



Walton Arts Center



2023/24

Community Impact Report



Community Impact Report 2023/24

The performing arts are about more than just seeing a show. These experiences build community by showing us that we are not alone and giving us empathy for one another.

At Walton Arts Center and the Walmart AMP our focus is not just on bringing the best performing artists and entertainers to Northwest Arkansas but also on

- Providing affordable and accessible programming
- Connecting teachers and students to the arts to facilitate exceptional learning
- Contributing to the growth of our region's arts and culture industry
- Operating our venues in a sustainable, responsible manner
- Supporting nonprofits that meet the needs of our community and increase quality of life for all

More than 400,000 people attended a public performance, event or school show at our venues between July 2022 and October 2023. Our staff, volunteers and leadership take our community-building role seriously, and that's why we are excited to report on some of the accomplishments from our FY23/24 seasons.

Supporting **Art Makers** and Area **Non-Profits**



Walton Arts Center's Joy Pratt Markham Gallery has been presenting visual arts exhibitions for 30 years. Since 2021, there has been a focused effort to showcase and support local and regional artists to our patrons in the gallery space. In FY23, **200 works by 80 local and regional artists** were showcased in these exhibitions.

Walton Arts Center regularly hosts **blood drives with live entertainment** that help meet the needs of our local blood centers, to encourage and reward blood donors and to support local artists. In 2023, we hosted three blood drives, hired nine musicians to perform and collected 53 units that helped 159 patients.

Even as a nonprofit arts organization, we are actively giving back to our arts and culture community by supporting two **resident companies**, Community Creative Center and the Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, with the space and resources they need to create art and expand their capacity to provide artistic opportunities to artists and to the community.

We support several **artistic affiliates** in very tangible ways including providing rehearsal space

for Northwest Arkansas Jazz Society's NWA Jazz All Stars and presenting their debut performance. Walton Arts Center collaborated with Fayetteville Film Fest to present and promote three themed film showcases, introducing our patrons to the artform and the work of FFF. We also presented and promoted Trike Theatre, Ra-Ve Cultural Foundation and Dhirana Academy of Classical Dance's production of *The Jungle Book*. This production marks only the second collaboration in the U.S. between a professional youth theater company and an Indian dance company. Supporting these organizations and the work that they do makes our arts community richer and stronger.



“A huge shoutout to #VetTix! Thanks to your generosity, I got to rock out to Queens of the Stone Age at the Walmart AMP. The music, the atmosphere, and the memories made were all priceless. Grateful for organizations like you that give back to our veterans. Here’s to more nights of music and camaraderie!”

- Jordan, United States Navy Veteran 2009-2013



We also support other nonprofits serving our community. Walton Arts Center and the Walmart AMP partner with **Vet Tix**, a service that provides tickets to all branches of active military and veterans, including families of troops killed in action. The tickets are a way to honor their service and an opportunity to enjoy a fun night out for free. 2,670 tickets to 11 shows at the Walmart AMP in FY24 were donated to our local service members and their families through Vet Tix, and 60 tickets to one show at Walton Arts Center in FY23.

Our facilities team has also found a creative way to **support local animal services and unhoused services**. Throughout the FY24 season, hundreds of wet and dirty blankets were left post-show at the Walmart AMP. Our staff launders the blankets and donates them to nonprofits serving our unhoused population and local animal shelters, vets and police departments. This season alone, more than 300 blankets were collected, cleaned and donated to facilities in Bentonville, Rogers, Fayetteville, Siloam Springs and Huntsville, and 50 large blankets were donated to Seven Hills Homeless Center.



A photograph of a five-piece band performing outdoors by a stream. The band members are wearing green and black outfits with bee-like accessories. They are playing a mandolin, a guitar, a violin, and a double bass. A woman in a red and black patterned jacket is playing a guitar. In the background, a woman in a light blue tank top and a man in a blue shirt are watching the performance. A young girl in a blue dress is standing in the foreground.

Accessible Arts for All

Artosphere, Walton Arts Center's annual month-long Arts+Nature Festival in May, was created to take art into our community and make it more accessible by presenting free and reduced-cost programming outside the walls of the arts center. Performances are held on trails, in gardens or sacred spaces, at community festivals and in partner venues across the region.

In FY23, Artosphere included 32 events or performances, 17 of those were free events and 21 events held off-site at seven different locations around the community. In total more than 17,000 people attended 2023 Artosphere events.

Walton Arts Center's **Take a Seat Program** invites partner non-profit organizations and their members or constituents to attend performances at no cost. This initiative extends our programming to underserved communities, including students, seniors, children and families, and introduces many to the performing arts for the first time. In FY23, Walton Arts Center offered 820 complimentary Take A Seat tickets to 17 community organizations.

“Words cannot describe **my son’s and nephew’s reactions** in finding out that I was able to take them to see the live production of Bluey,” said one Take A Seat recipient. “As a single mother, this was a singular experience that made our holiday so much more beautiful ... **these memories will last a lifetime!**”



Education Through the Arts



Walton Arts Center participates in two arts integration training programs for teachers, **Arts With Education (AWE) Institute** and a **SmART Residency Program**. In FY23, 375 individual teachers from 10 school districts were served through these professional development programs. Those teachers impact 9,375 students during the school year.

Walton Arts Center's **Classroom Series** welcomes students and teachers into the theater to see **free performances**, often students' first experience with live professional productions. Classroom Series shows have been offered for free since 2021. We also continue to provide the J.B. Hunt Busing Subsidy, which reimburses schools for a portion of their cost of transportation to the theater.

In FY23, Walton Arts Center presented 52 performances of 16 shows by performing arts companies from six different countries as part of the Classroom Series. 16,000 students and 3,500 teachers/chaperones attended for free.

In a **biliteracy partnership** with the Springdale High School Bilingual Bulldogs, Walton Arts Center is helping students get real-world experience using their biliteracy skills. The students translated education show learning guides and curtain speeches for *Mariposa/ Butterfly* and *LADAMA* into Spanish. They also gave the curtain speech for the *LADAMA* education show in two languages and met the band following the performance. This partnership benefits the students and helps make our programming more welcoming and accessible to Spanish speakers.

Stage to Studio is a collaboration between Walton Arts Center and the Community Creative Center that helps enhance a child's theater-going experience by giving them a way to creatively respond to it with the help of a visual arts teaching artist.

This year, Stage to Studio served 511 students from 11 schools in six districts across Northwest Arkansas. Memorable projects included clay offrenda skulls following a performance of Aida Cuevas and Pollock-style chance painting with various dance moves following a performance of Visceral Dance.

If teachers and classes are unable to come see a performance, we work to bring **artists into schools**. Walton Arts Center not only offers schools the opportunity to have artists visit, but also fulfills specific performance requests from schools. In FY23, 22 artists visited 10 schools, reaching 1,051 students through this program.





Sustainability

The Walmart AMP team has established some key partnerships and processes to make recycling efforts successful. These include pre-batching cocktails to reduce waste, working with the venue's food and beverage team to make sure glass is cleaned and separated, recycling at the pit entrances and picking up recyclables separately from trash after a show.

During three shows with ticket sales over 10,000, Food Loops managed a **zero-waste activation** in the Land O'Lakes Lounge that was made possible by our sustainability partners, Alff Construction and Reynolds Consumer Products. One show achieved 87 percent waste diversion and each of the additional shows achieved 91 percent waste diversion.

Glass recycled this season at the AMP totaled **21,182 lbs.**, up from last year's total of 14,850 pounds. Food waste collected totaled **7,436 lbs.**, almost four times as much as last year. Mixed recycling collected (paper, plastic, aluminum and cardboard) was **53,568 lbs.**, almost double last year's total.

Walton Arts Center staff calls Northwest Arkansas home and regularly looks for ways to give back. Each year we mobilize our staff members to do a **trash pick up and clean up** along our trail system. Staff has the opportunity to participate in four clean-ups annually, and 20-30 employees volunteer their time to help each year. Two clean-ups are held in May before and after the Trail Mix event that we host on the trail as part of Artosphere and two in early fall and winter. We do this because we want to help keep our downtown clean and welcoming to all and it allows us to volunteer as a team to help our community.



Walton Arts Center

By the **Numbers** FY23

(July 2022-June 2023)

121,800 Tickets sold
2,160 Broadway subscribers
200 Performances and events
238 Volunteers donating **21,369** hours



Community Impact

669 Annual employees
\$42.3 million Annual operating budget
21% Budget funded by donations

Estimated Economic Impact*

Event-related spending by audiences attending our shows or events: **\$12.4 million**
Audience spending supports 188 **jobs** locally
Total local government revenue (organization and audience): **\$566,404**
Total state revenue: **\$2 million**
Total federal revenue: **\$6.2 million**

* Based on Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 Calculator for Arkansas

Walmart AMP

By the **Numbers** FY24

(April 2023-March 2024)

318,521 Tickets sold
41 Shows and events (the largest season to date)
16 Shows with more than 10,000 tickets sold
\$49.76 Average ticket price

