aurora
cultural
centre

2013 Annual Report

Our Vision

The vision of the Aurora Cultural Centre is to be a vibrant centre of cultural and social activity in the heart of Aurora, celebrating the value of creative arts, culture and heritage, and enriching the quality of life of our community.

Our Mission

We deliver a diverse range of inspiring artistic, music and heritage programs, and promote Aurora as a dynamic community that values the creative contributions of its citizens. We proudly showcase local, emerging and established talent for our community to enjoy.

Our Values

We endorse and support the following values:

1. Excellence & High Quality Programming
2. Creativity & Learning
3. Innovation
4. Inspiring Environment & Customer Service Experience
5. Relationship Building
6. Collaboration
7. Diversity & Accessibility
8. Integrity & Accountability
9. Environmental Sensitivity

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aurora cultural centre

Message from the President 2013

Reflecting on the 2013 accomplishments of the Centre, one age-old saying strikes me as particularly true — that "the only thing that is constant is change."

At the Aurora Cultural Centre, we welcomed change and benefited from the many aspects of the changes we witnessed, initiated, or otherwise have been a part of. Indeed, our community is also in the midst of tremendous change and growth, and in 2013 we were proud and honoured to become an even more central part of life, work and culture in Aurora.

In 2013, the Centre's Board and Staff were focused on creating the best possible arts, music, instructional and heritage programming, while also enhancing relationships with surrounding stakeholders and strengthening the financial position and governance of our organization.

Significant for the Centre was the successful development and signing of our 15-year Provision of Cultural Services Agreement with the Town of Aurora in March of 2013. This agreement was the result of the tireless efforts of Board Members, Town Staff, Mayor Geoffrey Dawe and Councillors alike — a truly collaborative effort to create a visionary path forward.

While members of our team were focused on this cornerstone agreement, our creative and programming teams were busy welcoming our second straight year of over 25,000 visits to the Centre, resulting in revenue growth and overwhelmingly positive results across all of our key performance indicators. We directed three-quarters of our budget towards programming, which was a key contributor to our tremendous customer satisfaction ratings.

And yet others on our team were focused on delivering on several governance and transparency initiatives, to ensure strength for the Centre's future. Due to their efforts, we attained accreditation with Imagine Canada Standards Program and joined the ranks of the finest non-profit organizations across the nation, from a governance perspective. In addition to providing our regular reports to various levels of government, we also fully updated our Constitution and Bylaws, began public meetings at the Centre, established a new Joint Initiatives Committee with key Town Staff, and published our Board Agendas and Minutes and quarterly documents to our website, www.auroraculturalcentre.ca.

From a fund development perspective, key 2013 initiatives for the Centre included the design and rollout of our Friends of the Centre program and the securing of a Trillium grant for a Fund Development Officer. Both will be important elements of the Centre's long-term future.

As in any year, our team has also changed, as part of our normal course of business. We welcomed new Directors and bid farewell to others — all passionate and engaged people who we thank for their commitment and contribution.

At the June 2014 Annual General Meeting, Vice President Bonnie Kraft stepped up to the Presidency. I am thrilled to remain on the Board as a Director.

With such a foundationally important year under our belt, I am even more confident that the Centre is well-positioned to meet the needs of this continuously changing and vibrant community we call home.

I would like to express my personal gratitude to all of our Board members, our Executive Director Laura Schembri (your efforts never cease to amaze me), our wonderful staff (Jane, Carol, Stephanie, Clare, Carlo, Shirly and Laura B), our wonderful volunteers and Friends, the Town of Aurora and Town Council, Mayor Dawe and our supporters from across Aurora and beyond. You inspire us, and we hope the Centre can inspire you too.

2013 was a year of great change — change for the better. For this we are all thankful.

We invite Aurorans, as well as our friends from our neighbouring communities, to come the Centre to experience the best in artistic, musical, instructional and heritage programming — programming delivered in an environment, and by a team, that are truly second to none.

Be Engaged. Be Inspired.

Frank Pulumbarit, President
June 2014

What We Do

In keeping with the Centre's Mission, we strive to provide diverse cultural experiences for our visitors that are accessible and appealing to multiple audiences. We work to connect community and culture.

Our focus of operations include:

Enhanced Art Gallery Exhibitions

From local Grade 12 art grads, to internationally recognized artists, the public galleries of the Centre present all mediums of art, welcoming visitors at no charge. Opening receptions give the public opportunities to meet the artists and celebrate their work, while a selection of artist "walk & talks", lectures and illustrated presentations (also free to the public) provide unique learning experiences accessible to all.

All Ages Instructional Arts Programs

From toddlers to seniors, creative instructional programs are an important generator of earned revenue for us. Classes, from 1 day workshops to 8 week series, occur throughout the year at the Centre including March Break and summer activities. Group guitar, photography, Ukulele, Wood Carving, Creative Writing, Printmaking, watercolours, pen & ink, acrylics, oils and sketching for adults are some examples. Cartooning, Mixed Media, Young Artists Studio and Drawing & Painting for children. 2013 included our first summer of full children's art programming which was well received and which the Centre expects to successfully expand in 2014.

Engaging Community Events

We love to invite the community into the Centre to experience a variety of events, some of which are free of charge and family-oriented such as Culture Days, Doors Open, March Break family drop-ins and community sing-alongs. Other events presented in 2013 included Fest in October Dance, The Art of Wine Tasting, A Victorian Afternoon, The Art of Tea, FiddleFire Children's Show and more.

Live Musical Concerts

The public is telling us they love live music in Aurora and the Centre has responded by providing a cross-section of genres. From the finest of classical music, to casual house concerts, cool indie concerts, a theatrical/musical tribute to Patsy Cline, emerging Canadian singer songwriters, to foot stomping bluegrass, the Centre's blossoming live music presentations are gaining momentum as we continue to develop our concert program.

Community Heritage Displays & Lectures

In 2013 the Centre presented three heritage lectures, hosted the Town of Aurora's sesquicentennial 150th celebration exhibition of artifacts from The Aurora Collection, welcomed three community businesses to display their artifacts in our *Community as Curator* program and presented several heritage art activities throughout the year. We seek to connect visitors and history in a variety of meaningful ways.

Inspired Rental Facility

We provide rental space for a broad spectrum of individuals and organizations, all of whom enjoy the ambiance of the beautifully restored heritage building and the rotating series of art and artifact displays they can view while here. As well, our Yamaha C7 Grand Piano is appreciated by local music schools that book to present their seasonal end performances in Brevik Hall. This is another important source of earned revenue for the Centre but also provides an important community service as the largest number of users are non-profit cultural and community groups, with some regional government departments/agencies as well.

Aurora Cultural Centre Strategic Plan 2013 – 2015 Goals

1	Deliver high-quality arts, cultural and heritage programs that are diverse, accessible and appealing to multiple audiences.
2	Establish and sustain long-term collaborative partnerships and relationships with our stakeholders.
3	Secure sufficient resources to achieve the goals defined by our strategic plan, in order to contribute more fully to the well-being of our community.
4	Be a respected role model for a well-managed organization demonstrating best practices in transparency, accountability and good governance to our customers, stakeholders, staff and donors.
5	Be recognized by Aurora and our neighbouring communities as a vibrant and accessible centre of cultural and social activity.

Summary of 2013 results by Goal

1 Programming in 2013 was delivered to audiences from four years of age to seniors and as such was required to be diverse by its very nature. We continue to deliver a mix of free, by donation and registered/ticketed events in order to ensure our programs are accessible to all. All programming is delivered by professional working artists, musicians, facilitators in order to present the highest quality possible within our budget. While we have more work to do in the area of multi-cultural programming, we are having some early success reaching out to a wider cross section of our community, and will continue to work on this.

2 Our longest relationship is that with our major stakeholder, the Town of Aurora, and it is frequently referenced throughout this report. The signing of a 15-year Agreement for the delivery of cultural services with the Town was a highlight of 2013. As well, we enjoy several long-standing rental relationships and collaborative partnerships that we value highly. A list of major partners is found within this report.

3 We were pleased with year-end results. We successfully achieved significant operating funds as a result of our 2013 Budget Presentation to the Town. And with that support and as a result of our own endeavours were able to over-deliver in program revenue by $34,616 (30%) over our 2013 target.

4 We are proudly accredited through the Imagine Canada Standards Program; we secured an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant of $172,000 over three years; we were a finalist in the Voluntary Sector Reporting Awards for Transparency in Financial Reporting and received an Honourable Mention Award at same.

5 Our statistics show our programming draws visitors from Mississauga to Lake Simcoe and throughout Durham Region on a regular basis. We received favourable comments from our first annual Customer Satisfaction Survey.

2013 – Highlights

- After over a year of negotiations and meetings we celebrated the signing of a 15-year *Provision of Cultural Services Agreement* with the Town of Aurora
- Awarded our second Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant of $172,000 over three years
- Named a Finalist & were the proud recipient of an Honourable Mention award for Transparency and Accountability in Financial Reporting; Voluntary Sector Reporting Awards 2013
- Designated a Community Partner for *Ignite*, TO 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am games
- Active participation in Town of Aurora Cultural Master Plan development
- Active partner in the Aurora Cultural Roundtable with Aurora Public Library, Aurora Historical Society, Aurora Farmers' Market and Theatre Aurora
- Impressive 2013 KPI results
- Expanded our program offerings and increased revenues, while reducing expenditures
- Sustained over 25,000 visits for second year in a row

We did it!

Aurora Cultural Centre Awarded Trustmark Distinction Through Imagine Canada

In 2013 the Centre was one of only 24 successful non-profit organizations (out of a field of over 75 applicants across Canada) granted approval to use the **Imagine Canada Trustmark** by achieving thorough compliance of a rigorous set of standards in five key areas:

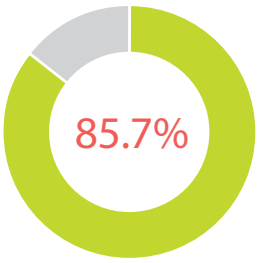
- Financial Accountability & Transparency
- Board Governance
- Fundraising
- Staff Management
- Volunteer Involvement

The Centre is proud to be among over 100 non-profit organizations nationwide working at this recognized level of excellence; organizations such as Autism Canada, Canadian Feed the Children, World Vision, SickKids Foundation.

We are thrilled with this gold standard recognition of our practices and our ability to bear the coveted "Trustmark".

How well did we do? 2013 Key Performance Indicators:

Customer satisfaction with *program mix*

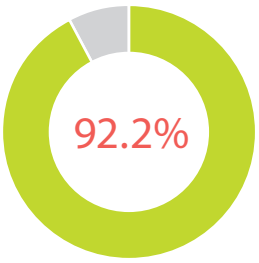


- ☑ Satisfied
- ☑ Extremely Satisfied

How Calculated: Question in annual customer satisfaction survey*

Strategic Plan Goal 1

Customer satisfaction with *quality level*

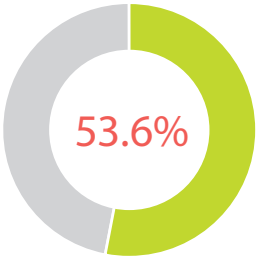


- ☑ Good
- ☑ Very Good
- ☑ Extremely Good

How Calculated: Question in annual customer satisfaction survey*

Strategic Plan Goal 1

Customer recognition and awareness of Centre**

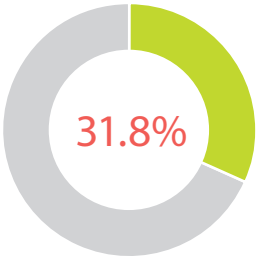


- ☑ Well Known
- ☑ Extremely Well Known

How Calculated: Question in annual customer satisfaction survey*

Strategic Plan Goal 5

Volunteer hours as a % of total hours to operate the Centre annually



How Calculated:
(Paid + Volunteer hours)
÷ Total volunteer hours

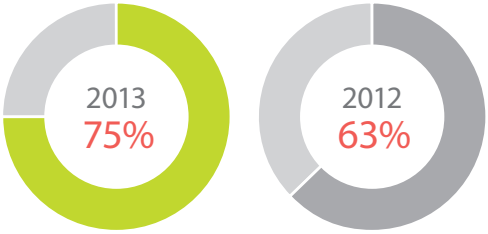
Strategic Plan Goal 2

Number of visits annually

How Calculated: Current year visits, year-over-year

Strategic Plan Goal 5

Program spending vs. total spending



How Calculated:
Programming spend
÷ Total spend

Strategic Plan Goal 3

Town grant as a % of total revenue

How Calculated:
Town grant
÷ Total revenue

Strategic Plan Goal 3

Town grant per capita

$6.50
per resident
of Aurora

How Calculated:
Town grant ÷ Population

Strategic Plan Goal 3

*85 individuals responded to the Centre's first annual customer satisfaction survey (5.1% response rate).
**This challenge has been identified by the Centre and we are working on securing signage and establishing plans to increase community awareness.

2013 Financial Highlights

Excess of revenues over expenditures:

$27,419

(2012: Deficiency of Revenues over expenditures $21,177)

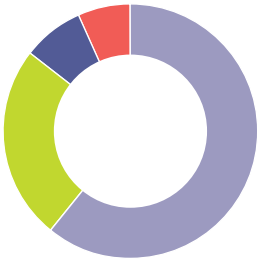
Fundraising expense ratio:

44%

(2012: 41%)

2013 Total Revenues: $606,918

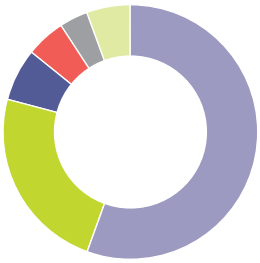
(2012: $576,612)



	2013	*2012*
Town of Aurora operating grant	61.0%	*61.9%*
Programs	24.7%	*21.8%*
Fundraising, Donations & Sponsorships	7.8%	*6.0%*
Grants (other)	6.6%	*10.3%*

2013 Total Expenditures: $579,499

(2012: $597,789)



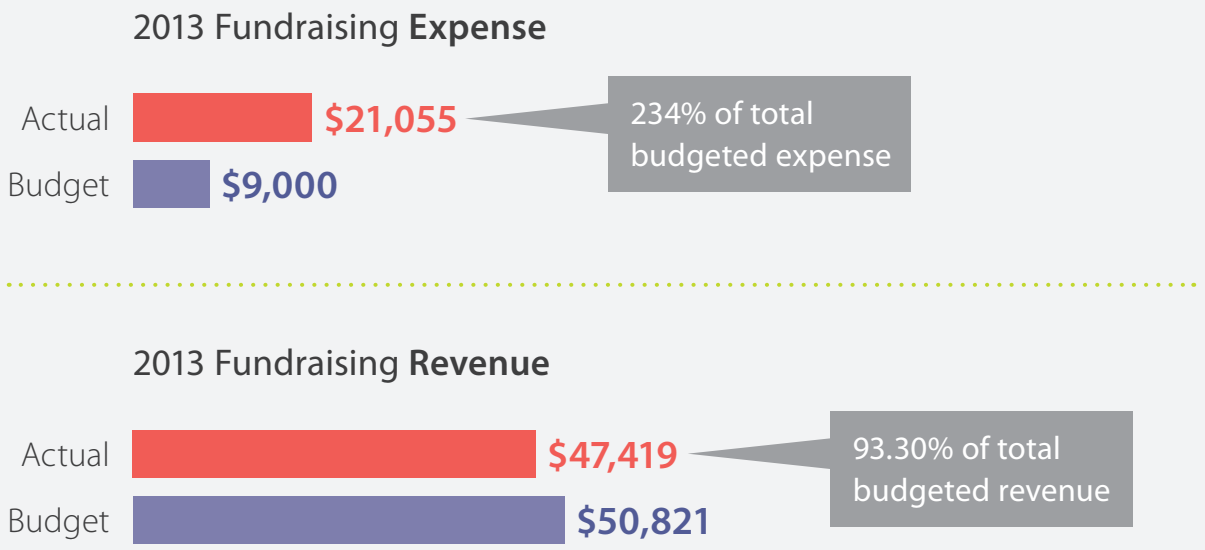
	2013	*2012*
Salaries and benefits	55.8%	*51.9%*
Programs	23.5%	*20.2%*
Professional fees and insurance	6.6%	*13.2%*
Office, bank charges, etc.	5.0%	*6.3%*
Fundraising	3.6%	*2.4%*
Amortization	5.5%	*6.0%*

2013 Program vs. Administration Expenditures

	2013	*2012*
Programs $436,997 (2012: $383,266)	75.4%	*64.1%*
Administration $142,502 (2012: $214,523)	24.6%	*35.9%*

Fundraising Activities

In order for the Centre to continue its delivery of programs, concerts and special events at the current level and to grow its offerings, it is necessary for the Centre to raise funds from other sources to supplement the core operating grant from the Town.



The Fund Development Committee of the Board of Directors spent several months researching and preparing a detailed activity plan for the Centre`s Fund Development Program for 2013 and 2014. This multi-layered approach to fundraising is ambitious. Now that the Centre is operating in a more secure environment with a strong relationship with the Town of Aurora, we have been able to build a fund development plan and a strategy to activate it. 2013 represented our first year of dedicated activity guided by a strategic plan, but primarily driven by volunteers.

In 2013 our fundraising expenses represented 44% of our fundraising revenue up from 41% in 2012. As a small organization, our fundraising expenses are likely to remain in this range, if not increase to reflect start-up expenditures to execute our Fund Development Program. Historically, some of our fundraising revenue has been derived from events that tend to be costly and resource intensive to put on. As a result, our expense ratio is driven higher by these events. However, these events are necessary to maintain publicity about the Centre and reach new audiences.

2013 Fundraising Initiatives

- The Centre softly launched *Friends of the Centre* program that includes levels of support from $50 to $1,000+ with corresponding benefits (100% of the Board of Directors has supported the Friends Program).
- Our *Business Partners* and *Event Sponsorship* programs newly underway with Concert & Event Sponsorship and Gallery Naming opportunities
- Fundraising events – Art of Tea / Fest in October / Art of Wine
- Pennies for the Piano
- 88 keys to Success piano key fundraiser
- The Centre is the recipient of Ontario Trillium Foundation funding allowing us to hire a full time Fund Development Officer (Community Investment Manager) for three years beginning mid-2014

… and into 2014

Up to the point of being able to hire our Community Investment Manager in 2014 through the Ontario Trillium Foundation funding, all fundraising efforts of the Centre had been driven by volunteers and through the volunteer Fund Development Committee, with some support from staff when possible. We anticipate growth by having a full time staff dedicated to fund development in the coming years.

The Centre is laying the groundwork for a well-balanced development program built on four major pillars:

1. **Individual Giving**
2. **Sponsorship**
3. **Grants & Foundations**
4. **Fundraising Events**

As these elements begin to work together, we anticipate that our development strategies, activities and practices will continue to expand and evolve in exciting new ways.

Risks & Challenges

The Centre faces a number of risks and challenges. In 2012, the Board created and approved a Risk Management Plan that enables us to continue to identify and manage risks going forward.

The Board and staff of the Centre regularly review risks and mitigation strategies in order to safeguard the Centre. Insurance coverage is reviewed annually to ensure the Centre has adequate coverage. The following key risks are discussed here.

What are the Centre's key risks?

The Centre has three key risks related to:

1. Funding
2. Operations
3. Governance

What steps does the Centre take to manage these risks?

Funding

The Centre's continuing main risk to operations is that we are a young non-profit, volunteer-based cultural organization with one major funder to date. Our primary identified risk is the dependence of the organization on the core operating grant from the Town of Aurora in order to carry out its day-to-day activities. The Centre must appear before Council each year to request its annual grant. Council may, at its discretion, reduce the amount of the grant requested. This would have negative consequences to the Centre and its ability to deliver its services. There is no guarantee that the Centre would be able to replace the funding from an alternate source. That said, the challenge of securing and maintaining strong core funding is one shared by most non-profit cultural organizations.

Recognizing this, one of the Centre's main goals is to continue to build a strong relationship with the Town. In 2014 the Mayor and a Councillor formally joined the Board as ex officio Directors, attending and voting at meetings. Our Joint Initiatives Committee works closely with the Town's Director of Parks & Recreation. We have increased our presence at Council meetings providing updates and information on the Centre. The Executive Director provides Board-approved financial statements and Managerial Commentaries each quarter to the Director of Parks and Recreation, CAO and Mayor. These actions have greatly improved mutual understanding between the Municipality and the Centre and have yielded positive results and continue to strengthen our relationship.

Operations

As we grow operations it will be necessary to grow the staff complement in order to properly fulfill our goals as outlined in our Strategic Plan. We are aware of the need to allocate as much of our resources to programming as is fiscally responsible, and to optimize administrative expenditures. We are committed to managing and optimizing these resources today and into the future.

Parking continues to be a challenge in the area surrounding the Centre. Lack of available parking spaces could result in patrons choosing not to attend Centre events and programs that could result in a reduction of annual visits to the Centre if the situation persists or worsens. The Centre discusses these issues with the Town as part of the Joint Initiatives Committee in order to work toward long-term solutions.

Governance

The Board is comprised of volunteer Directors. In order to continue to be properly governed, the Board will need to recruit new experienced and passionate volunteers to replace Directors whose terms are expiring. In addition, succession planning will need to be in place to ensure executive positions on the Board continue to be filled with experienced Board members. The Centre has a nominating committee that actively seeks new Board members and the Board has made Board recruitment a priority.

Treasurer's Report

2013 was another successful year for the Centre resulting in an excess of revenues over expenditures of $27,419 for the year which allowed us to add to our Contingency reserve and create a Special Project Fund in line with our Board approved reserve policy.

Revenues

Overall revenue increased by 5% or $30,306. Although our total grant revenue was down 1.6% we saw a 19% increase in program revenue thanks to the efforts of staff to provide an expanded and diverse selection of programming.

We had set a fundraising goal of $50,000 for 2013 which we came close to meeting with actual revenue from fundraising, donations and sponsorships of $47,419, a 37% increase over the prior year. Our 2014 goal of $66,000 is ambitious but we now have a dedicated staff member to help us achieve this goal.

More staff and Board resources were dedicated to grant writing in 2013 and the result was a successful Trillium Grant application. The full impact of this grant will be seen in our 2014 financial statements. The Centre will continue to pursue grant opportunities, although there is no guarantee of success.

Stable annual core funding from the Town in the form of an annual operating grant remains key to the future sustainability of the Centre. The operating grant is applied towards staffing costs and other overhead costs such as insurance and audit fees which allows us to provide the programming for the community required of us under the Provision for Cultural Services Agreement.

Expenditures

2013 saw a 3% decrease overall in expenditures from 2012. While the amounts spent on salaries and benefits, programs, fundraising and insurance increased, all other costs decreased. The most significant cost reduction was for professional fees. We reduced our professional fees line by 56% (thanks to the finalization of our funding agreement with the Town in early 2013) and also came in under budget, even though we incurred higher than anticipated legal costs during the year related to re-writing the Centre's By-Laws to conform to the proposed new Ontario Non Profit Corporations Act. Our 2014 budget aims to further trim this line to $30,000.

Office and other overhead costs were trimmed by 23% to $29,041 however we experienced an increase in our insurance costs by approximately 18% and we have budgeted for a significant increase in our insurance costs in 2014. This reflects the need to insure the art displayed at the Centre and for insurance for special events held at the Centre along with increasing WSIB costs.

Our programming to admin expenditure ratio was 75/25 compared to 64/36 in 2012. While this is an excellent achievement, it may not be sustainable.

Approximately 56% of the Centre's annual operating expenses are for staffing costs, including benefits. We will continue to experience cost pressure on this line as we are faced with salary/wage increases and increasing benefit costs and the potential need to increase our staff complement as the Centre's operations continue to expand.

Executive compensation

The Executive Committee is responsible for annual performance evaluations of the Executive Director and recommends any annual pay increase to the Board. The Board provides input to the evaluation. The Executive Director's specific performance goals are set each year in relation to the Centre's goals as set out in the Strategic Plan. The Board strives to maintain a fair compensation model for its Executive Director while balancing its responsibility for fiscal prudence.

Reserves

At the end of 2013 the Board increased the amount of our operating contingency reserve by $20,000 to $120,000 in line with the Board's reserve policy. The reserve amount had remained unchanged since 2011. Cultural organizations experience variability in cash flows and the reserve is intended to act as a shock absorber should unforeseen events occur. The Special Project Reserve was established for a 2014 purchase of capital assets designated by the Board to enhance programming at the Centre.

2014 Budget

Our objective going forward is to continue to grow our revenue "pie" by securing other sources of funding and to maintain a balanced budget. Our 2014 budget of $690,600 is 21.5% higher than 2013 mainly due to the offsetting revenue and expense impact of the Trillium Grant. We have budgeted for more spending on programs and a necessary increase in staffing costs to reflect the Centre's growth.

Heidi Franken, CPA, CA
Treasurer

Statement of Financial Position (as at December 31, 2013)

	2013	2012
ASSETS	**$**	**$**
Current Assets		
Cash	307,718	295,144
Amounts receivable	21,007	30,075
Prepaid expenses	6,242	4,099
	334,967	**329,318**
Capital Assets	61,198	93,021
	396,165	**422,339**

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	**$**	**$**
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable & accruals	30,787	28,966
Revenues received in advance	15,181	9,307
Deferred grants	55,292	109,930
	101,260	**148,203**
Deferred contributions	16,150	22,800
Subtotal	**117,410**	**171,003**
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	51,340	52,248
Internally restricted	182,367	128,867
Invested in capital assets	45,048	70,221
Subtotal	**278,755**	**251,336**
	396,165	**422,339**

The Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets are reproduced in the Annual Report as they appear in the audited financial statements. The audited financial statements are available on the Centre's website.

Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets

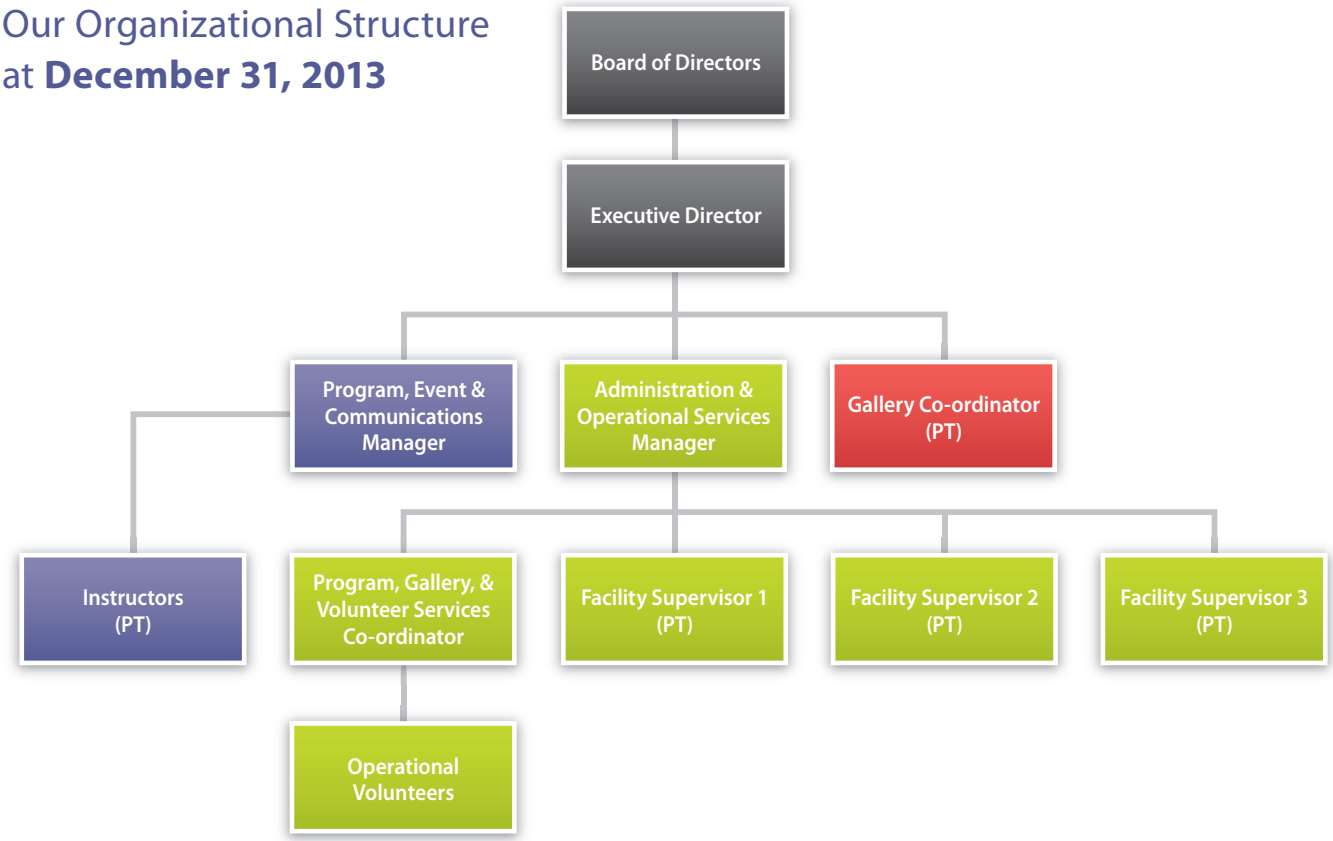
	Dec. 31, 2013	Dec. 31, 2012	Budgeted 2013	2014 Budget
REVENUE	**$**	**$**	**$**	**$**
Grants – Town of Aurora Operating	370,000	356,852	370,000	377,000
Grants – other	39,883	59,712	26,100	92,600
Programs	149,616	125,538	115,000	155,000
Fundraising, donations, sponsorships	47,419	34,510	50,281	66,000
Other	—	—	6,500	—
	606,918	**576,612**	**568,421**	**690,600**
EXPENDITURES	**$**	**$**	**$**	**$**
Salaries and benefits	323,061	310,314	325,309	372,174
Programs	106,176	95,547	110,625	134,800
Amortization	32,115	36,096	— *	— *
Office, telephone, equipment, lease, bank charges	29,041	37,750	40,200	41,649
Professional fees	32,259	73,890	51,787	30,000
Fundraising	21,055	14,291	9,000	15,677
Ontario Trillium Foundation grant	29,925	24,915	26,100	85,800
Insurance	5,867	4,986	5,400	10,500
	579,499	**597,789**	**568,421**	**690,600**
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures for the year	**27,419**	**(21,177)**	**0**	**0**
Net assets, beginning of year	**251,336**	**272,513**		
Net assets, end of year	**278,755**	**251,336**		

The Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets are reproduced in the Annual Report as they appear in the audited financial statements. Budgeted figures for 2013 and 2014 have been added for comparative purposes. To view the complete audited statements, visit www.auroraculturalcentre.ca.

* Does not include amortization.

Who We Are

Our Organizational Structure at **December 31, 2013**



Board of Directors at December 31, 2013

President	Frank Pulumbarit	ex officio all Board committees
Vice President	Bonnie Kraft	Executive and Joint Initiatives Committee
Treasurer	Heidi Franken	Executive and Finance & Audit Committee
Secretary	Karin Allan	Executive and Chair, Fund Development Committee
Director	Craig Mather	Co-Chair Governance Committee
Director	Janet Thacker	Co-Chair Governance Committee
Director	Levon Yazejian	Finance & Audit Committee
Director	Bill Jones	Fund Development Committee
Director	Carol Mather	Finance & Audit Committee
Director	Lindsay Ablett	Fund Development Committee

Board of Directors at June 2014

President	Bonnie Kraft	ex officio all Board committees
Vice President	Craig Mather	Executive and Co-Chair Governance Committee
Treasurer	Heidi Franken	Executive and Finance & Audit Committee
Secretary	Karin Allan	Executive and Chair, Fund Development Committee
Director	Janet Thacker	Co-Chair Governance Committee
Director	Levon Yazejian	Chair, Finance Committee
Director	Eric Acker	Governance Committee
Director	Lindsay Ablett	Fund Development Committee
Director	Carol Mather	Finance & Audit Committee
Director	Mukhlis Mutlag	Governance Committee
Director	Gabriela Dragomir	Fund Development Committee
Ex officio Director	Mayor Geoffrey Dawe	
Ex officio Director	Councillor John Abel	

Board of Directors at December 31, 2013

Frank Pulumbarit, Hon.B.Sc., MBA
PRESIDENT

Managing Principal of FP Consulting Group, a leading digital media and technology consulting company, founded in 2004. Frank has held executive leadership positions including VP, International at Kobo, SVP, Solutions at Syncapse, VP, Interactive (consulting role) at Cineplex, VP, Interactive at Alliance Atlantis, as well as Creative Director IBM Interactive and Director, New Media at Sony Music. Frank joined the Centre's Board in 2010 and has lived in Aurora since 2005.

Bonnie Silver-Kraft, B.MUS, A.R.C.T.
VICE PRESIDENT

An internationally respected producer and editor of classic music CD's. Recognized as one of the top producers in the classical music field, she was awarded a Grammy in 2010 for music production, and has had 3 Grammy nominations. As North American Artist and Repertoire Consultant for Naxos Records, the largest classical label in the world, she has introduced some of Canada's finest classical musicians to the international CD market. In 2012 Bonnie was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. She and her husband Norbert have lived in Aurora since 1994.

Heidi Franken, CPA, CA
TREASURER

A Senior Forensic Accountant in the Enforcement Branch of the Ontario Securities Commission, she has also worked in the Corporate Finance Branch and Office of the Chief Accountant at the OSC. Prior to joining the OSC, she managed assurance engagements for both corporate and non-profit clients at PWC. She holds an Honours Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Brock University. Heidi joined the Board in October 2010 and has lived in Aurora for 11 years.

Karin Allan, B.Ed., ECE
SECRETARY

A retired Elementary School teacher who has been heavily involved in all aspects of the Centre's fund raising activities. Karin joined the Board in 2010 has been a resident of Aurora for 18 years.

Craig Mather, BSc., Eng.
DIRECTOR

Served as the CAO for the Toronto & Region Conservation Authority from 1992 to 2003 with a staff of 250. He is the Province of Ontario appointee to the International Joint Commission's Water Quality Board, former National Director of the Canadian Water Resource Association, and former Director on the Board of the Toronto Centre for the Arts.

Janet Thacker, Hon.B.Sc., B.Ed.
DIRECTOR

Janet moved to Aurora from Toronto and has retired as Administrator from the Etobicoke School of the Arts. She has several years of non-profit Board experience.

Levon Yazejian, CGA
DIRECTOR

A Certified General Accountant who was the Director of Audit for a major retailer/distributor in Ontario. He has done extensive volunteer work in Canada for charitable, cultural, educational and NGO organizations.

Carol Mather, B.A., CFP
DIRECTOR

A graduate of University of Toronto who holds a Chartered Financial Planner designation. She has served on several cultural Boards and has lived in Aurora for nine years.

William (Bill) Jones, B.A.
DIRECTOR

A graduate of University of Western Ontario with more than 15 years of senior business development experience with Fortune 500 companies and relationship management expertise in the private and non-profit sectors.

Lindsay Ablett, Hon.BFA, B.Ed. OCT
DIRECTOR

A visual artist and an Ontario Certified Teacher. She completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) degree Magna Cum Laude and Bachelor of Education at York University. Her passion for history and the arts, and her love of teaching, help bring energy and creativity to her role as a member of the Fund Development Committee.

New Directors, 2014

Eric Acker, B.A., Hon.B.A.
DIRECTOR

His professional career began in the early 1970s in the political milieu of Ottawa. He then spent sixteen years in the aerospace industry followed by fourteen years in the health sector. Eric retired after serving as President of one of Canada's largest behavioural health companies where his focus was on operations including human resources, information technology, finance, customer relations and service delivery. Born and educated in Nova Scotia, Eric made Aurora his home in 1989.

Mukhlis Mutlag, B.Sc.Eng., PMP
DIRECTOR

The Manager Construction and Facilities at Canada's Wonderland and previously served as the Senior Manager Operations and Infrastructure with Ontario Place Corporation. He holds a Degree in Civil Engineering and is a certified Project Management Professional. He brings his knowledge and experience with best practices in corporate procurement and governance. Mukhlis has lived in Aurora since 2002.

Gabriela Dragomir, MBA
DIRECTOR

A Romanian-Canadian with broad consulting, entrepreneurial and business management experience. She holds degrees in business administration and geological engineering and has lived in Aurora since 2003. As an executive and capacity development consultant in the non-profit and social enterprise sector, her body of work is based on solving complex problems through collaboration, collective impact and effective resource deployment.

Mayor Geoffrey Dawe
EX OFFICIO DIRECTOR

Mayor of the Town of Aurora since October 2010, Geoff served on the Library Board for seven years, four as Chair; and served on the Board of Directors for the Aurora Chamber of Commerce for eight years, culminating in the Presidency. He has served on several Town committees and started his business in Aurora in 1986. He has lived in town for over 30 years.

Councillor John Abel
EX OFFICIO DIRECTOR

Moved with his family to Aurora 20 years ago and immediately began coaching and volunteering within the Sport & Dance Communities. Once the children graduated and left for university, John's calling was to serve the community as a Councillor. Serving as Chair of the Heritage Committee and with a passion for the Arts and Music, John has naturally been drawn to the Cultural Centre.

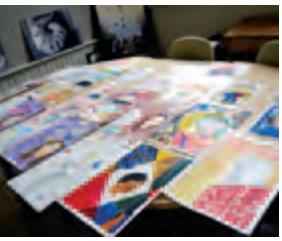
Board Committees

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, and is responsible for the oversight of the Centre's strategic, business, and risk management planning processes. In addition, the Executive committee conducts the annual performance review of the Executive Director. The Committee may be called upon to address issues that arise between regularly scheduled board meetings. The Executive Committee reports to the entire Board.

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee has been charged with formally creating and reviewing the policies that guide the governance of the Centre. The Committee ensures that appropriate policies, procedures and systems are in place to manage risk and maintain high stands of ethical behaviour and legal compliance.



Finance and Audit Committee

The Finance and Audit Committee meets regularly with the Executive Director and provides strict oversight by closely monitoring the Centre's financial health. The committee assists the Board of Directors in fulfilling its fiduciary responsibilities by overseeing the financial reporting processes, internal control systems which management and the Board have established, and coordinating communication between the Board and external auditors. The Town of Aurora receives quarterly financial reports, keeping them up to date with knowledge of our financial standing on a regular basis and the Centre makes available its annual audited financial statements on its website.

Fund Development Committee

The mandate of the Fund Development Committee is to oversee Fundraising Activities, Sponsorship and Donor Opportunities, and to work in collaboration with the Community Investment Manager.

Joint Initiatives Committee

The Joint Initiatives Committee acts as a liaison between the Cultural Centre and the Town of Aurora, being comprised of Town staff, the Centre's Executive Director, and members of the Centre's Executive Committee. The committee's mandate is to discuss coordinated activities, facilities and maintenance, and opportunities for collaboration between the Centre and the Town.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is a standing committee and is responsible for the recruitment of new Directors as and when vacancies occur during the year and when sitting Directors decide not to return or their term is up as of the Annual General Meeting. The Nominating Committee is also responsible for recommending a "slate of officers" to the Board of Directors for the first Directors' meeting after the Annual General Meeting.

Our Directors

Our volunteer Board of Directors have worked, and continue to work, tirelessly to create the strong governance foundation that guides the growth and development of the Aurora Cultural Centre. Being that the Centre only opened its doors in 2010, this is a very interesting, but also time-consuming venture for the Directors who meet monthly and attend regular committee meetings. The negotiations with our major funder, The Town of Aurora, and the resulting 15-year *Provision of Cultural Services Agreement* that was signed in March 2013, was a major undertaking for the Board. Our Directors bring a diverse skillset to their roles and all are residents of the Town of Aurora. You will often see Directors at the many concerts and events held at the Centre — and sometimes too, as we go beyond our four walls, offsite.

Directors typically hold a two-year office and have an option to stand again for an additional term up to a total of three times (six years). Each Director must sit on at least one committee and regularly attend meetings and Centre events.

The Board conducts an annual self-appraisal and works with the Executive Director to ensure policies are in place, followed, reviewed and updated as required; particularly with our commitment to the Imagine Canada Standards Program accreditation, Town of Aurora Provision of Cultural Services Agreement, and Ontario Trillium Foundation grants.

There are many interesting documents posted to the Centre's website (www.auroraculturalcentre.ca) under the *About Us* button. There can be found: our Strategic Plan, Audited Financial Statements, Annual Operating Budgets, Board of Director Agendas, Minutes & Reports, Managerial Quarterly Reports, Annual Reports, Centre By-laws & Regulations, schedule of Board Meetings, names of our Directors, staff and instructors, and the Centre's Privacy Policy.

Throughout the year, the Centre has four public meetings and those dates are posted on our website under the *About Us* tab, *Board & Staff* section. Members of the public are invited to meet the Board, receive a presentation on financial results of the Centre, ask any questions they might have and enjoy a tour of the Centre's latest art and heritage exhibitions.

One of our public meetings is the Annual General Meeting which takes place in June.

All Directors sign a CONSENT TO ACT AS DIRECTOR & ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES agreement, a DIRECTOR'S CONFIDENTIALITY Agreement, and a DIRECTOR'S CONTRACT pledging to accept the fiduciary responsibility of the position and to work in the best interests of the Aurora Cultural Centre.

Those interested in joining this passionate and hardworking Board are invited to send an email with a covering letter expressing interest along with a resume for future consideration to: info@auroraculturalcentre.ca with a subject line of BOARD OF DIRECTORS. Board members must be residents of Aurora and have a passion for the vision and mission of the Centre.

Our Staff

We have a small staff of creative and hardworking individuals who are passionate about their work.

In 2013 we had four full time professional staff to operate the Centre. The Executive Director reports directly to the Board, attends all Board meetings and is included in all committee meetings where possible. The ED is responsible to ensure that the directions of the Strategic Plan are put into action. The operations of the Centre are driven by an inclusive decision making process in a unique team environment where staff are inspired to take on multiple roles and responsibilities. In addition in 2013 there were four part time staff who are also a valued part of the team.

In 2013 we were notified by the Ontario Trillium Foundation that we were the successful recipient of a three-year grant of $172,000 to hire a Fund Development Officer to increase our fundraising abilities, and in 2014 we hired Anuja Varghese as our Community Investment Manager in this role. Additionally, in 2014 we were able to move Clare Bolton, our long-time, part-time Gallery Coordinator to the full-time Gallery Manager's position then bringing our staff complement to five full-time and three part-time.

Aurora Cultural Centre Staff

Executive Director	Laura Schembri
Program, Event & Communications Manager	Jane Taylor
Administration & Operational Services Manager	Carol Sharp
Program, Gallery & Volunteer Services Coordinator	Stephanie Nicolo
Gallery Coordinator PT (Gallery Manager as of 2014)	Clare Bolton
Community Investment Manager (hired 2014)	Anuja Varghese
Facility Supervisor (PT)	Shirly Girot
Facility Supervisor (PT)	Carlo Vinco
Facility Supervisor (PT)	Laura Beaton

Our Volunteers

Volunteers are an important indicator of community participation at the Centre.

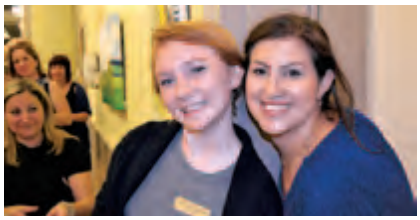
Our volunteers donate thousands of hours of their time. All ages volunteer at the Centre in operations, on our Board of Directors and on committees.

The *previous* year in 2012, the Board of Directors were faced with unprecedented governance work as we spent the year in negotiations with the Town of Aurora and in developing our Strategic Plan. In 2013, while still donating a HUGE amount of volunteer hours, the cumulative hours donated by the Directors were able to be reduced to a still herculean 3,309 hours. At the same time, our operational volunteers increased their volunteer hours to 1,584.5.

It is hoped that in 2014 the governance hours required to operate the Centre will continue to decrease to a more sustainable and realistic level and that we will continue to gain volunteer help in the area of operations.

Our volunteer hours in 2013 were 32% of the hours required to operate the Centre. We simply could not operate the Centre without our dedicated volunteer force. The Board and Staff are extremely grateful for their contribution.

We are always seeking and welcoming new volunteers, and offer orientation and supportive supervision. If you would like to volunteer on our front desk, in our galleries, at events and concerts — or in any other way, we would love to meet you. Please send an email outlining your interests to Stephanie Nicolo, *Program, Gallery & Volunteer Services Coordinator,* at stephanie@auroraculturalcentre.ca



Our Partners

The Centre is extremely fortunate to work with an array of talented, creative and sharing artists, artist instructors, writers, writer instructors, potters, musicians, musician instructors, photographers, photographer instructors, historians, film makers, actors and lecturers.

As well, in 2013 we had the pleasure of working in partnership with the following, among many others:

- Town of Aurora
- Aurora High School
- Aurora Farmers' Market
- York Region Arts Council
- Aurora Community Band
- Aurora Historical Society
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Theatre Starts Inc
- Theatre Aurora
- Meridian Credit Union
- Sacred Heart High School
- Society of York Region Artists (SOYRA)
- Pine Tree Potters' Guild
- Dr. G. W. Williams High School
- York Region District School Board
- Austrian Consulate
- Bonsai Hill Tea
- Priestly Demolition
- Aurora Cultural Roundtable
- Culture Days
- Caruso & Company
- Aurora Public Library
- Imagine Canada
- gb Wines
- Gabriel's Cafe
- ScotiabankToronto Waterfront Marathon
- Black Forest Garden Centre
- Stouffville Brewing Company
- Aurora Horticultural & Garden Club
- Multi Media Film Festival of York Region
- TO2015 Pan AM + Parapan American Games
- Aurora Seniors' Association – Silver Star Singers
- Aurora Chamber of Commerce
- Hurst Bakery
- Longo's Aurora
- COBS Bread
- Prime Data Inc.
- Thursday Night Jam Band

Thank you to our 2013 – 2014 Donors!

Donors large and small are very important to the Centre and we value all contributions. Thank you to those individuals and local businesses that have supported the Centre in 2013 and 2014.

All of our Yamaha C7 Grand Piano keys have now been "sold". Soon the donor plaque will be placed in Brevik Hall near our beautiful grand piano. Thank you to those who have so generously participated.

Major Donors & Sponsors (2014 to date):

- Town of Aurora
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Canadian Museums Association; Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations
- Ontario Arts Council
- Bonnie & Norbert Kraft
- Meridian Credit Union
- Apple Suites
- Rickard Banjos
- VandenBosche Jewellers
- Pine Tree Potters' Guild
- DiSal Contracting & Design
- Machi Badminton Training Centre
- Annalisa Asian Fusion Cuisine & Lounge
- Backyard Pools & Spas

Outlook for the Future

Strategic Priorities

2013 represented the first opportunity for the Centre to begin to implement the **2013 – 2015 Strategic Plan** that was created throughout the previous year.

Our Key Performance Indicators are tied to the goals outlined in the Plan, and for the first time we were able to acquire some important baseline information. As implementation of the plan progresses, our key performance indicators will continue to be tracked, measured and reported. A copy of the Strategic Plan is available at **www.auroraculturalcentre.ca** under the *About Us/ Documents* button.

Accompanying the Strategic Plan is the Centre's **Fund Development Plan 2013 – 2014.** This plan was created by staff and Board with professional guidance and complements the Strategic Plan and the newly signed **Provision of Cultural Services Agreement.** It recognizes the embryonic nature of the Centre's early fundraising activities and provides a course of action for building a comprehensive fund development program over time.

With three robust leading documents *and* an **Imagine Canada accredited** slate of policies securely in place, a dedicated Board of Directors and passionate staff, the Centre is moving forward with confidence.

We look forward to the implementation by the Town of Aurora of its new Cultural Master Plan and anticipate increased communication and partnerships throughout the local cultural sector as this occurs. We participated in the plan's development and creation and look forward to continuing to being involved as it rolls out.

The Centre recognizes that we still have some work to do to grow our community recognition and in 2014 have addressed that in some measure by increasing our marketing budget. We are working with the Town to address improved way finding & site signage and continue to strategize to improve this area of our work.

Summary

By the close of 2013, the Centre had four years of existence under its belt led by a creative staff team and a dedicated volunteer Board of Directors.

We were, and continue to be, supported by an army of loyal volunteers.

We successfully navigated unexpected political turmoil and learned much from it along the way. This resulted in the Centre working to secure a long-term understanding from our major funder: the Town of Aurora.

Behind the scenes the Directors and staff undertook major projects to re-evaluate and tweak the Centre's By-laws and its policies, and also developed a two year Fund Development Activity Plan.

We matured to the point of achieving the grants necessary to present a full slate of children's *summer* programming making us for the first time, an all-season high activity cultural gathering point.

We achieved some successes that even long-established organizations have yet to see: Imagine Canada accreditation, a second (in four years) substantial Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant. We were one of over 130 nonprofits from across Canada to seek a Voluntary Sector Reporting Award; were one of 16 named a Finalist and then were thrilled to be awarded Honourable Mention.

We conducted our first Customer Satisfaction Survey and were told that 95% rated the overall quality of the Centre's programs and events as Good, Very Good, or Extremely Good. In addition, 85% stated they were Satisfied or Extremely Satisfied with the Centre's mix of arts, music, heritage and special events programming.

Our KPI's yielded positive results.

We directed 75% of our spending directly to our programming, providing another year of exciting and diverse offerings of arts, culture and heritage for the community.

We worked hard to increase our earned revenues while at the same time reducing expenses. And we were able to increase our financial reserves and create a new reserve for an upcoming purchase of capital assets to support our programming objectives.

It is very fulfilling to work with the Board, Staff and Volunteers as the Centre begins to mature.

We invite the public to visit our website on a regular basis to keep up to date on all activities occurring at the Centre — there is a lot going on here!

Laura Schembri

Laura Schembri
Executive Director
www.auroraculturalcentre.ca

AURORA

Ontario Trillium Foundation / Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO
an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

Imagine Canada Standards Normes

We would love to hear from you!

Would you like to discuss opportunities to support the Centre through donations, sponsorships or fundraising events?

CONTACT: Anuja Varghese; Community Investment Manager
anuja@auroraculturalcentre.ca

Are you interested in volunteering with us?

CONTACT: Stephanie Nicolo; Program, Gallery & Volunteer Services Coordinator
stephanie@auroraculturalcentre.ca

Would you like to rent space for your next meeting/conference/event?

CONTACT: Carol Sharp; Administration & Operational Services Manager
carol@auroraculturalcentre.ca

Would you like to exhibit your art in our galleries?

CONTACT: Clare Bolton; Gallery Manager
clare@auroraculturalcentre.ca

Are you interested in teaching or have ideas regarding instructional programs?

CONTACT: Jane Taylor; Program, Event & Communications Manager
janetaylor@auroraculturalcentre.ca

Are you interested in joining our Board of Directors?

CONTACT: **info@auroraculturalcentre.ca** with subject line BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We are interested in, and welcome your feedback!

CONTACT: Laura Schembri; Executive Director
lauraschembri@auroraculturalcentre.ca

Be a friend of the Centre.
Join our community of friends.
Your support is vital.
Become a:
Supporter
Gift Society Contributor
Business Partner
Your support makes exciting programs & events possible.
Join us.
There are many great benefits!
Get the details.

aurora cultural centre

22 Church Street
Aurora, Ontario L4G 1G4
905-713-1818
www.auroraculturalcentre.ca

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