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Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo announces new Vision | Mission | Values

The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo has unveiled its new Vision | Mission | Values. Executive Director, Kristen Chesak, says, “After completing a five-year strategic plan, it was clear to the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo that the old Mission, Vision, Values, while important, no longer accurately represented who we are, who we want to serve, and how we want to serve them. A more narrow focus on the artists and arts organizations, of which there is a robust and varied diversity, for a community our size, needs to know they have a resource to connect with to offer services and benefits, allowing them to continue their much-needed work in our community.”

In addition, it also became apparent that the Arts Council needed to look internally to recognize our internal cultural, to see the inherent barriers and biases to accessing the Arts Council, and in turn to help other arts organizations do the same. “This recognition led us to understand that access is an important value to hold, but that it can’t stop with recognition, we need to walk the talk, and also engage our community in dialogue, and have empathy for the experiences that our artists and arts organizations are having, as they are not all the same.”

The New Vision, Mission, and Values statements also enable the Board and staff to have a more productive conversation about our programming and our interactions with artists and arts organizations in our community. “We have a north star now by which to gauge our progress, a mission to guide our actions, and values to inform our behavior and decision making,” says Chesak. “It is all very exciting, and creates a foundation for a much stronger, proactive, and resilient organization on which our arts and culture community can rely.”

The new Vision | Mission | Values may be read in their entirety below. For additional information regarding the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo, its programs or services, or to schedule an interview, please contact Sara Dillon at 269.342.5059 or by email at sdillon@kalamazooarts.org

Vision

The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo exists to infuse arts and culture into the commercial, educational, and creative economies of our region.

Mission

The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo

- is dedicated both to enriching and engaging our community through artistic and cultural experiences through a roster of programs and services that serve the needs of our community (4.2.a)

- provides a connecting point for artists, artistic and cultural organizations, and the publics we serve with the express goal of providing opportunities for both organizational and member-focused advancement (4.3.b)
- provides access to a broad range of artistic and cultural opportunities through grants, promotion, advocacy, and free programming to the seven county region which we serve. This would be achieved through attaining a nimble internal culture that values equity, diversity and access (5.4.d) and fostering a broader understanding of biases and barriers to access within the arts (4.3.c)

Core Values

Access: the freedom or ability to obtain or make use of something remains at the heart of what we do and why we do it. By cultivating broad points of access, arts and culture participation in Greater Kalamazoo can advance ...

Inspiration: the action or power of moving the intellect or emotions. Since we serve a community that expects arts and culture experiences of all kinds, our appreciation for inspiration in all shapes, styles, and forms involves ...

Dialogue: the exchange of ideas and opinions in order to continually push Greater Kalamazoo to engage arts and culture activities to create opportunities, address challenges, and celebrate points of pride. Open and inclusive exchanges of this importance require ...

Empathy: the genuine appreciation for, awareness of, or sensitivity to the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of another person. To maintain these values over time mandates ...

Sustainability: the method(s) used to ensure that resources, fiscal and otherwise, are not depleted or permanently damaged by our efforts.

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