

August 20, 2009

Dear Sirs:

As one of the founders of the organization legally called Floyd Community Center for the Arts, but better known as The Jacksonville Center for the Arts, I wanted to express my support for the expansion/enhancement effort currently under consideration. From the beginning, the organization was conceived as a support organization for arts business and professional artists. It has remained true to this original intent since its founding in 1995.

In addition, a significant component of the decision to take up operations in an old dairy barn was to preserve an icon of a dwindling industry in our rural region. From having as many as 30 dairies in the post-WWII era, Floyd County is down to about three today. Many of these cannot survive on milk production alone, but diversify their operations into raising beef, growing locally-sold crops such as hay and straw, and some agri-tourism.

From the beginning of our existence as a nonprofit organization, we have enjoyed tremendous local support, starting with the bank that owned our current property. Not only did they allow us to use the campus and buildings free for a year; they then sold it to us on very reasonable terms, even giving us our first grant to offset three years' worth of mortgage payments.

In 2001, the arrival of sewer and water service through a different project allowed us to move forward with an extensive renovation of the barn, through public, private, individual, and nonprofit partnerships. Architectural Alternatives, the region's most community-spirited firm, was involved in the planning and design of that effort, and undertook the project prior to funding having been secured, and thus shared a tremendous risk with us.

The purpose under which we were able to accrue this financial support was to become Virginia's first cultural business incubator – an honor we have enjoyed and made work for many artists since our grand opening ceremonies in 2003. In addition, a separate effort, again funded by a coalition of public, private, and individual financing (and again designed and planned by Architectural Alternatives) allowed expansion of facilities to including three fully-equipped, dedicated teaching and working studios for glass-working (with torches), pottery, and blacksmithing on our campus. That effort also expanded our capacity to house guest teachers as well as some students by creating a dormitory. That building has been located on property then-owned by the County, but which has been allocated to our use through a generous rent-to-purchase agreement.

Since opening as a fully-functional facility for professional artists' support, the Center has hosted 30 tenants in the Center. These professionals have occupied 10 available spaces. Of that number, 15 full-time and 12 part-time jobs have resulted due to shared support services offered by the Center through these businesses' tough start-up years. Several have "incubated out" of the limited spaces there, and continued to thrive. Currently all of these jobs are a vital part of Floyd County's workforce.

Today the problem of running out of space appropriate to working artists' needs is a good one to have, yet still needs a financial, design, planning, and implementation solution. The volunteers, professionals, staff, and interested partners have tackled all of the preliminary work required. Design and planning has been accomplished with the able and talented help of professionals who believe in the goals of the Center, and who have donated their equipment, talent, and creativity to date. Their involvement through to completion is assured. Implementation is a long-standing tradition of the Center's organizers and managers, and their track record of carrying through to completion excellent programs and initiatives, both with partners and collaborators and alone, speaks for itself. Now, the challenge is assuring funders that the project is worthy and will offer returns on the investment.

I want to assure representatives of LINC, the Ford Foundation, and the MetLife Foundation that this is a group whose involvement with your organizations will be well worth your investment.

Sincerely,

Lee Chichester

Founding Member, FCCA, Inc.

Past President, The Jacksonville Center for the Arts

Board Member, `Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network

Vice President, Blue Ridge Heritage, Inc.

Commissioner, Southwest Virginia's Cultural Heritage Commission

# THE JACKSONVILLE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

## Building Communities



### THE JACKSONVILLE CENTER FOR THE ARTS FACTS

#### GEOGRAPHIC REGION SERVED

Counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski, the city of Radford, as well as visitors from the city of Roanoke, and the counties of Patrick, Franklin and Lee

#### POPULATION SERVED

Approximately 167,647 area residents

#### ATTENDANCE (FY 2008)

13,500

#### CONTACT INFO

The Jacksonville Center for the Arts/  
Floyd Community Center for the Arts  
www.jacksonvillecenter.org  
(540) 745-2784

*"The Jacksonville Center has offered quality programs that have had far-reaching consequences...students have applied what they have learned through your programs to the sciences (dulcimers and sound), writing about process and visual observations (glass), expanded our welding program to include not just functionality, but works of imagination and artistic expression, and enriched the lives of our rural students through art."*

**Linda H. Petrie, Ed.D**  
Director of Instruction,  
Floyd County Public Schools

### The Jacksonville Center strives to be a vital community partner, designing opportunities for cultural, economic and environmental sustainability through the arts.

Also known as the Floyd Community Center for the Arts, the Jacksonville Center for the Arts (JCA) is located in the town of Floyd, Virginia, just a few miles north of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Founded in 1995, its five-acre campus offers arts and cultural activities for visitors and community members, including contemporary and folk art exhibits, social events, and educational programs for artists of all ages and abilities.

The Jacksonville Center offers a robust program of youth and adult education opportunities through the services of 100+ artisan instructors.

#### EDUCATION & COMMUNITY IMPACT

- \* Artisan exhibitions showcased in two galleries;
- \* In-school outreach programs tied with Virginia's SOLs in math, science and English;
- \* Summer art camps for youth;
- \* Annual *WinterFest Crafts Fair*;
- \* *First Fridays*, offering free arts-related programs for community residents;
- \* Partnership with tourism officials to distribute a Floyd-area *Artist's Studio Trail and Map*; and
- \* Teaching studios, and retail and work spaces for area artists.

The Jacksonville Center for the Arts delivers an immeasurable richness not only to its audiences, but also to cultural entrepreneurs through incubation services. Since 2003, businesses incubated at JCA have added 15 full time and 12 part-time jobs to Floyd's economy. The center itself also creates jobs and generates revenue and tax dollars that help sustain the communities it serves. Consider the following data showing the indirect economic impact of JAC:

#### ECONOMIC IMPACT (FY 2008):

(total industry impact of organizations & audiences)

- \* Total Expenditures: \$542,675
- \* Full-time Equivalent Jobs: 15.9
- \* Local Taxes & Fees Generated: \$24,373
- \* State Taxes & Fees Generated: \$26,429

Source: *Americans for the Arts Economic Prosperity Calculator*

As these facts reveal, the value of the arts to building — and sustaining — Virginia's communities cannot be overemphasized.

*"Another great thing about the Jacksonville Center is they give a chance for kids my age and younger to show their talents to people inside and outside of the community. Having this chance to show my artwork in an exhibit was a great feeling."* **Nikki Saunders**  
Former student participant and now current part-time employee of the JCA

VFTA/VFTA Foundation 1 E. Cary Street Richmond, VA 23219 804.644.2787

The Jacksonville Center for the Arts is a grant recipient of the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

"Arts Build Communities" is a project of Virginians for the Arts Foundation and is supported in part by a grant from Altria.

To Whom It May Concern:

August 17, 2009

Living in a rural area as a professional artist is an ongoing challenge. Exhibition of one's work is difficult; support networks are hard to forge due to simple geography; an audience of potential students is nearly impossible to reach (if you want to diversify your income base through teaching); and finding your market audience (and reaching it) is cost-prohibitive to undertake alone. Rural challenges are multiplied also by perception: because your address does not say Los Angeles or New York or Boston, you're not taken seriously by a world community of art appreciators and supporters of the arts.

For our geographically isolated community to have access to a resource such as The Jacksonville Center for the Arts is a tremendous boost to my personal ability to function as a professional artist who has chosen to live and work in an inspirational, clean, and pastoral place. Since opening as an incubator for arts businesses in 2003, the Center has developed two significant, wide-ranging networks of contacts I have access to only through their organization. One is made up of buyers, students, members, and users; and another, of working artists like myself, who are constantly trying to better our talents, our businesses, and our creativity. Being able to combine efforts, discuss challenges, and partner to share resources and attain similar goals is invaluable to me.

I have recently entered into an affordable rental agreement with the organization so that I might have my print-making equipment in a working studio, accessible to other artists and to students. The Center recently completed, at its own expense, the job of extending water and drainage to the studio I now occupy, as it had not been available prior to my inquiry about work space. Their willingness to accommodate the special needs of an art form such as mine is testament to their tradition of being flexible in their approach to offering artists working and exhibition spaces.

Sharing common spaces and a supportive environment with fellow working artists offers me a charge of inspiration and enthusiasm for the creative process. In addition, The Jacksonville Center has operated as an engine for the stimulation of community creativity. Many of us believe our current "downtown revitalization" process, including adaptive uses of old buildings into retail studios (one of which, in a building now called "The Station," is my own exhibit space) would not have been possible without The Jacksonville Center's synergy and dynamic outreach to quality artists and aspiring artists. As word gets around about our local artist-support system and beautiful, rural landscape with its clean environment, Floyd has been drawing new artists and new ideas (as well as an audience with some purchasing power) into the regional community, enhancing the quality of all our lives.

The good problem that I see the Center struggling with today is that of running out of spaces appropriate to artists' needs and their requests for more of the same. Should renovation money be obtained by the Center for upgrading the "Western Room" and its adjacent silo, many ideas several of us have envisioned for collaborative and larger works could be begun. Currently, there is literally no available space not already in regular use for large-scale, collaborative, or public-input works. Similarly, with wider access to equipment allowing a significant print-making endeavor, additional needs for print-drying spaces will be required, in my case personally. The planned renovations, if funded, will enable me to teach students, and naturally dry and show the products of their creative process.

I hope this grant process can be successful not only to facilitate my own personal agenda and vision, but also those of other artists in the community who thirst for collaboration, for experimentation, for further education from their peers, and for inviting the public's participation in either activities or discussions that will widen access to a lot of creativity. To be able to bring this engagement not only of the artists but also of their public audiences to a rural community is truly a goal worthy of some significant investment.

Kate Anderson, Printmaker

My name is Michel'le Nichole Saunders; I'm 18 and currently a High School graduate from Floyd County. I have been working at Floyd Community Center for the Arts, Inc., better known as the Jacksonville Center for the Arts, for almost a year since last August. I got involved with the Jacksonville Center by participating in a summer youth employment/job training program through Work Force Development managed by Goodwill Industries of the Valley, Inc. The Jacksonville Center was a participating worksite for this program that pays the participants wages by utilizing Department of Labor funding. I started this program on June 9, 2008 – just after the end of my junior year of high school. With someone such as myself, who has never worked in an office, it was a very new experience.

My first day at the Jacksonville Center was scary but at the same time, very exciting. When I first walked in everyone welcomed me with open arms and big smiles. From that moment on I knew I was going to love this place. Working at the Jacksonville Center I learned new things and met many different people. During my summer at the Jacksonville Center, I worked with younger kids at the Kids Camp for one week. For any normal person it might have driven them crazy. But with all the activities we had going on I enjoyed it just as much as all the kids that were in the camp. Having the youth involved at the Center is a great experience for them to learn about art and have fun with kids their age in the community.

Around the beginning of August, my time with the youth employment program was winding down. On my last day, John McEnhill, Executive Director at the Jacksonville Center, and Jackie Blount, Office Manager and my Supervisor, offered me a part time job as a staff employee! I was very excited, filled out the paperwork, and became an employee at the Jacksonville Center for the Arts!

Since August 16, 2008, until present, I have been working part time after school at the Center. Working through my senior year of high school was hard but I soon learned how to manage my time. Working for the Jacksonville Center and being a student at Floyd County High School gave me the opportunity to present some of my artwork in our "Student Art Show." It amazes me to see all the talent that the high school students have. For the high school student exhibit, some did sculptures, some paintings, and some even plastered their faces.

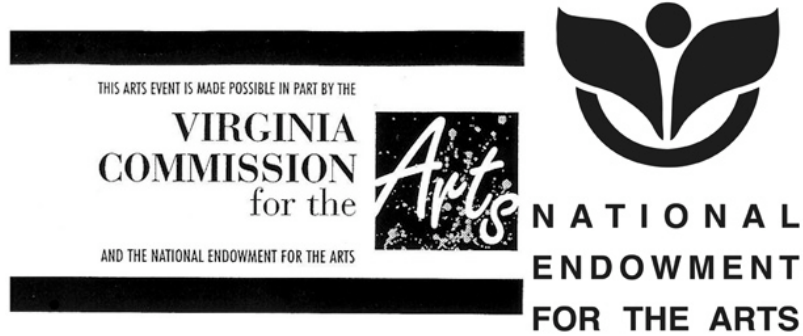
Another great thing about the Jacksonville Center is they give a chance for kids my age and younger to show their talents to people in the community and outside of the community. Having this chance to show my artwork in an exhibit was a great feeling and I felt a sense of great accomplishment.

With every First Friday we present something new in the Breezeway Gallery. In my opinion, this is our best special event – you get to see the new featured art and mingle with the guests. Working during the First Fridays is very busy at first but when people start to come in and get comfortable, everything starts to calm down and mellow out.

My time here at the Jacksonville Center for the Arts has been short when compared to many others in the community who have been active in the Center's effort, working and volunteering for years. But I feel like I'm part of this growing family – a family that will keep welcoming people with open arms and big smiles just like my first day. Like any family, we have our ups and downs. But in the end we are still a family that will stay together and will always be there for each other. Working at the Jacksonville Center for the Arts taught me how "the real world" is and it gave me a great experience that I will always remember and will use in my future.

Once again I'm Michel'le Nichole Saunders and I'm an employee at the Jacksonville Center for the Arts.

Nikki  
246 Timberline Rd.  
Copper Hill, VA 24079  
540-651-8514, 540-230-7874



2009-2010 General Operating Support Grant Application  
Virginia Commission for the Arts  
Application Reviewers' Comments

One of the most amazing art centers in Virginia and an economic engine for the Town of Floyd. The Jacksonville Center has helped Floyd become a destination town. Artistic quality is high. Promotes the artists from the region. Working with master craftsmen and artists across the board. Incubator program is unique. Diverse, engaged and hardworking board. Fiscally responsible. Leadership seems to be aware of current climate. Good to see that the plan addresses threats to organization. Detailed long-range plan with built in contingencies. Good educational and exhibition programs. Good community support. Outreach is strong. Collaborates with local businesses, farmers, artists and teachers. Collaborating with `Round the Mountain. Great resource for artists. Impressive application.

August 14, 2009

The Jacksonville Center (Floyd Community Center for the Arts, Inc.) has been a great creative outlet for me. In fact, it was a big part of my decision to move from the west coast to this area. To have a studio at the Center has given me the opportunity to collaborate with other artists-in-residence, share ideas and resources, and expand our concepts of what the deeper meaning of our work might be, and how it relates to the world at large.

The choice to be a professional artist comes with significant challenges, it is a choice of deep trust, chock full of fears (i.e., financial insecurity) as well as a deep belief that the creative process will support our higher ideals as citizens of the planet. I have deep respect for my fellow artists as I know the challenges of the endeavor.

The program at The Jacksonville Center gives us the ability to pursue our work in an affordable and supportive atmosphere. It is essential to our creativity to have the time it takes to "experiment" and this is only attainable by having affordable space, so as to not have the overwhelming burden of financial pressures on top of all the other stresses we carry in our daily lives. The Center organizers will accept quite flexible terms from us that we might have access to their spaces for work, for exhibition, for teaching (and learning), and for selling.

Along with the supportive environment the Center offers, it also allows us to interact with the public—the other essential aspect of our profession. This completes the circuit: to share our works and receive feedback; to educate through dialog with the public. As citizens of any community, we learn so much from each other when we connect in the creative/artistic realms.

The Jacksonville Center is a phenomenal rural art center as it is, yet the potential for expansion into its higher vision will allow it to rise to a first class center for education, community involvement, artistic exploration, and ongoing dialogs between the public and the artists—discussions that have so much to reveal in this day and age.

The "Western Room" at the Center, were it renovated, would lend a significant boost to the organization and its influence on our larger community, in that it would create an inspiring space for collaborative works, works of larger scale and (for me personally), a space to build large-scale public work commissions with the help of assistants/apprentices. Most of us artists are hindered by challenges surrounding access to space and time. Because the Center's mission, facilities, and staff support us in this arena, we are able to fulfill our mission as creative beings. One never knows when a single or collective group of artists will make a fundamental breakthrough that may change the world for the better.

I obviously full-heartedly support our rural Center for the Arts. I have been able to take advantage of its regional reach and audience, and I fully believe this is an organization that deserves to be supported so that it might continue its ongoing trajectory toward being a world-class center for the arts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt Steger', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Kurt Ernest Steger  
[www.stegersculpture.com](http://www.stegersculpture.com)



Dear LINC Representatives:

**2008-2009 BOARD  
OF DIRECTORS**

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*Martha Sullivan  
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**Executive Director**

*John McEnhill*

Among our primary efforts recently has been to demystify the artistic process for a group of rural youth whose historic introduction to the arts and the artistic process has been sketchy. Along with linking youth intergenerationally with their elders, with adults who make their livings as artists, and with their care-givers, we seek to create opportunities for peers to collaborate in a creative task. Wonderful things happen to people when they gather to make things, in our experience.

While we forge these chains, we concurrently offer our professional artists a youthful audience of students to expand their income-generating audiences. When all these goals are considered at the end of the day, however, our community of youthful creators are important to us because they represent not only the next generation of artist entrepreneurs, but also because nurturing their creative problem-solving skills may, indeed, be the salvation of our communities in the future.

In my capacity as Educational Programming Coordinator, I have cultivated an organizational culture that has expanded its capacity to engage youth both on our campus and on the primary turf the youngsters inhabit—our rural public school system. Our in-school outreach has been successful to date, with networks of professional artists reaching into the core Standards of Learning (science, history, English) to extract those aspects that art can address, and giving our public school teachers a needed helping hand to mold our future community activists and leaders.

Within this culture is the acknowledgement that a budding artist of 12 or 13 who has never lived anywhere except this rural, mountainous environment is as critical to our engagement as that professional from Elsewhere, USA, who's been involved in art, its critique and refinement, and its business for most of his or her life. In fact, we have envisioned the quality of service we render to each group as equally important to our long-range goals.

We do recognize, however, that children require different spaces than do adults. This is especially true in the realms of collaborative and community works of artistic endeavor by children. Unfortunately, here is the challenge we face on our own campus: we have quite limited artistic spaces appropriate for adult-guided creative activities for youth. Those spaces we do have compete fiercely with the more lucrative adult student and professional business incubation services we are known for.

The existing capacity for this organization to invite youth to our campus, with the ultimate goal of fulfilling our complete creative vision for this segment of our audience, has been reached. Without further renovation of an exterior, "barnyard" space for youth engagement (among other shared-use spaces), our facilities have actually begun to limit our ability to meet those lofty goals that will enhance our community by appropriately engaging youth in the creative process.

The spaces we envision adjacent to the existing pottery studio, its porch refurbishment, the "barnyard" space, as well as the "Western Room" and silo renovation/reuse plans will allow many more children than can currently access art and the artistic process, to do so. These spaces will be low-maintenance (saving the organization overhead), and as shared, multi-use areas, will be able to extend resources, inter-link partnerships, and blend generations into a dynamic environment that supports not only the Center and our resident, underserved youth, but also our larger region.

While mine is a vested interest, as a staff/manager of the organization, I wholeheartedly support the vision for infrastructure capacity-building, with a special emphasis on enhancing our capacity to address the needs of a special constituency of citizens whose voices are rarely heard, yet who make up a large portion of our regional rural community. These are the people whose futures we hold in our hands, and can influence—should the resources be found to extend our reach to them.

Sincerely,  
Monique Dufour, Educational Programming Coordinator

**Sarah McCarthy Pottery**

**Jacksonville Center for the Arts  
220 Parkeay Ln S, Suite 120  
Floyd, VA 24091**

**[www.sarahmccarthypottery.com](http://www.sarahmccarthypottery.com)**

**August 21, 2009**

**To whom it may concern:**

**I have been an artist renting studio space and teaching at the Jacksonville Center for over five years. I continue to be grateful for the resources and support this wonderful center for the arts offers me each year. I am able to continue being a full time studio artist because of all the resources I can access here at the center.**

**I am in full support of the Jacksonville Center for the Arts to receive funding to make greatly needed renovations for studio spaces. The ceramic studio is a space I use to teach and glaze my works in on a regular basis. Its porches and stairs are in great need of repairs due to rain and years of use. It is so important these spaces remain safe for the students and children using them on a regular basis.**

**The Jacksonville Center is a oasis of creativity and economic growth in a very rural county. It is so wonderful to see the exhibits, shows, art openings, classes, and other fine venues that go on here. It is great to see the arts alive and people being exposed to all it has to offer. Thanks for your support of the Jacksonville Center.**

**Sincerely,**

**Sarah McCarthy**