

## Creative Aging Network-NC



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# 2014 Annual Report

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## The Arts & Aging Movement

*by Lia Miller, Executive Director*

2014 proved to be an interesting and exciting year for Creative Aging Network-NC (CAN-NC). In partnership with the NC Arts Council and the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, we implemented the **Arts & Aging Survey**. The results confirmed what we already knew - that the top barriers for engaging older people in the arts are *cost* and *transportation*. Arts organizations said they wanted to learn new ways to *attract and engage older adult audiences* and healthcare providers wanted to learn to *develop creative programming for older adults*. And nearly half the respondents wanted help *building partnerships across the arts and aging service provider disciplines*. These results and associated survey comments will help inform our plans and programming for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Creative Aging Symposium scheduled for May 2015. Look for details online soon at <http://www.can-nc.org/creative-aging-symposium/>.

Speaking of the **Symposium**, we were honored to have Tim Carpenter as the keynote speaker for our May 2014 event. Tim is the founder and executive director of EngAGE, a nonprofit that changes aging and the way people think about aging by transforming senior apartment communities into vibrant centers of learning, wellness, and creativity. Tim's timely message about senior apartments and arts communities resonated with the 74 attendees and generated a great deal of excitement about the potential for developing a similar model in our state.

Other **special events** included hosting Creative Aging Day at the Greensboro Cultural Arts Center as part of the **CAN-NC Arts Festival**, celebrating arts & aging during May (Older Americans Month). We also co-sponsored the Green Living Arts Festival in downtown Greensboro, provided table art for the symposium Re-imagining the Future: Community Conversations on Aging in Guilford County, and provided an intergenerational hands-on arts activity at the World Elder Abuse Walk in Kernersville. Additionally, CAN-NC coordinated Intergenerational Conversations, an expansion of StoryCorps@yourlibrary in partnership with the Greensboro Public Library.

In May, I was honored to serve as **keynote speaker** at the "Non-Pharmacological Interventions for Dementia Patients" seminar in Charleston, SC. Throughout the year I also provided presentations at the 2014 NCRPA Therapeutic Recreation Conference in Concord, the Winter Symposium: New Year New Memories for The Geriatric/Adult Mental Health Specialty Teams (A Division of Therapeutic Alternatives Behavior Healthcare) in Chapel Hill, and at Geriatrics 360: Coping with the Degrees of Aging Conference in Greensboro. I was especially fortunate to volunteer with many of my peers at The Creative Age: Leadership Exchange Conference hosted by the National Center for Creative Aging in Washington, DC.



### A Connector

CAN-NC connects artists with healthcare professionals and offers resources for best practices and evidence-based program models.



### A Convener

CAN-NC brings together local and national experts and leaders to strengthen and expand the arts and aging movement.



### A Catalyst

CAN-NC provides programs for older adults as well as consulting and training services for both arts and healthcare organizations to promote healthy aging through the arts.

**Creative Aging Network-NC is a 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit whose mission is to enhance the well-being of older people in North Carolina through creative arts programming, education, and training.**

## Statewide Program Excellence

Each year brings new challenges and new opportunities. As we continue to address the ever-growing needs of our older adult population, we know it's just as important to raise awareness about the positive health benefits which result from engaging in the arts. Ultimately, creative aging is all about using the power of creative self-expression to promote a longer, healthier, and happier life. We aim to do just that by reaching out to older people of all ability levels across the state and providing art classes in the spaces they live and gather. In 2014, we provided 106 creative classes for approximately 128 older adults in disciplines such as clay sculpture, paper and book-making, acrylic and watercolor painting, TimeSlips storytelling, wood sculpture, spoken word poetry, terrariums, building "Little Free Libraries" and much more.

### Creative Programs for Older Adults

- Challenge the mind
- Reduce stress
- Build self-confidence
- Honor skills & voices
- Build our social network
- Provide meaning & purpose

In partnership with the Alzheimer's Poetry Project, Greensboro Public Library, and the NC Arts Council, CAN-NC coordinated **Poetry for Life** training and workshops in the Triad. A pilot project to join the skills and passion of the young poets of the Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest, with elders at senior, assisted living and adult day care centers, Poetry for Life training was facilitated by founder Gary Glazner for 8 teaching artists and 18 community members. Twenty four youth participated in workshops with 42 older adults and 13 staff at 2 aging service facilities.

In partnership with Elsewhere Museum and with funding from Guilford Green Foundation, CAN-NC completed the documentary **Then & Now: exploring LGBTQ stories across generations**. Video interviews with 19 people aged 15 to 78 resulted in a 30 minute film which highlighted personal stories of coming out, falling in love, and striving for equal rights. The film premiered to an audience of 85 at Carousel Cinemas in Greensboro.



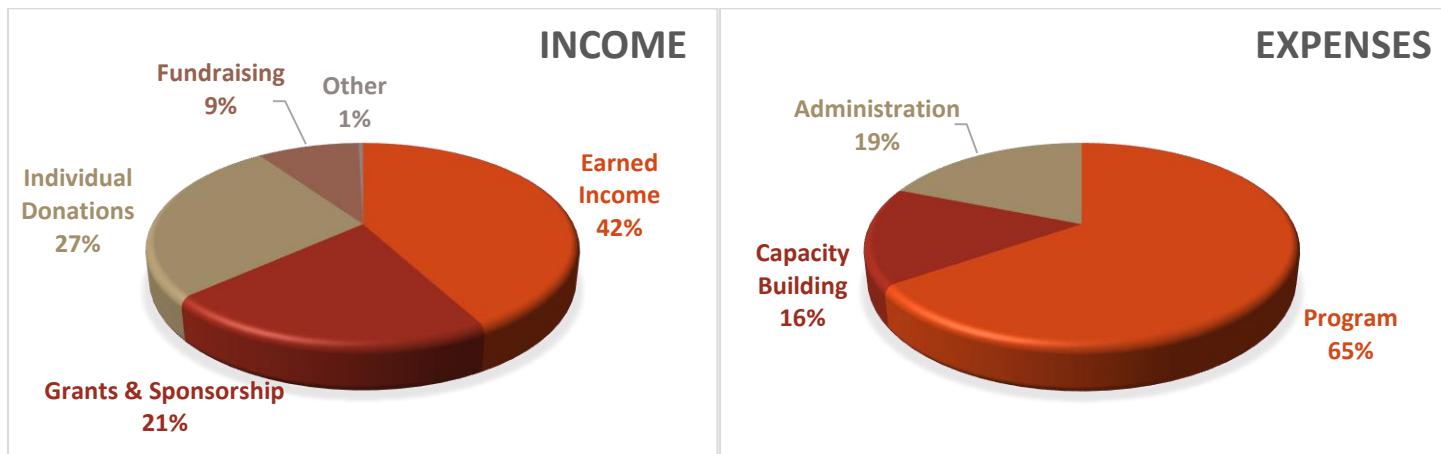
Due to need and interest, CAN-NC formed the **Greensboro Senior Artists (GSA) Guild** with 20 initial members. Six of the artists exhibited their work as part of the CAN-NC Arts Festival in May and several participated in arts & craft fairs throughout the year.

**Consulting** continued with aging service providers to assist them with program enhancement and space planning (pictured left).

The efforts of CAN-NC to advance mission-related activities such as these would not be possible without our state-wide network of caring and concerned individuals, partners, funders, and organizations. We thank you for your support!

## Financial Sustainability

In FY 2014, expenses were well-managed with more than 80% devoted to programmatic activities and capacity building. To advance progress we invested in artist training, marketing, strategic planning, and board development.



We are especially grateful to those who helped us advance our mission in 2014 by supporting the arts and aging movement. With a generous contribution from Board Advisor and long-time supporter Jim Weikel, we were able to establish the **Weikel Network Fund**. This working capital fund will better establish CAN-NC as the *only state-wide resource utilizing the arts to improve the health and overall well-being of older people*.



Our signature **Art Parties** brought together more than 65 people to engage in art making, generate funds, and raise awareness about the valuable role the arts play in the health and wellness of older North Carolinians. We are honored and grateful that our participants and donors respect our stewardship, embrace our mission, and are a vital part of promoting the arts and aging movement in North Carolina.

