,000 and up)

Big Sky Resort Area District (Resort Tax) ◊
Don Grasso ◆
Melissa McKeithen ◊
The Morgridge Family Foundation ◊
Trux and Durbin Emerson ◊
Two Bear Construction *

Champions (\$25,000-\$99,999)

Mike and Sue Arneson ◊
Cottle Carr Yaw Architects Ltd *
Joe and Mary Ann Fasanella ◊
Jereco Studios *
Lone Mountain Land Company
Jill and Nick Woodman
WSDC Foundation
Yellowstone Club Community Foundation

Visionaries (\$10,000 - \$24,999)

Big Sky Resort *
Stan and Cyndee Button ◊
Crucible * ◆
Sascha Douglass ◊
Brian and Tara Frank
The Gloré Fund
Joe Green and Michelle Kristula-Green * ◆◊
Kirsten Hilleman and Greg Slamowitz
Patti Noble and Steven Kempf
Kristin Kern
Matt Kidd
Chris Killingstad
Amy and John McHugh
Montana Arts Council
Moonlight Community Foundation
Outlaw Partners
Spanish Peaks Community Foundation
State Of Montana, Dept Of Commerce ◊
David and Betsey Stewart ◊
The Wilson Hotel *

Catalysts (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

American Bank of Montana
Big Sky Sotheby's International Realty
Bozeman Health
John and Amy Cholnok
Eric Christensen and Sue Elliott
First Security Bank
Jim and Joan Hayssen
Rob and Jill Inches
Will and Whitney Littman
Montage Big Sky
Pure West Christie's
Bob and Patty Rhea ◆
SRI Entertainment
Sally Stilwill ◊
Susan and Rob White ◆
Yellowstone Club

Stewards (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

3 Rivers Communications
James Adamek
Marilyn Alkire
Bill and Shannon Collins
Dean and Molly Cottrill
Creative West
Design Roofing & Restoration
Martin and Kathy Dudley ◆
Paul Farrell and Paula Cleary ◆◆
Maude Gloré Charitable Fund ◆◆
Paula Turner ◆
Dianne G House *
Kendrick Family
Sheena Kidd
Court and Robin Lorenzini
Moonlight Basin ◊
Matt and Heather Morris
Whit and Nancy Peyton
Sean and Karla Slade
James and Solace Southwick

The Dreebin Family ◆
The Shearson Family Giving Fund ◆

Advocates (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Rich and Lori Addicks
Matt Armentrout & Maura Trumble
Frank and Paula Bennett
Big Sky Landscaping & Irrigation
Broken Spoke Bar & Grill
Conoco Big Sky
Bill and Koko Corbin ◆
Doug and Cathy DeVries
Bennett Drozic
Gallatin Canyon Women's Club
Mark and Cindy Fritz Family Foundation ◆◆
George and Lili Geiser
Brian and Dawn Gonick
High Altitude Property Management
Jed and Liz Hogan
Jessica Howard
Hungry Moose Market
Dr. Laurie Simon Kaguni
John and Deborah Lahey
Mark and Jill Littlejohn
Lowery Donor Advised Fund at East Texas
Communities Foundation
Tim and Debby McKenna
NorthWestern Energy
Marilyn Olson
Overholt Family Charitable Fund
Bill and Jennifer Reed
Ray and Erin Schultz
Alisa Scott
Angela Shirley
Carol Stack and David Cleveland
John and Beth Stein
The Cave Spirits & Gifts
The Rocks
Ty and Krista Traxler

Teri Turner ♦
Curt and Juju Vinson
Bill and Reny Willoughby

Friends (up to \$999)

Steve and LeAnn Adams
Anna Allen
Adrienne Amin
Peter H. Bachman and Janet Rice
Robert Becker and Diane Handler
Mary Bentley
Sara Berkstresser
Erika Berndt
Paul and Randi Betz
Big Sky Thrift *
Mike and Colleen Cleary-Boyer
David Broederdorf
By All Means Brewery LLC *
Charlie and Melanie Callander
Jason and Molly Carrico
Melissa Cashman *
Kaz Chaffin
Thad Beaty and Annie Clements
Jeffrey Collett and Mary Margaret Rajala
Kathy Colwell and Conrad Hooge
Halley Connolly - Bennett Enterprises. Inc.
Audrae Coury
Greg and Susan Darden
John and Toni Delzer
Patricia Doherty
Quint and Cicely Drennan
Randy Erlenbach and Sian Hunter
Ann Fetzer
Marilyn Flint
Phil Fluke and Betsy McFadden
Lulu Freer
Chase Gallaway
Jonathan Gans
Amanda Gensemer

Kirsten Gnipp ♦
Mary Grundman
Jennifer Guenther
Jim and LynnAnne Hagar
Tessa Haggerty Roby
Bob and Joanie Hall *
Sydney Hammermeister
Mark and Myriah Hanno
Sharon Harbarger
Wendy Helfand
Jared Stein and Kimberly Helmes
Graham and Jennifer Hill
Wayne and Marilyn Hill
Chris Horst
Brian Hurlbut
John Johnson
Steven and Carolyn Jones Fund of The Greater
Cincinnati Foundation
Rich and Leslie Jorgenson
Karst Stage, Inc. *
John and Brenda Keating
Bob and Pat Kimmel
Frank and Carol Kistler
Tamara Knappenberger
Haley Konen
Yarrow Kraner and Ania Bulis
Lakeshirts *
Carl John Lange ♦
Darius and Cindy Larsen
Brad and Melissa Levine ♦
Deb Lewis
Matt Lydens and Claire Thayer
Brian and Mary MacDonald
Karen Macklin and Don Mattusch
Marc and Joanna Mantell
Miles Mason
Misayo Matsuda
Victoria May
Dennis and Thais Mishler

Susan Moncada *
Matt Mudek and Laynee Jones
Lisa O Kaufman
One Valley Community Foundation
Fred Orgas and JeNelle Johnson
Chris and Yvette Palermo ♦
Erich Pessl
Allen and Emily Potts
Kjersti Powell ♦
Caroline Price
Jillian Ramos ♦
Ron and Dana Reilly
Leon and Vera Remeniuk
Ann Rhoads
Matthew Richter
Donna Swank Rudiger
Kelly Ruhstaller
Paul Schaus
Mike and Andrea Scholz
Todd and Le Ann Shaw
Keely Sieg
Jerod Skyberg
Patricia Snider-Mueller
Soren and Ruthi Solari
Bayard Dominick and Callie Stoltz
Cal and Kendall Thomas
Ben and Emilie Tucker
Christi Turner
Charles and Stephanie Uter
Greg and Emilie Wagner
Derek Wallace
Rudy and Margaret Warren

* Includes In Kind Donations

◻ Includes Capital Campaign Donations

♦ Includes Public Art Donations



OUR MISSION: To enrich our community through artistic experiences

OUR VISION: A community connected to and inspired by art

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Melissa McKeithen **President**

Sheena Kidd **Vice President**

Betsey Stewart **Secretary**

Chris Johnson **Treasurer**

Sue Elliott

Michelle Kristula-Green

Peter Mathieson

Sally Stilwill

Heather Haynes

Robin Kendrick

Ron Reilly

A special thanks to former board members Kirsten Hilleman, Durbin Emerson, Trux Emerson and Marilyn Alkire, whose terms ended in 2025.

STAFF

Brian Hurlbut **Executive Director**

Katie Alvin **Development Director**

Rebecca Burns **Education Program Manager**

Jesine Munson **Public Art & Outreach Manager**

Bex LaCroix **Development Manager**

Tamara Knappenberger **Events & Volunteer Manager**

Kate Hammermeister **Digital Media Coordinator**

Yvonne Leung **Stewardship Coordinator**

Sierra Hooge **Studio Coordinator**

Zach Stephens **Studio Art Educator**

Shannon Brennan **Studio Art Educator**

Libby Flach **Studio Art Educator**

Jason Tobkin **Studio Art Educator**

Anna Schlehuder **Studio Art Educator**

Amy Gitchell **Studio Art Educator**

bigskyarts.org

406.995.2742 • PO Box 160308 • 77 Lone Peak Drive • Big Sky, MT 59716



Back Cover: Summer art campers help beautify Big Sky. **Right:** Mariachi Zavela performs outside at the Dia de Muertos celebration.

BIG SKY CENTER FOR THE ARTS



Arts Council of Big Sky • PO Box 160308 • 77 Lone Peak Drive • Big Sky, MT 59716



bigskyarts.org