aurora
cultural
centre

2015 – October 2016 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.

Highlights of 2016 - Achievements at a Glance

- Trending to exceed 2016 program revenue target by approx. 8%
- Trending to decrease expenses by approx. 3% less than 2016 budget
- On track to exceed the 30,359 visits recorded previous year (2015)
- Trending continued favourable KPI results
- Maintained 'Imagine Canada' accreditation
- 54 instructional arts classes for all ages delivered
- 14 musical concerts presented
- 222 artists provided the opportunity to display art in Centre's professional galleries
- 10 changing exhibitions of art presented to public
- 5 High School Co-op Students mentored with long-term placements at Centre
- 1 University Arts Administration student intern; placement and mentoring
- 16 local artists promoted in Gallery Gift Shop and two annual artisan Pop Up sales
- Increased the size, length and scope of our summer children's' art programs
- Partnered with A. Historical Society & Theatre Aurora on site at the Centre, for Culture Days
- Partnered with Aurora Museum & Archives for Doors Open Aurora

Continuous Services Provided - At a Glance

Programs

- Concerts
- Special community events
- Free community programs
- Instructional arts & culture programs for all ages
- Multi-cultural events & showcases
- Host fundraising marketplaces with community partners
- Host and facilitate programs with community partners
- Collaborate with community partners
- Art exhibitions, talks, demos
- *Community as Curator* History Displays
- Community facility rentals
- Youth arts exhibition/s

Administration

- In-house management of all facility rentals, activities and events
- Bookkeeping, accounting, audit
- In-house Marketing and communications
- Customer services
- Maintain active website and all social media platforms

Governance

- Board of Directors assume fiduciary responsibility for the governance of the Centre and provide broad oversight of the Centre's operations
- Create, review and administer policies and procedures
- Develop & review Strategic Plans
- Oversee all aspects of the organization
- Oversee compliance, legal and reporting protocols
- Ensure compliance with Canada Revenue Agency, Imagine Canada Standards, Provision of Cultural Services Agreement (PCSA), Strategic Plan, Ontario Corporations Act
- Serve as a resource to Town of Aurora for various cultural studies, committees etc.

Accountability and Transparency

As a Registered Charity and a party to the Provision for Cultural Services Agreement (PCSA), the Centre maintains high standards of accountability and transparency.

- Reporting to Federal and Provincial governments (e.g. Canada Revenue Agency, Ontario Charities Directorate),
- Reporting to Town of Aurora Council (quarterly reports, annual budget presentation)
- External third party audit
- Maintain Imagine Canada Standards and accreditation

- Continuous oversight of Finance Committee & Treasurer
- 10 Aurora residents volunteer as the Centre's Board of Directors
- Reporting to and meeting with Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
- Documents and operational information widely available to public on Centre's website
- Two Councillors on Centre's Board of Directors
- Quarterly Public Meetings
- Compliance with PCSA reporting and submissions
- Accountability and reporting to our individual and corporate donors as well as grant providers (Trillium, Ontario Arts Council, Heritage Canada etc.)

Summer 2016 – Professional Live Theatre for children SOLD OUT – "*Cinderella*"

Celebrating Ramadan with the community

Pastel Artists of Canada National Conference

2015 - Measuring Performance

2015 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (2016 not fully compiled at time of writing)

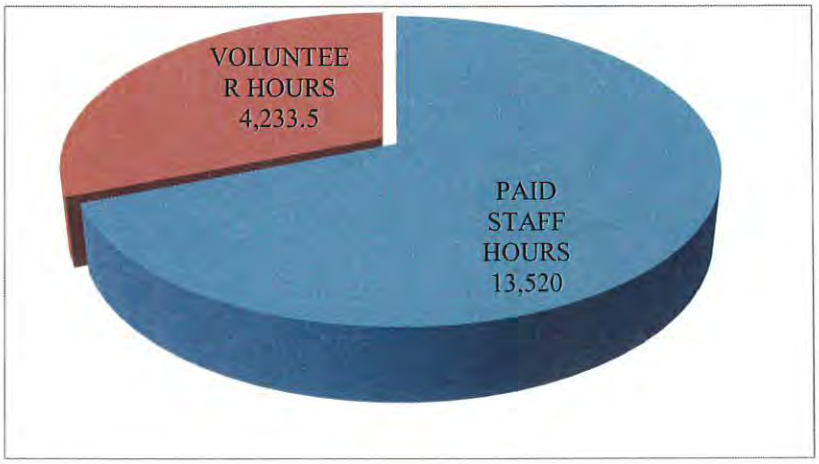
KPI (reference to PCSA)		How Calculated	Strat Plan Goal	Measure
1a.	Customer satisfaction with Program mix	Question in Annual customer satisfaction survey	1	88% Satisfied or Extremely Satisfied
1b.	Customer Satisfaction with Quality Level	Question in Annual customer satisfaction survey	1	97% Good, Very Good or Excellent
1c.	Customer Satisfaction with overall Governance	Question in Annual customer satisfaction survey	2	67% Satisfied or Extremely Satisfied N.B. 25% responded "Don't know."
1d.	Customer Recognition and Awareness of Centre	Question in Annual customer satisfaction survey	5	59% Well Known or Extremely Well Known
2.	Programming spending vs. total spending	Programming Spend / Total Spend	3	2015 77% 2014 74% 2013 69 %
3.	Programming hours per capita	Programming hours / population	3	2015 0.08 2014 0.05 2013 0.05
4.	Town Grant as % of Total Revenue	Town Grant / Total Revenue	3	2015 54.09% 2014 56.96% 2013 61.44 %
5.	Town Grant per capita	Town Grant/ Population	3	2015 $6.35 2014 $6.48 2013 $6.50/resident of Aurora
6.	Number of Partnerships*	Current year partners / previous partners	2	2015 57 2014 43 2013 37
7.	Volunteer hours as a % of total hours to operate the Centre annually	(Paid + Volunteer hours) / total volunteer hours	2	2015 31.28% 2014 28.74% 2013 31.83 %
8.	Number of Visits Annually	Current year visits YoY	5	2015 30,359 2014 27,247 2013 25,324

*Does NOT include the many long-standing Individual artists, performers, instructors, lecturers, facilitators with whom we partner annually.

2015 population estimate is 59,359 is taken from BMA 2015 Municipal Study [p.8]; Town of Aurora's website.

Significant Volunteer Contribution (2016 Volunteer hours not completed at time of writing.)

2015



Volunteers continue to be an important indicator of community participation with the Centre.

Our volunteer hours are tracked in two streams: Governance Hours (Board of Directors) and Operational Hours (volunteers assisting with programs or administration etc). Combined, they clearly show the significant support the Centre enjoys from the community.

Our volunteers range in age from 15 into their 70's; some volunteer as husband and wife couples, some as families, many as individuals – all of whom are dedicated to the Centre and are excited to be involved.

Volunteers Provide Significant Value and Support to the Centre

Based on the 4,233.5 total volunteer hours donated to the Centre in 2015 --- generous supporters of the Centre generated $67,280 (average of value of $15.90/hour) in administrative, governance and operational support to the Centre and to Aurora.

We are grateful for the dedicated help we receive from our amazing volunteers!

Community Impact

In 2016 the Centre:

- employed 11 residents of Aurora;
  3 full time, 1 full time contract, 2 part time, and 5 Aurora summer students,
- provided high value volunteer opportunities for High School volunteer hours,
- hired four Aurora youth to lead our summer camp programs,
- hired one Aurora youth to fulfill summer heritage research project,
- welcomed and mentored local Co-op students in annual long-term placement opportunities,
- provided graduating high school art classes with professional art gallery exhibitions,
- purchased local - event refreshments, catering, office and program supplies, linen laundering, printing and signage, event rentals, banking, furnishings, advertising, strategic planning, auditing,
- enthusiastically promoted local restaurants for visitors, rentals, and for before and after Centre events,
- was the proud "home of" MANY community partners such as, Society of York Region Artists, Aurora Community Band, Pine Tree Potters' sales events and Empty Bowls fundraiser, Third Age Learning York Region, ... among others.

An Engaged Partner with the Town of Aurora

Promoting Recognition of the Town of Aurora

There are numerous occasions when staff and Board act as ambassadors to promote the Town of Aurora; such as:

- through recognition for achievements and awards,
- when speaking at, or attending regional, provincial and national conferences,
- participating in planning sessions,
- when Aurora Cultural Centre is the subject of an article or editorial or on television,
- when the Centre is recognized for best practices on other organizations' websites,
- public acknowledgement of Town of Aurora support at Centre events, on posters, documents and website,
- 400 series highway signs.

An Engaged Partner with the Town of Aurora

Driving the Cultural Master Plan Forward

We actively support the Town of Aurora's Cultural Master Plan and fully participate in planning meetings. The Centre has assumed many of the targets and goals of the plan as our own.

An Engaged Partner with the Town of Aurora

Embracing Accessibility and Inclusion

We have recognized and embraced the growth of a diverse Aurora as demonstrated in the following presentations:

- *St. Jean Baptiste* Québécois celebrations and French language music concerts,
- Ramadan *Iftar* Community Fast-Breaking Dinners,
- *Day of the Dead* Mexican Cultural photo exhibition and talk,
- Steel Drums celebration of Caribbean Culture,
- Persian Cultural Celebration for Culture Days,
- South Asian food, art & dance event,
- celebrations of *National Aboriginal Day*; facilitated First Nations dance circles and ceremonial smudging; First Nations, Métis and Inuit female artists' exhibition and public facilitated conversations,
- South African Township Music,
- African Gospel,
- Celtic & East Coast music,
- *Oktoberfest,*
- Brazilian Capoeira for Family Day,
- Brazil Classical Guitar Duo,
- Chinese New Year art and activities and,
- many culturally diverse exhibitions of art supported by various talks and conversations such as; Passage; Nepali Photo Essay; Passage Between Two Worlds; Faces of War; Who Am I? In search of an Answer, and A Lens on Africa,
- summer children's programs offer a theme of "discovering new cultures through art",
- world music for families.

Diversity and Inclusion Charter for York Region

We are a participant in the York Region initiative "Let's Talk Inclusion" focusing on immigration, cultural and religious diversity.

Cultural Access Pass – Welcoming our Newest Citizens

In partnership with the *Institute for Canadian Citizenship,* to introduce new Canadian citizens to cultural offerings here, and across the Country, we are the first stop of newcomers in their pursuit and interest of cultural activities in York Region.

We are the only location in central and northern York Region. **To date we have welcomed 171 new Canadian citizens to Aurora**.

Cultural Passes for two!

Culture for All – We are Accessible

- The Centre offers a mix of programs aimed to be accessible for the community. This includes some free family activities, and free access to the Centre and its four art galleries.
- The Centre actively seeks out sponsors who make it possible for us to bring at least one professional show to the community for free annually.
- In 2016 we delivered 7 free community events at a cost to the Centre of only $1,500.
- We make our artist space available free of charge as an open studio one day per week for artists to create together, rather than working in isolation.
- The art students of St. Max. Kolbe Catholic High School donated funds to the Centre that allowed us to partner with Big Brother, Big Sister to provide six needy children with a week of summer art camp at no expense.
- We requested and received enhanced accessibility wayfinding signage for the exterior of the Centre. We have protocols in place to assist with the accessibility needs of our visitors.

An Engaged Partner with the Town of Aurora

Responding to the Needs of Youth

- We invite and mentor Aurora high school art students to plan, create, hang and launch youth driven art exhibitions in the Centre's professional galleries.
- Centre staff spend a significant amount of time in the classroom, and outside of it, assisting with the student art program. In 2017 we are presenting a trial for a town-wide enriched youth curatorial committee.
- We mentor five local high school students with 120 hours each of individual onsite programming annually. This includes developing a unique program to support student goals, provide engaged daily supervision and teaching, and final evaluations with the teacher.

- In the 2016 cycle students came to the Centre requesting to gain experience in the areas of Gallery Administration, Event Management & Marketing, Curation & Marketing, and Research.
- In 2016 the Centre provided an enriched long term placement for a local university student studying Arts Administration. We mentored the student on all facets of her education and invited her to participate in hanging her first professional art exhibition assisting the artist and our staff.
- To inspire artistically-minded young people, we make an effort to present some early career visual artists and classical performing artists, and provide student concert rates that allow young people access to rising stars in their genres.

Student Artists

Rising Stars

Hanging Out

An Engaged Partner with the Town of Aurora

Responding to the Interests of Seniors

The Centre is a "senior-friendly", fully accessible environment with supportive and knowledgeable staff.

- We are the home of *Third Age Learning York Region,* a fall and spring lecture series specifically for seniors.
- We offer daytime art classes and Open Studio which by virtue of timing is comprised primarily of seniors.
- Moderately priced, world-class concerts are a draw to seniors who consistently rave about having the opportunity to enjoy music in their own town without having to face a drive downtown.
- We partner annually with the Aurora Seniors' Centre for a free singalong, where we welcome a large number of seniors to sing the songs of their youth. Planned to occur on, or close to, the anniversary of 'D' Day, we also include recognition of the Canadian and British war effort.
- We work closely with local seniors' residences and create enhanced visitor experiences with tours and art talks designed for seniors.

Community as Curator

Annual Community Sing Along

2017 Initiatives

Continue to:

- deliver high-quality arts, cultural and heritage programs that are diverse, accessible and appealing to multiple audiences,
- deliver a mix of free community events, ticketed events, registered programs, and by donation events,
- engage and welcome community organizations, including local high schools and businesses,
- maintain the highest level of governance, accountability and transparency,
- grow our new collaborative instructional program/gallery artist initiatives and educational experiences,
- work closely with the Town of Aurora with regard to cultural studies and plans.

New Initiatives:

1. Launch a new town-wide youth driven art curation committee.
2. Celebrate February as "Student Art Month" by offering a full month of youth arts in our galleries.
3. Expand summer children's/youth programs with a trial program upstairs in Brevik Hall, to run concurrent with our traditional arts camp operating out of The Pine Tree Potters' Activity Room in the basement.
4. A partnership event with the Aurora Historical Society to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge with an evening of stories, songs & artifacts.
5. Complete and begin to put into action a new 2016 – 2019 Strategic Plan for the Centre.
6. Celebrate Canada's 150th Birthday with a selection of specially branded activities throughout the year.

#150andinspired

2017 Pressures facing the Centre

1. Maintaining the core staff complement necessary to provide current programming levels, the cost of which is no longer covered by the Town of Aurora operating grant.
2. The completion of the 3 year Ontario Trillium Foundation grant in June 2017 and the loss of a full time position dedicated to exploring fundraising opportunities.

2015 – 2017 Operating Budgets

REVENUE	2015 BUDGET	2015 Actual*	2016 BUDGET	2017 BUDGET
Grant – Town of Aurora Operating Grant	**387,000**	**377,000**	**433,789**	**405,600**
Grants – other	62,500	74,439	62,800	21,900
Programs	174,400	180,727	173,800	202,900
Fundraising grants, donations & sponsorships	70,100	57,717	86,800	63,372
TOTAL Income	**694,000**	**689,883**	**757,186**	**693,772**
EXPENSES*				
Salaries and benefits	429,482	397,240	462,244	467,302
Grants - other	55,300	62,407	44,300	21,900
Programs	139,700	141,619	155,642	132,220
Professional fees	34,000	32,389	37,000	30,000
Fundraising	11,800	7,492	10,500	1,500
Amortization (not budgeted)		14,135		
OTHER (Office, phone, equip lease, bank, insurance)	50,244	41,596	47,500	40,850
TOTAL Expense	**720,526**	**696,878**	**757,186**	**693,772**
Excess/-Deficiency of Revenues over Expenditures	(26,526)	(6,995)	0	0
Centre Contribution from Operating Reserves		6,995		

*NOTE: 2015 **AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** are available under the **About Us/Documents** tab on the Centre's website at: www.auroraculturalcentre.ca

2016 Year End Projections Highlights

2016 Year End REVENUE Forecast	
Town of Aurora grant revenue	7% less than target
Program Revenue	8% better than target
Fundraising Revenue	28% less than target
OTF Grant revenue	decreasing annually
TOTAL 2016 Revenue	**6% less than budget**

2016 Year End EXPENSE forecast	
Program expense	under budget by 12%
Professional fees expense	under budget by 8%
Fundraising expenses	savings: no costly event in 2016
Other expenses (office etc.)	under budget by 7%
TOTAL 2016 Expense	**3% under budget**
2016 NET	-$19,426 under target of zero To be funded by Centre's reserves.

Reserves	
Classical	65,940
Contingency	120,000
Special Projects	20,000

2017 BUDGET Highlights

2017 REVENUE	
Town of Aurora grant revenue	less than 1/2 percent over funds received in 2016
Program Revenue	14% increase over 2016 Budget
Fundraising Revenue	target is to maintain 2016 result despite loss of one staff
OTF grant revenue	65% less rec'd than 2016 and will end in June 2017
TOTAL 2017 Revenue	**22% less than 2016 for above reasons**

2017 EXPENSE	
Program expense	target of 18% in reductions over 2016 Budget
Professional fees expense	target of 19% in reductions over 2016 Budget
Fundraising expense	no increase projected over 2016 Budget
Other expenses (office etc.)	target of 14% in reductions over 2016 Budget
TOTAL 2017 Expense	**target of 9% in overall reductions over 2016** Budget
2017 NET	0

A balanced budget reflecting strategies to mitigate the loss of grants revenue and loss of one full time staff member.

2010 – 2016 Dashboard

Town of Aurora Operating Grant

2010 **90%** of total revenue achieved from TOA operating grant
2016 **57%** *(est.)* of total revenue achieved from TOA operating grant

Centre's Total Earned Revenue (<u>not</u> including TOA grant), shows Impressive Growth

2010 $38,698
2016 $350,372 *(est.)* (805% ↑)

Centre's Earned Revenue strictly from Programs, shows Continuous Growth

2010 $25,975
2016 $187,550 *(est.)* (622% ↑)

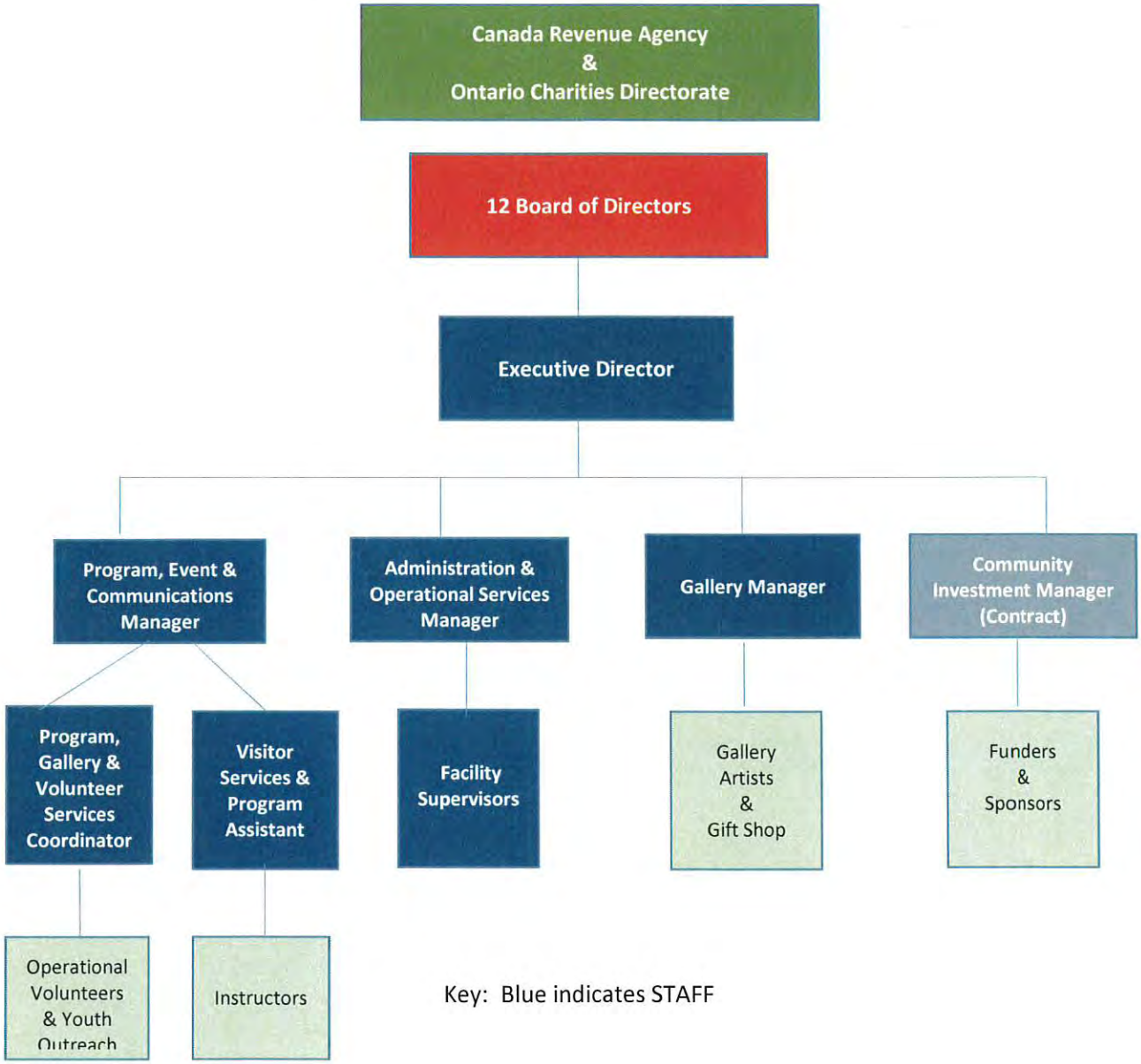
World Famous Pianists (Anton Kuerti)

Children's Summer Programs

Fundraising

Community Rentals

Organizational Leadership, Structure & Responsibilities



TITLE	STAFF
Executive Director	Laura Schembri
Program, Event & Communications Manager	Jane Taylor
Admin. & Operational Services Manager	Carol Sharp
Gallery Manager	Clare Bolton
Program, Gallery & Vol. Services Co-ord.	Stephanie Nicolo
Visitor Services & Program Co-ordinator	Leanne DiMonte
Community Investment Manager	Anuja Varghese on contract until May 2017
Facility Supervisors (3)	Laura Beaton, Tazra Miller, Christina DiPaola PT

The Board of Directors – Residents Investing in Aurora [current to September 2016]

At July, 2016	Board of Directors	
President	Craig Mather, BSc., Eng.	Served as the CAO for the Toronto & Region Conservation Authority from 1992 to 2003 with a staff of 250. 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.
Vice President	Eric Acker, B.A., B.A (HON)	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.
Treasurer	Heidi Franken, CPA, CA	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 13 years.
Secretary	Bonnie Silver-Kraft, B.MUS, A.R.C.T.	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.

Director	Carol Mather, B.A., CFP	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 11 years.
Director	Mukhlis Mutlag, B.Sc.Eng., PMP	The Manager of 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
Director	Maureen Campbell, B.A., E & E.O	An independent Group Benefits Advisor with over 25 years of experience in sales and marketing for the Human Resource and Information Technology sector. Prior to running her own Benefits practice, Maureen held executive leadership roles in the Health and Wellness services industry and Global Technology Recruitment firms. Maureen is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario with a Bachelors Degree in Finance and Economics and has been a resident of Aurora for 22 years. In addition to her new volunteer position as a Board Director at the Aurora Cultural Centre, she is active as a League and Bonspiel convener with the Newmarket Curling Club and a subject matter contributor for Acetech Ontario.
Director	Karen Johnston, B.A., M.B.A	A marketing professional with significant experience in creating and executing strategic plans that deliver exceptional business results. A leader who fosters an environment of creativity and works to inspire the team to solve business issues with creative yet cost effective solutions. Experienced gained in corporate and not for profit sectors.
Director	Jamie MacDonald B.A, B.Com	A resident of Aurora since 1995 and an active volunteer and coach within the community for over 20 years. A passionate supporter of the arts & music and Founder/Artist Director of the Aurora Winter Blues Festival, a not-for-profit organization that benefits local youth music and community charities. Board member of the Toronto Blues Society that develops and promotes Canadian Blues, Roots and Soul musicians nationally and internationally.
Director	John Gallo B.A, Arch. Tech.	Resident of Aurora for 20 years. Member of Aurora Council for 7 years. Chair of Central York Fire, Environmental Advisory Committee, Trails and Active Transportation Committee. Current Director at

		Aurora Soccer Club. Principal in a property management company for 15 years.
Ex Officio Director	Councillor Sandra Humfryes	
Ex Officio Director	Councillor Jeff Thom	

The Aurora Cultural Centre gratefully acknowledges funding from

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In Conclusion

The Aurora Cultural Centre is proud to partner with the Town of Aurora for the delivery of cultural services. We thank the Town of Aurora for its significant support since 2009.

We share common a desire to *"support an exceptional quality of life for all"*[1] through the delivery of inspired cultural services to our community.

Together we *"expand opportunities and partnerships that contribute to the celebration of culture in the community"*[2].

Laura Schembri
Executive Director

aurora cultural centre

[1] Community Goal No. 2, Town of Aurora Strategic Plan

[2] Objective No. 3, Town of Aurora Strategic Plan

Voluntary Sector Reporting Awards 2014
CPA·QUEEN'S CENTRE FOR GOVERNANCE

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