

KEY FINDINGS

ArtsVision: State of the Arts goals and strategies are outlined below.

ADVOCACY: Speak For the Arts

- ▼ Increase awareness of the value of the arts for economic development, educational achievement, community health and wellness, and other quality of life issues.
- ▼ Advocate for public and private funding of the arts at the local, state, and national levels.
- ▼ Advocate for public policy initiatives to benefit the arts at the local, state, and national levels.

ART-IN-PUBLIC-PLACES:

Create Art-In-Public-Places Programs in Howard County

- ▼ Research best practices and successful models for creating public art programs.
- ▼ Assess feasibility of creating a public art program.



ARTISTS: Foster Individual Artistic Expression

- ▼ Increase opportunities for artists to live, work, study and present their work in Howard County.
- ▼ Provide professional development opportunities for artists.
- ▼ Provide opportunities for dialogue between and among artists and the public.

ARTS ORGANIZATIONS:

Strengthen Arts Organizations

- ▼ Strengthen administrative, programmatic, and management practices to build organizational capacity.
- ▼ Raise the profile of arts organizations in the larger community.
- ▼ Diversify the funding base.
- ▼ Continue to build professional relationships and partnerships, both locally and regionally.

EDUCATION: Provide Opportunities for Life-long Learning

- ▼ Continue to develop educational and participatory experiences in the arts for people of all ages, abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds.
- ▼ Continue to develop and strengthen K-12 arts curriculum programs in the Howard County schools and recognize that the arts are a core part of the curriculum.

ETHNIC DIVERSITY: Embrace and Celebrate Ethnic and Culturally Diverse Artistic Expression, Recognizing its Contribution to the Broader Community

- ▼ Continue efforts to ensure that culturally diverse artists and art forms are presented.
- ▼ Continue to integrate ethnically and culturally diverse art and culture in K-12 and higher education curricula.
- ▼ Foster communication and collaboration among diverse cultural arts groups.
- ▼ Provide leadership opportunities in the arts for people of ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds.

FUNDING: Develop and Sustain a Diverse Funding Base for the Arts

- ▼ Advocate for a stable and increasing government funding base.
- ▼ Develop funding strategies that increase individual, foundation, and corporate support.
- ▼ Promote the important contributions that the arts make to economic development, educational achievement, community health and wellness, and other quality of life issues.
- ▼ Increase government, foundation, and corporate understanding of the value of partnering with the arts.
- ▼ Investigate and develop sources for earned income.

HOWARD COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL: Support the Mission of the Howard County Arts Council, which is to Serve the Citizens of Howard County by Fostering the Arts, Artists and Arts Organizations

- ▼ Develop initiatives that foster the arts and encourage community-wide participation in the arts.
- ▼ Advocate on behalf of public and private funding for the arts and public policy regarding the arts.
- ▼ Strengthen the foundation for community-based arts to insure Howard County citizens have access to the arts.
- ▼ Expand and diversify the Arts Council funding base.
- ▼ Increase awareness of the Arts Council and its programs and activities.
- ▼ Strengthen and expand the programmatic and organizational capacities of the Arts Council.

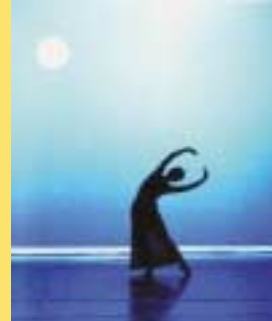
MARKETING AND AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT: Develop New Arts Audiences

Develop New Arts Audiences

- ▼ Improve and diversify marketing skills of artists and arts organizations.
- ▼ Continue efforts to reach out to underserved and non-traditional audiences.
- ▼ Create opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds to participate in the arts.

SPACE: Identify and Develop Appropriate Spaces for the Arts

- ▼ Maintain existing arts spaces and ensure accessibility.
 - ▼ Conduct a facility needs assessment and feasibility study in order to define space needs for the arts and the community and to determine the capital and operating costs needed to sustain them.
 - ▼ Advocate for the creation of an "Arts & Entertainment District" in Howard County.
- To achieve these goals, those with a vested interest in advancing the arts – artists, arts organizations, educators, funders and policy makers – need to do their part.

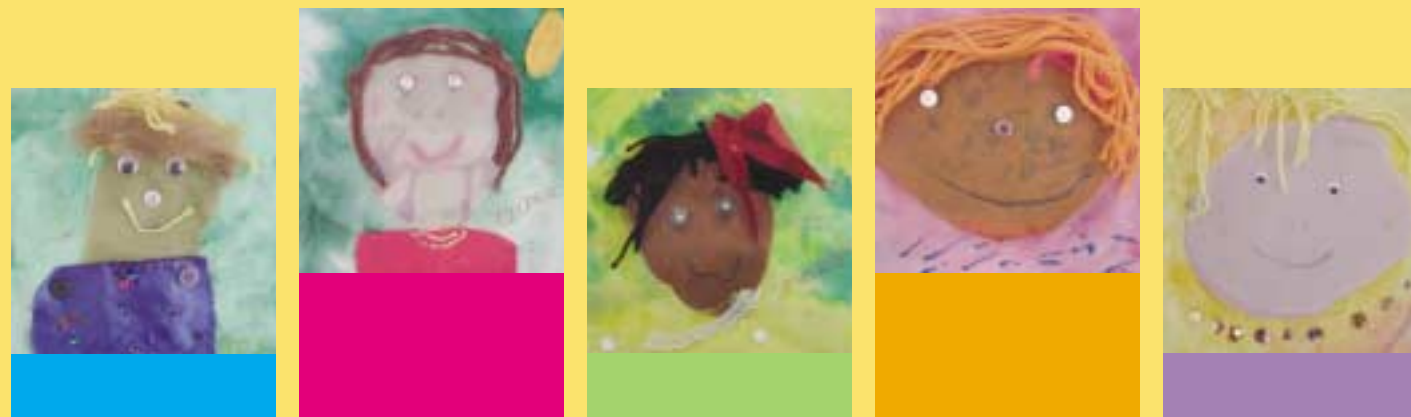


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



ARTSVISION

State of the Arts in Howard County 2003



BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The arts are a vital part of community life. Recognizing their value to the community, Howard County government commissioned a comprehensive cultural needs assessment in 1987, which included a profile of the community, feasibility study and facility needs report. The *Cultural Needs Assessment* involved over 4,000 participants and defined, for the first time, the cultural profile of Howard County artists and citizens.

Using the assessment as the foundation for a cultural plan, the Howard County Arts Council engaged the community in a year-long planning process that resulted in *ArtsVision 2001*, the ten-year strategic plan for the arts. The plan, published in 1992, incorporated the ideas and concerns of 700

artists and community members. Goals and strategies were developed to address 12 issue areas: advocacy; art-in-public-places; arts organizations; artists; audiences; education; funding; Howard County Arts Council; multiculturalism; participation; regional partnerships; and space.

For ten years, *ArtsVision 2001* guided the arts community, resulting in new facilities, increased opportunities and access to the arts, and many other accomplishments. By 2001, the arts community, as well as the county, had dramatically grown and changed. In light of these changes, the Arts Council set out to assess and update *ArtsVision 2001*. The process began in October 2002 after funding was secured from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Howard County Arts Council, Columbia Association, and the Maryland State Arts Council. The 60-page report, *ArtsVision: State of the Arts in Howard County 2003*, was completed in March 2003.

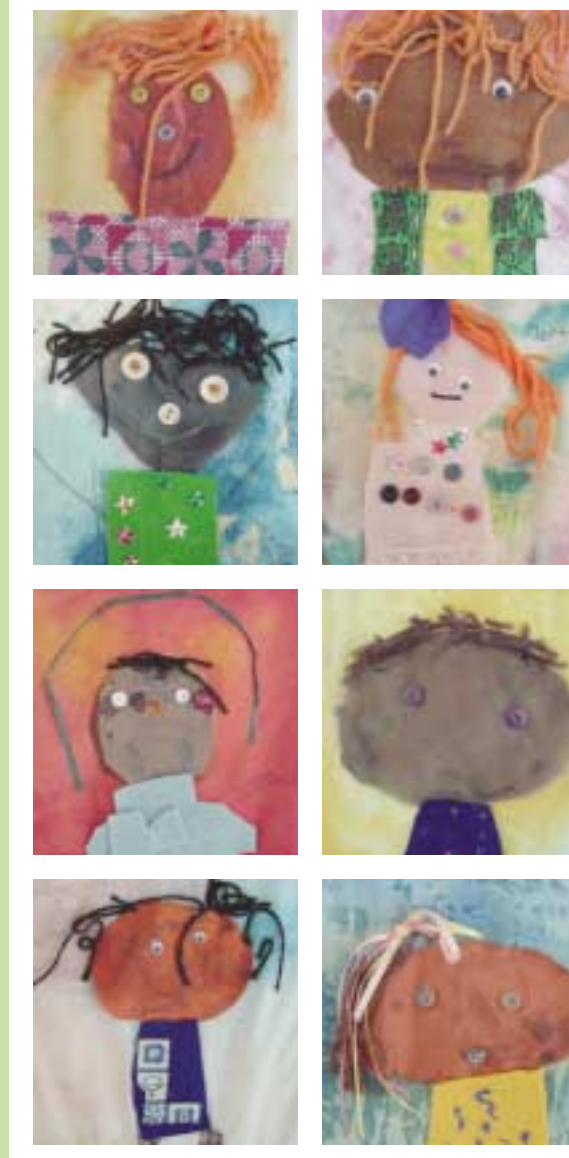


PHOTO CREDITS:

Cover, top to bottom: (1) Hua Sha Chinese Dance Center; (2) Bruce Nelson as "Teddy" in the Rep Stage production of "Faith Healer"; (3) Quilt blocks from "Unified Fabric of Life," made by the Ellicott City Head Start students with artist-in-residence Maria Theresa Fernandes and the National Quilting Association.

Map: See (3) above.

Inside Left: James Shipp on the vibraphone with accompanist Nolan Ericsson.

Inside Center: (1) Rob McQuay on stage at The Jim Rouse Theatre for the Performing Arts. Photo: Karl Lauenstein; (2) The Columbia Orchestra with Jason Love, conductor; (3) Benjie Porecki at the Celebration of the Arts in Howard County. Photo: Karl Lauenstein

Inside Right: Columbia Festival for the Arts 2001 lakefront activities.

Back Cover: Howard County Center for the Arts gallery view.



For a copy of the full *ArtsVision: State of the Arts* report, please contact:
The Howard County Arts Council,
8510 High Ridge Road, Ellicott City, MD 21043
Phone: 410/313-ARTS (2787)

▼ PLANNING PROCESS

The Arts Council partnered with Vision Howard County to undertake the project. The project consultants, Jean Moon & Associates, conducted research and evaluated and compiled the results. To ensure broad community input, the assessment process was overseen by a 27-member Steering Committee made up of arts, business, community, education, and government leaders.

During the assessment process, the consultants sent out surveys and conducted



numerous interviews and focus groups to gather information and identify future goals for the arts in Howard County. Two surveys, one sent to arts organizations and leaders in the county, the other distributed to arts patrons and the general public, garnered 898 responses. In addition, thirty 45-minute interviews and eight focus groups were held with community and arts leaders. The Steering Committee and the Howard County Arts Council Board of Directors vetted the findings. As a result, more than 1,000 people participated in the *ArtsVision: State of the Arts* process.

▼ PLANNING GUIDE

ArtsVision: State of the Arts in Howard County 2003 builds on the goals and strategies outlined in *ArtsVision 2001* and provides the citizens of Howard County with an assessment of the arts in the county today.

ArtsVision: State of the Arts is not an action plan for any agency, public or private. It is designed to serve as an advocacy tool and planning guide for artists, arts organizations, educators, funders, and policy-makers. As they look towards the future, individuals and groups can use the report to identify goals and strategies to address that are relevant to their own missions and development. As a practical tool and guide, *ArtsVision: State of the Arts*:

- ▼ Provides a “snapshot” of Howard County, including current demographic, economic, and social data.

- ▼ Evaluates the “state of the arts” nationally, in Maryland, and in Howard County, utilizing data from many sources.
- ▼ Recommends ways to achieve the goals identified during the six-month process and offers innovative ideas that arose in interviews and surveys.
- ▼ Identifies indicators that individuals and groups can use to monitor change in the arts community and to track the success of organizations’ efforts.
- ▼ Provides resource information for artists and arts organizations as they build their plans for the future.

Overall, *ArtsVision: State of the Arts* participants believe the arts community in Howard County has prospered and grown over the last decade. However, participants also believe challenges remain and cited funding, leadership issues, audience development, arts education for youth, space limitations, and issues around diversity as the most pressing challenges facing the arts community today.

▼ HOWARD COUNTY: A SNAPSHOT

Howard County is home to approximately 250,000 residents. Its population has grown 32% in the last decade, and it is



the third-fastest growing county in the state, behind Calvert at 45% and Worcester at 33%. One quarter of its population is non-White, 20% has some type of disability, 10% is made up of those 60 and older, and 56 different languages are spoken in its schools. Conveniently located between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., 62% of the workforce commutes daily to jobs outside of the county.



The Howard County Public School System has ranked first among Maryland’s 24 school districts on the state’s School Performance Assessment Report Card for 8 of the last 10 years. The school system has been able to improve performance results despite a 42.6% increase in the number of students since the 1991-92 school year.

Howard County ranks eighth among counties nationwide for its percentage of residents with a higher education and opportunities for adult education abound. Credit and non-credit courses are offered at the Howard Community College and four other colleges with campuses in Howard County. In addition, year-round classes for both children and adults are offered at dozens of arts and community centers.

Howard County has created 52,073 jobs since 1990, a growth rate of 64.4% – the highest in Maryland – while the population has grown 32%. This growth has been fueled largely by the high tech industries, but the county retains a diverse economic base that is fundamental to a healthy economy. As a result, Howard County has a very low unemployment rate, below that of both the state and the nation. It is also the 10th richest county in the United States, with a median household income of \$74,167. With this tax base, there are many amenities available to citizens, including exceptional public schools, public recreation facilities, and cultural opportunities.



▼ HOWARD COUNTY: THE STATE OF THE ARTS

ArtsVision: State of the Arts shows that Howard County’s arts community is healthy and well-supported. Attendance has increased in the past decade and local public funding (general, not capital) from Howard County Government ranks the county 2nd in the state, well above the national averages.

The variety and quality, as well as number, of arts offerings in Howard County is impressive. Presenters include long-established arts organizations, as well as newer groups seeking their own niche. A growing number of ethnically-specific organizations, such as the Korean American Association of Howard County and the Pakistani-American Arts Council, are presenting arts programs within their communities. The increase in diverse programming and presentation of ethnically diverse artists is a matter of pride among local arts organizations and is seen by *ArtsVision: State of the Arts* participants as one of the major successes of the past decade.

The county’s arts organizations have also been successful in broadening their reach by drawing audiences from outside of the county to local arts events. According to surveys distributed at arts events held during the first quarter of 2003, 20-30% of the attendees do not live in Howard County.

Support for the arts, in terms of participation and public funding, is one way to determine their significance in a community. In FY02, the Arts Council awarded 27 grants to Howard County nonprofits that presented public programs, 252,935 people attended their events. Budget reports show that nonprofit arts organizations received 35.4% of

their funding from private sources; 20% from public sector support; and 45% from earned income. Revenues generated by these organizations totaled over \$3.1 million and audiences spent approximately \$500,000 on admissions, which generated an additional \$1.1 million in secondary spending.



While the arts in Howard County appear to be flourishing, challenges remain. Education of our young people is seen by *ArtsVision: State of the Arts* participants as the factor most critical to the future prosperity – if not survival – of the arts in Howard County. Participants

cited the need for equitable access to quality arts education as a pressing concern.

Leadership transition and board development were cited by *ArtsVision: State of the Arts* participants as challenges for the years ahead. As some of the founders of Howard County’s premier arts groups prepare to retire after 25 years or more at the helm, there is concern that groups will not be able to afford to replace current leadership.

ArtsVision: State of the Arts participants see marketing and audience development as a continual challenge and believe creative approaches will be needed to reach new audiences as the county’s demographics continue to change.

The growth in arts organizations, programming and audiences has put additional strain on existing facilities, making it even more difficult to schedule arts activities and find affordable rehearsal, studio and performance space.

And, while public and private support for the arts in Howard County is above the national average, earned income is not. Nonprofit arts organizations, already operating on tight budgets, may have to stream-line operations even further if the current economic decline continues or they need to come up with new income sources.