

Staff Reports | March 2024

Summer Callahan, Grants Manager

Summer held a "Revenue Relevancy Partnership" workshop with grant writer Jan Rodusky on February 2nd, which was a hybrid workshop with 34 attendees on Zoom and 5 in-person. Attendees gave positive feedback and she hopes to offer similar workshops in the future. She submitted the National Endowment for the Arts application for regranting funds in 2025. She has been working with the Grants Sub-committee and Leon County to revise the grant guidelines and application in anticipation of the grant cycle opening April 24. She stated that the National Songwriters Association International, Tallahassee Chapter, expressed interest in having a songwriting workshop at Domi Station. She has attended events representing COCA, including Stop At The Station and the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra's Conductor Reveal. She will give a presentation on local arts agencies to a grant writing class at the FSU Department of Art Education later this month.

Sam Joslin, Public Arts Manager

The Creative Tallahassee application closed February 26; it received 39 applications, which were reviewed by the Arts Advisory Committee, and notification emails sent to artists on Monday, March 18th. Creative Tallahassee will be installed April 5 and the reception/awards ceremony is scheduled for April 11. The Mural Makeover Program applications for interested property owners closed March 15th; it received 11 applications (this number will be confirmed tomorrow). The City Hall Gallery currently features "I Can Dream, Can't I?" by artist Jeanine Czaja-Mordon. This will be on display through April 3, when it will be replaced by Creative Tallahassee. The Claire Osborne exhibition reception, which took place on January 25 at the airport, was well attended and successful. Sam held a virtual artist talk with Claire Osborne on March 12, the recording is now on the COCA website. Sam worked with artist Angelica Neyra to install "Exilios de Cárdenas" in the Innovation Gallery at the R.A. Gray building, but due to unforeseen complications this installation was moved to Domi Station instead. A reception for this exhibit was held March 15. Sam assisted the Division of Arts and Culture with the Black History, Arts, and Culture Festival in the R.A. Gray building and received a lot of positive feedback. Sam is still with the Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Affairs for the South Arts Cross Sector Extension Grant to get more banners put up for the request of the Bond Neighborhood Association. Sam met with the Assistant City Manager about some window art for City Hall to reduce bird window strikes during peak migration season. This idea was proposed by Erika Zambello, a local artist who works for the Audubon Society in Florida. Sam is still looking for new Arts Advisory Committee members for the next season of Exhibition Journey. The committee members look through all of the artwork submissions for solo shows, photo fests, and Creative Tallahassee. She is looking for practicing artists in Tallahassee who bring diversity in terms of ethnicity and art type.

Sahara Lyon, Arts Education Manager

On January 24th at the Capitol Complex, COCA hosted Chalk Walk 2024 featuring 10 groups from 7 different Leon County high schools. The event was held in conjunction with Arts Advocacy Day, and the student artworks were Bicentennial-themed. Each teacher received a stipend for participating and 2 awards were given to two different student groups. I assisted with two exhibition de-installs, including Winterfest that was de-installed on January 13th. I also assisted with the opening reception for Claire Osborne's show at the airport. Winterfest pickup is currently at the COCA office from now through March 1st and all teachers received a stipend of \$142 for participating. I tabled with interns at *Be My Neighbor Day* with WFSU, in which over 500 kids attended! We provided coloring sheets and crayons, as well as information on COCA and pamphlets for event attendees to receive COCA newsletters. Education tours continued, when I gave an exhibition tour at City Hall to Sarah Black Sadler's class at FSU and two tours to Carrie Phee's classes. It was great fun to be the featured guest on a podcast interview with a student at FSU for an arts administration project called *Creative Connections*. Sam, our two interns and I assisted with the Division of Arts & Culture's *Black History, Arts, and Culture Festival* at the RA Gray Building. COCA co-presented the festival, tabled, assisted in the Green Room and helped host performers. Over 300 community members attendees. I also started something new- I worked with Evangeline Ciupek at the College of Music to organize a luncheon with the College of Music's guests including violinist Vijay Gupta. Approximately 30 different community partners attended the luncheon. March is Arts Education Month, so I've written student *Artist Inspires* features that I'll launch every week. And I'm going to attend more education events, write and post about them, including the art education opening at the Leon County Library and the History Symposium presented by the Tallahassee Historical Society later this month.

Nick Pavlovik, Business Manager

We have concluded the analysis of the funding scenarios for next year's cultural and marketing grant cycle. All the indicators, including the TDT collections, have pointed into recommending an optimistic scenario, which provides slightly over \$2 million in funding available for the next year. TDT collections has increased 14% from previous years. Next year will be the fifth and final year of COCA's current contract with Leon County. The funds available for the Cultural Grant and Cultural Tourism Marketing Grant have increased approximately 50% each year and this trend is likely to continue next year. We have also completed two DCA grants, Winter Festival Youth Art Exhibition and Black History Month Arts & Culture Festival.

Samantha Sumler, Marketing & Communication Manager

Newsletter stats have increased over the last 90 days to 4% higher than the industry average on open rates and 3% higher than the industry average on CTR. For March, they have created an Artist Inspire Call for Women's History Month with a few entries thus far. The work from Nanuko Digital at the Black History, Art, and Cultural Festival came back, including some photos on our website. Samantha is working with Nanuko to continue taking content at COCA events. Samantha also mentioned that the media guide is updated and available for the community. In February-March, they also hosted the COCA Connect How-To Workshop series, which ten community members attended. The workshop series was recorded and is available on the website and social media. She published a call for a guest writer for their COCA Spotlights with several entries and is finalizing a schedule for our guest writers to fill in at least once every 4-5 weeks.

Additionally, new merchandise is being purchased to distribute at upcoming April tabling events, including various pens, water bottles, koozies, sunglasses, and more. Some items are marked only to be distributed at events, while others are marked for COCA members & will be branded as such. Regarding events, the COCA Board portal now has sign-up sheets available for all the April tabling events that board members can sign up to volunteer. Samantha also brought on a new intern, Willow, who will be a Marketing & Community Engagement intern for the remainder of the semester. Lastly, Samantha met with Artsopolis to allow people to purchase ads on their website and is moving forward to add that to our website before the end of this fiscal year.