

## Arts Council of Princeton

### Strategic Plan

For the years

2007 – 2011

Approved by the Board of Trustees 12.7.06

#### Mission

The mission of the Arts Council of Princeton is to build community through the arts by providing opportunities for appreciation of and participation in the visual, performing, and literary arts in Princeton and the greater Princeton region. The Arts Council of Princeton is a multi-disciplinary organization encompassing three key functions:

- Operating a center for arts education, exhibitions, literary events, and performing arts that is accessible to people of all ages and from all socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds;
- Serving the community through events, as an advocate for arts appreciation, and as a catalyst for artistic activity in the region; and
- Providing a support, advocacy, and coordinating structure for local artists and arts organizations.

Arts Council programs provide a common ground where people from diverse backgrounds can come together through creative endeavors, which are the essence of our humanity.

#### Executive Summary

This is an exciting time for the Arts Council of Princeton (ACP). The general climate of expanded arts activities in the vicinity, including Princeton University's Creative and Performing Arts Initiative, has set the stage for Princeton to become a major destination for arts and culture in central New Jersey. ACP, with the construction of the renovated Paul Robeson Center for the Arts and the improvement of its programs, is positioned to be a key cultural and arts leader. Close to 30,000 people annually participate in ACP programs and events, a number that is expected to grow in the coming five years.

The Arts Council's Board and Staff, in a planning process undertaken during mid-2006, reaffirmed the organization's mission statement and its goal of serving the community without barriers of race, class, socioeconomic status, age, education, or cultural background. ACP's programs remain open to all and no membership fee or proof of local residency is required to participate in any class, program, or event.

ACP supports its mission through arts education activities, professional exhibitions and performances, outreach to diverse populations, and community partnerships.

ACP recognizes that the arts are a powerful tool for advancing social change and cross-cultural understanding. Arts education programs are a proven means to promote self-esteem and improve literacy and academic achievement. The arts are a vehicle for successful economic development; it is anticipated that the Paul Robeson Center will make a major contribution to the economic health and vitality of downtown Princeton.

With these important issues in mind, the vision for ACP is an ambitious one. The new Paul Robeson Center, double the size of ACP's original WPA-era building, will include greatly improved studio, gallery, and performance space. Using audience surveys and focus groups, ACP will continue to engage the community in the process of developing meaningful and relevant programs. The Paul Robeson Center belongs to the entire community; meeting, performance, rehearsal, and event space will be made available to community groups for free or at nominal rates. ACP will honor the Paul Robeson building's roots as a community center by building strong bridges with the residents of the Witherspoon-Jackson neighborhood.

The Paul Robeson Center will anchor our community's arts and cultural activities, serving to bring together diverse segments of our community through classes, performances, exhibitions, and events. Beyond the Paul Robeson Center, ACP programs will expand to enrich the cultural life of area residents of all ages and backgrounds. Those activities will take place in the streets, parks, and community centers. They will happen in partnership with numerous other cultural and social service providers, including exhibitions in the Princeton Public Library, after-school classes with HomeFront, and after-school classes in Princeton Young Achievers Learning Centers. In addition, ACP will continue and improve events such as Communiversity Festival of the Arts, Cinco de Mayo, and Black History Month celebrations. ACP will expand arts education programming, including outreach to at-risk youth; will develop a directory of local artists; and will prioritize the development of teen, senior, and multicultural programs.

During the renovation of its building, ACP is based in the conTEMPORARY Arts Center, an interim facility in the Princeton Shopping Center that will be utilized until the opening of the Paul Robeson Center. During the construction period ACP will incrementally improve its programs, increase its membership, and expand its operational capacity in order to be fully prepared to occupy the larger facility. In support of the increased capacity of the facility, the budget will double over a five-year period, from under \$500,000 before construction started, to \$1 million in the second year of operation in the new building. This will be accompanied by an improved organizational infrastructure, increased fundraising, and improved marketing.

ACP Board, Staff and Committee members have been engaged in an ongoing process of evaluating programs and imagining a vision for the future of the organization and the impact it will have on the artists' community, the general public, and the Witherspoon-Jackson neighborhood. Once ACP has moved into the Paul Robeson Center, it will continue to develop programs that are responsive to the needs of the community and that ensure that high-quality arts programs remain affordable and accessible. In this way, it will effectively address its mission of building community through the arts.

Note on updates: This plan is designed to be an ongoing, living, and working document. Attachments are an essential aspect of the plan and will be periodically revised.

Attachments:

- A. Programming outline
- B. Capacity building outline
- C. 2007 timeline

The following documents relevant to this plan are in the Operations Manual:

- Operating budget
- Personnel plan
- Detailed program plans
- Development and marketing plan
- Board governance policy
- Policies and procedures

## ATTACHMENT A

### ARTS COUNCIL OF PRINCETON

#### PROGRAMMING OUTLINE

The ACP Board and Staff, in the planning process undertaken in mid-2006, identified priorities for ACP's programming that include: artistic excellence, accessibility, relevance, and collaboration. It is the vision of the Arts Council of Princeton that high-quality, accessible arts programs be offered for all segments of the community.

It is our vision that the programs of the Arts Council of Princeton will:

- Cultivate the visual, performing, and literary arts in the greater Princeton region
- Foster collaborations with other organizations
- Provide high-quality arts education that is accessible and affordable
- Build community through participation in and presentation of meritorious programming
- Allow participants to take risks and experiment
- Create access to innovative and experimental art
- Address topics relevant to the community in general and to the neighborhood in particular

Programs of the Arts Council of Princeton are planned to include:

#### Arts Education

- Classes and workshops for children, teens, and adults (including seniors) in the visual arts, including: painting, drawing, ceramics, mixed media, film/video, and photography
- Classes and workshops for children, teens, and adults (including seniors) in the performing and literary arts, including: dance, theater, music, and poetry

Outreach programs that provide free classes to at-risk and disenfranchised children and families including:

- Arts Exchange: weekly programs for homeless youth in partnership with HomeFront and other social service and community organizations and offered at the Arts Council facility.
- Art-Reach: after-school programs for at-risk youth in partnership with Princeton Nursery School, Princeton Young Achievers, and other community organizations that place ACP artists in community learning centers and other venues where there are students

Other programs that serve students include:

- Under Age: an annual literary and visual art anthology for students K-12
- Kids at Work: a gallery program that brings school groups into exhibitions for a docent tour and hands-on project based on the exhibition; and
- Other relevant programs to be developed working with the schools and community organizations

With teens as a focus, ACP plans to develop a film/video component that will provide hands-on training and experience as well as enable ACP to document and promote its own programs

Art Matters - Arts in Literacy Initiative: ACP, in cooperation with Rutgers University, the local schools, and other community partners to be identified, plans to develop an arts in literacy program that will train teachers to use the arts more effectively as an educational tool to help teach academic subjects.

Community Programs – including the following sampling of ACP community events:

- Communiversities Festival of the Arts
- Hometown Halloween Parade
- Cultural events such as Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month, Day of the Dead, Hometown Halloween parade and other free activities for people of all ages and backgrounds
- Free concerts modeled after the Princeton Shopping Center summer courtyard concert series

Visual Arts Exhibitions and related programs:

- Focus on contemporary art with a balance of emerging to established, local to internationally known, in all visual arts media
- Promote cross-cultural understanding and diversity by providing a multicultural balance of artists and themes
- Provide exhibition opportunities for ACP students and faculty and local artists
- Encourage artistic innovation and experimentation
- Seek opportunities for satellite exhibitions, continuing with Library shows and looking for other exhibition opportunities, especially for the display of student works from ACP programs
- Develop a viable public art policy and program over a five-year period

Film, Performing, and Literary Arts

- Produce and present performing arts (including music, dance, and theater), film, and literary events with a diverse range of themes and approaches in order to support local talent as well as expose the local community to national and international talent

- Promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding through film and performing and literary arts offerings
- Provide performance, rehearsal, and event space for community and arts groups at affordable rates or, where appropriate, free of charge

General/Multi-disciplinary programs

- Artists-in-residence program – to be developed utilizing the Anne Reeves studio and other studios within the facility, depending on the discipline of the resident artist
- Workshops, lectures, networking functions, and panel discussions that support and educate working artists in all media
- Meeting, gathering, and rehearsal space for local working artists
- Explore the possibility of ACP satellite program space at the Princeton Shopping Center or elsewhere

ATTACHMENT B

Capacity Building and Institutional Transformation

Plan Summary:

The expansion and transformation of the organization will encompass the following aspects:

- Increased staffing for programming and administration
- Increased capacity for marketing and development
- Improved compensation for staff and faculty to enable the recruitment and retention of the most qualified personnel
- Increased capacity for technology, security, and maintenance

ACP is currently conducting a study of other arts organizations in order to develop a comprehensive and accurate operating budget for the expanded Paul Robeson Center. We are planning for a multi-year process of capacity building that will cost approximately \$500,000 above and beyond the 2004/05 operating budget of \$590,000.

Operating budget estimated increases in expenses:

2004/05\* 2005/06\* 2006/07 2007/08 2008/09

Total operating: \$589,524 \$602,033 \$737,500 \$860,000 \$1,000,000

Approximate expense breakdown:

Program Personnel \$135,857 \$308,020 \$368,500 \$429,850 \$ 499,500

Admin. Personnel 214,214 102,206 169,250 191,150 229,500

Operations 239,453 191,807 199,750 239,000 271,000

\*: Actual FYE totals – FY ends June 30

## ATTACHMENT C

### YEAR 1 – 2007

#### Construction, Development, and Move-In Timeline

January 2007: Staffing needs determined – plan in place for hiring new staff

Winter classes and programs in conTEMPORARY Arts Center

March 2007: Final phase of construction

Final phase push on Capital Fundraising

April 2007: Communiversity Festival of the Arts on April 28

Spring classes and programs in conTEMPORARY Arts Center

May 2007: Annual drive

Construction near completion

June 2007: Summer Arts and Drama Camp moved to Princeton Junior School

Construction completed

Marketing on grand opening of Paul Robeson Center begun

July 2007: Furnishings and equipment installed in PRC

Preparations underway for move to PRC

Summer concert series at Princeton Shopping Center

August 2007: Summer Camp supplies moved to PRC

Operations moved from conTEMPORARY Arts Center to PRC (end of August/beginning of September)

September 2007: Grand opening of PRC to public

Launch of Endowment Campaign

Fall classes and programs in PRC

Inaugural exhibition opens in PRC Gallery

40 for 40 series commences in celebration of Arts Council's 40th anniversary; the series will consist of 40 performances and events over a four- to six-month period