



ABOUT COCA

COCA (Center of Creative Arts) is a leading, multidisciplinary community arts organization committed to enriching lives and building community through the arts. As an innovative model for arts education and nationally accredited for artistic and educational excellence, COCA serves as a regional hub for learning in and through the arts for all ages from all backgrounds and skill levels. The organization was founded with the intention of being a place of artistic learning that would transcend the boundaries of geography, race, and class. COCA celebrates diversity in perspectives, backgrounds, artistic disciplines, and experiences, and believes everyone should have access to experience the arts. It has grown to become one of the most diverse cultural institutions in St. Louis, a position bolstered by a commitment to access and equity. COCA is committed to supporting the vitality and creativity of over 200 artists at the heart of its work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and onsite at its campus in University City.

VISION

Use the power of the arts and education to build a vibrant St. Louis that is creative, connected, and inclusive

MISSION

To enrich lives and build community through the arts

WE VALUE...

- The creative potential of everyone and the transformative power of the arts to change lives
- Both the artistic process and the artistic product
- Inclusiveness and remove barriers to make the arts accessible
- Diversity and serving as a bridge to connect people
- Collaboration
- Innovation and delivering thought-provoking, relevant programs and experiences to the communities we serve
- The people who work and volunteer to support our mission
- Our unique St. Louis home and the community that is created when people learn together through the arts

CORE PROGRAMS

Arts Education: COCA offers 1,300+ classes, camps, and workshops in dance, theatre, vocal music, culinary arts, and art & design for students of all ages and skill levels.

Pre-Professional Division: The Pre-Professional Division serves more than 400 career-oriented, high-potential young artists annually. These dance and theatre artist students receive rigorous training and public performance opportunities, as well as career counseling, faculty evaluations, master classes, dancewear, transportation, ACT tutoring, audition assistance and scholarships.

- Student Companies (Ballet Eclectica, COCAdance, and the COCA Hip-Hop Crew) and Ensembles (COCAwrites, Improv Troupe, and Vocal Company) provide talented students with opportunities to develop individual accountability in preparation for performances and training with professional guest artists.

COCApresents: COCA's signature performance season brings thought-provoking programming to the St. Louis community with a selection of work from local, national, and student artists.

Millstone Gallery: The Millstone Gallery presents innovative exhibitions and educational programs featuring the work of regional, national, and international visual artists.

COCAbiz: COCAbiz offers courses, workshops, and conferences that combine authentic arts teaching with business-focused facilitation to teach business skills in creative and effective ways to business leaders.

COCAedu: COCAedu is a nationally recognized model of excellence for arts education. Since 1992, the program provides arts programming to thousands of students and dedicated educators throughout the St. Louis region, breaking through economic and transportation barriers.

SCHOLARSHIP & ACCESS

COCA uses the power of the arts and education to build a vibrant St. Louis that is creative, connected and inclusive. COCA has been an advocate of equity, accessibility, and inclusion in our community for more than 30 years, and works to bring transformative arts education and experiences to people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. COCA provides opportunities for more than 4,000 children from schools and communities around St. Louis to experience, learn from, and excel in the arts.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

COCA has gained national recognition for its programs through prestigious grants from the Hearst Foundation, the Ford Foundation (one of nine nationally), the Wallace Foundation (one of 22), the Doris Duke Foundation (one of four) and the Kresge Foundation (one of nine), as well as a 2003 *Coming Up Taller Award* from the White House for the Pre-Professional Dance Program. In 2014, COCA was invited to speak to the National Council on the Arts at their biannual meeting, and in 2016, the Chairman of the NEA, Jane Chu, along with United States Senator Claire McCaskill, visited COCA on a limited tour of select St. Louis arts organizations. COCA was featured as one of 19 case study sites in *Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education* (2009), conducted by Harvard University's Graduate School of Education on the characteristics of high-quality arts learning and teaching, and as a model organization in the Kresge Foundation's Non-Profit Finance Fund's 2015 publication of *Building a Culture of Capitalization in Your Organization*. In 2016, COCA earned accreditation from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Precollegiate Arts Schools (ACCPAS). COCA also received the Anti-Defamation League David M. Grebler Award for promoting acceptance, inclusion, and respect for diversity, and the Who's Who Diversity in Color Award for promoting diversity and inclusion. In 2019, COCA was named a What's Right with the Region Award recipient by FOCUS St. Louis and honored by Paraquad with the Shine the Light Award in recognition of our efforts to build a community that is accessible and promotes opportunities for people with disabilities to increase their independence. COCA's expanded Ferring East Wing was awarded a 2021 Building St. Louis Award.

EQUITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

COCA is committed to actively and intentionally operating as an anti-bias, anti-racist institution. As such, we promote policies, practices, and programs that create courageous spaces for our COCA community to dialogue toward understanding.

We know art is a powerful instrument for social justice. It is a means for people to share history, culture, and perspectives, celebrate differences, challenge assumptions, and find common ground. We aim to be a home to people from all backgrounds. We do not discriminate based on race, national or ethnic origin, citizen status, veteran status, ancestry, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis of discrimination.

COCA is dedicated to advancing anti-bias, anti-racism work as we grow. As a learning institution, we understand that this work is an iterative journey. We will continue to evolve our strategies in collaboration with our communities in order to remain relevant and impactful.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION, FY2021

Total Operating Budget: \$5.5 million
Earned Income: \$1.6 million
Contributed Operating Income: \$3 million
Event Income: \$1.1 million
Endowment Value: \$6.9 million

STAFF, FACULTY & BOARD, FY2021

Full-Time Staff: 33
Part-Time Staff: 54
Teaching Artists/Faculty: 258
Board Members: 35

