



BFF ARTS & COMMUNITY ♥

BFF OMAHA

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

WE BELIEVE THAT EVERYONE
HAS THE RIGHT TO CREATE,
EXPERIENCE, AND CULTIVATE
THE ARTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES.



BFF ARTS & COMMUNITY ♥

2729 N. 62nd Street, Omaha, NE 68104

BFFomaha.org

info@bffomaha.org

[f](#) BFF Omaha [@](#) bffOmaha

BFF'S MISSION

CORE VALUES

Building Community Through Arts Engagement.

BFF Advocates for Education, Inclusion, Opportunity, and Unique Experiences. AEIOU! (We'd like to buy a vowel!)

LETTER FROM ALEX

Hey Friends!

Has it already been another year? Are we there yet??
(Insert swirly-eyed emoji three times)

Wowza what an amazing 2023 it has been! We expanded two of our main-stay festivals: First Friday PRIDE and the New American Arts Festival (celebrating 10 years of NAAF!). With new and motivated committees at their helms, these festivals supported New Americans, Omaha's LGBTQIA2S+ communities, and every intersectionality in between through PAID artist opportunities (murals, exhibitions, performances, vending, etc) and FREE community experiences.

In 2023, we focused "real bad" (a la Jennifer Coolidge) on expanding opportunities for area youth. BFF began hosting weekly art classes at Trudy's featuring month-long teaching artist residencies. Classes focus on a variety of subjects including tufting, cross-stitching, illustration, and art-making for activists! We also debuted the Free Little Arts Center (don't give us no "FLAC") outside of Trudy's which distributes free art supplies. We anticipate a continued expansion for these new youth opportunities as we move into 2024.

Our galleries keep on keeping on - exhibiting over 70 local, national, and international artists, and hosting BFF's first ever Art Auction during the BFF Ball on November 10th! What a blast. (IYKYK).

And we had some great internal improvements in 2023! We established our employee program (believe me, this is cooler than it sounds) which allowed BFF to hire its third full time employee, Annie Butler, as the Benson Creative District (BCD) Director. If you didn't already know, let me tell you: Annie is a rockstar! The BCD is gearing up to support 13 neighborhood-focused projects which vary from public art projects, art classes, neighborhood festivals, artist residencies, lectures, co-working opportunities, to 3 huge partnerships with Benson High School.

Help us keep this momentum going! Your continued support will sustain BFF's programming, artist support, and community building into 2024 and beyond. Please visit bffomaha.org/support to pitch in!

THANK YOU for supporting the arts, the community, and yer BFFs!

Alex Jochim

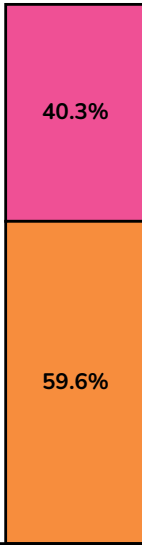
Co-Founder & Executive Director

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

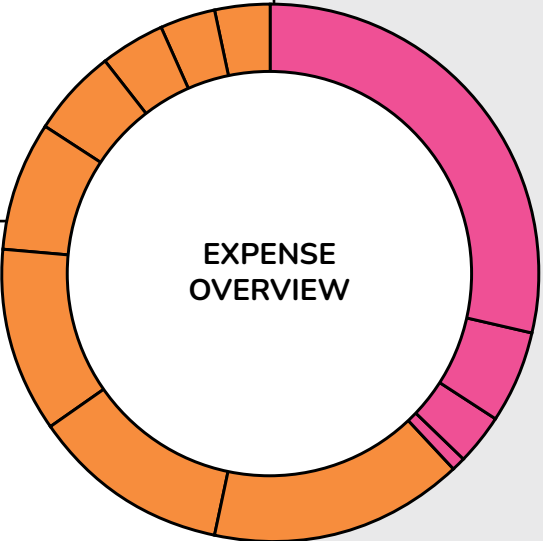
EXPENSES

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$422,376

EXPENSE OVERVIEW



| | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Operating Expenses | \$170,565 |
| Salaries + Benefits | \$128,789 |
| Finances & Misc. | \$24,825 |
| Development | \$13,156 |
| Communications | \$3,794 |
| Program Expenses | \$251,811 |
| First Fridays | \$68,415 |
| Petshop | \$53,687 |
| Youth+ Education | \$49,111 |
| Green Team | \$34,464 |
| Trudy's | \$24,138 |
| BFF Gallery | \$16,470 |
| MaMO | \$15,060 |
| Creative District | \$14,601 |



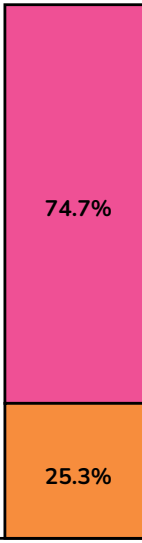
2024 General + Operating Reserves: \$184,598.60

TOTAL EXPENSES + RETAINED ASSETS: \$606,975.16

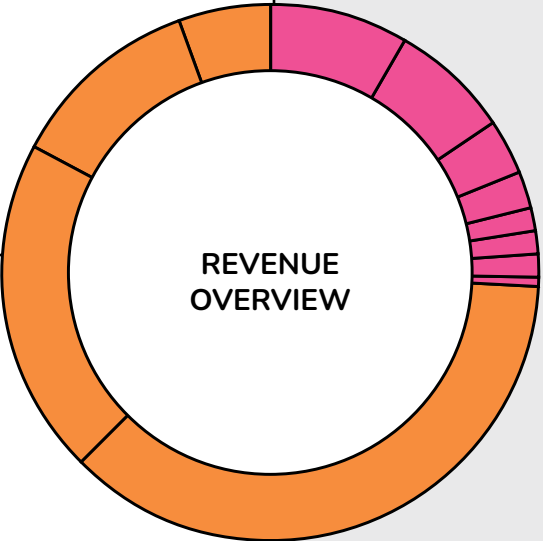
REVENUE

TOTAL REVENUE: \$606,975

REVENUE OVERVIEW



| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Earned Revenue | \$153,692 |
| Rental Revenue | \$50,890 |
| Rollover Program Income | \$42,903 |
| Fundraisers + Special Events | \$18,551 |
| Gallery Sales | \$13,569 |
| Membership Income | \$8,862 |
| First Friday Income | \$8,348 |
| MaMO Income | \$7,500 |
| Merchandise Sales | \$2,768 |
| Classroom Registrations | \$297 |
| Contributed Revenue | \$439,100 |
| Government Grants | \$217,883 |
| Foundation Grants | \$120,427 |
| Corporate Support | \$68,355 |
| Individual Donations | \$32,434 |



OPERATING RESERVE: \$14,181.97

TOTAL REVENUE + ASSETS: \$606,975.16

BFF PAID ARTISTS A TOTAL OF \$238,648 IN 2023 - 57% OF ALL EXPENSES!!



PROGRAMS & PROJECTS



HONORS

2023 Change Maker Nonprofit Professional Greater Omaha Chamber
2023 Cultural Stewardship Award Omaha Entertainment and Arts Awards

FIRST FRIDAY

23,000+ visitors attracted
15% of survey respondents traveled from outside of Omaha
26% first-time visitors
20% have attended First Fridays more than TEN times
89% said they “experienced or learned something new”

During May-September:

2 pedi-cabs offering free transportation!
4 street closures and parking lot activations, allowing for **65+ local artist vendors** and community partners each month!
110 paid artists providing interactive elements, educational demonstrations, live art, live music, public art, or other artistic productions
10th Annual New American Arts Festival and 4th Annual First Friday PRIDE - supporting local refugee, immigrant, and LGBTQIA2S+ artists
3 new public art pieces in Benson created during PRIDE and NAAF

PETSHOP, MAMO GALLERY, TRUDY’S, AND BFF GALLERY

74 artists exhibited
20+ interdisciplinary studio artists housed
8 artist residents
2 new exterior murals at Petshop

YOUTH + EDUCATION

Resident Teaching Artists began **weekly art classes** at Trudy’s!
 Free Little Arts Center debuted - distributing **500+** free art materials monthly
25+ teenage and youth artist exhibited
12 hands-on Art Club activities hosted
600 to-go art kits distributed for free
1 new “Teen Zine” publication released

GREEN TEAM

160+ bags of trash & recycling picked up from Benson streets
 Hosted Benson’s neighborhood **compost site**, partnered with Hillside Solutions
 Cigarette butt receptacles installed

22% OF PARTICIPANTS CAME FROM OUTSIDE OF OMAHA TO ATTEND BFF

11% of participants came from out of state to attend BFF
9% of event attendees come from Iowa (Council Bluffs mainly)
 Based on zip code, the majority of attendees live in Nebraska, but BFF attracts participants from California, Iowa, and Minnesota.





EVENTS TO REMEMBER // A LOOK BACK



FURST FRIDAY

First Friday has gone to the dogs! During September 1st's First Friday, we invited pets and the people who love them out for "FURst Friday," where dog-friendly galleries and businesses were highlighted on event maps. The event included special pet-friendly vendors at the Artist Markets, a pop-up dog park, painting activities for dogs, live dog caricatures by artist Kirk Kuenzi, and a colorful dog parade right down Maple Street! Special thanks to Byrd Bath, DogGurt, Dungeon Crate, and Benson Brewery.



FIRST FRIDAY PRIDE

2023's First Friday PRIDE featured 55+ LGBTQIA2S+ identifying artists presenting works in galleries, on-street, on-stage, and more! 2 new public art pieces were installed, 2 all-ages workshops were held, and the markets featured 10+ special vendors. The real highlight was the first iteration of the on-street stage show "Judy Jam" featuring live performers and hosted by Purris Stilton and Tia Pet. Oh, and did we mention that there was a real life double rainbow in the skies over Benson?!!

60% OF BFF PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFY AS LGBTQIA+

The majority of LGBTQIA+ participants have attended multiple BFF events which indicates a safe space.



10TH ANNUAL NEW AMERICAN ARTS FESTIVAL

NAAF celebrated its 10th anniversary in style with new American artists, vendors, performers, and food vendors throughout the neighborhood. Two stages held musical showcases throughout the night, with a special feature performance by Danza Tlacoleros De Schuyler (presented in partnership with Nebraska Folklife and Nebraska Arts Council). The event also featured a community mural led by Oria Simonini, community stencil and postcard workshops, live art by Jorge Colorado and Mimi Yu, and drum and salsa workshops.



THE BFF BALL + ART AUCTION

The Atomic Ball and Art Auction invited event-goers to dress the part for a "mid-century nuclear fallout dinner party." Hosted by Lucy Stooile (Chicago), the event featured the three-piece band Parfait, performances by Claudio T. Sol and Mimosa Savage, projection art by Joe.Video, and an unforgettable immersive photo booth installation by StudioDaze Omaha! What a way to celebrate the year!



SUPPORT

Funders



Captain's Club Members



2023 Friends of BFF Business Members

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Benson Little League | Jimmy Johns | St Paul Benson |
| Buildertrend | Maven Social | Star Deli |
| Dahlia House | Ming Toy Gallery | StudioDaze Omaha |
| DogGurt | Nebraska AIDS Project | Sundee Event Venue |
| Flavas | Nocturnal Eats Food Truck | Taco Co. |
| Gregg Grossman, Inc. | Omaha Roller Derby | The Gray House Salon |
| Heather Tedesco, Realtor | Omaha Steaks | The Sydney |
| Jake's Cigars | Shipment Vintage | |

LEARN MORE ABOUT BECOMING A SUPPORTER



Program & Project Partners



LOCAL VOICES: INSIGHTS FROM THE COMMUNITY



QUOTES FROM OUR EVENT SURVEYS

Amazing monthly celebration of one of Omaha's great neighborhoods we're proud to be a part of.

Rad people, rad times, 100% worth every minute.

Our kids had a blast and it definitely sparked their creative side!

BFF night is such a fun and inclusive event each month, I always look forward to it!!

I never fail to find something I love.

BFF is a place for community and love—it makes me heart #HOMaha so much more!

Im not that great at quotes! But bff is great at everything.



QUOTES FROM OUR MEMBERS

BFF makes me so proud to live in Omaha and share in community with so many gifted creatives. It creates a common richness that I never dreamed to experience in Nebraska.

Michael Hennings

Art, music, fashion, opportunities, inclusivity, friends, fun and personal growth just to name a few = BFF!

Michelle & Gregg Grossman

We've loved being members of BFF this year and meeting so many cool folks!

Josh Eklow and Reba Rakstad

BFF Omaha has created such an amazing community that immediately welcomed me in. They've given me so many opportunities to learn, grow, and share what I'm passionate about. I've met so many amazing people that have become not just friends but family. I'm so thankful for BFF and all they do <3

VIY



SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT | TED & WALLY'S



As BFF's first program sponsor (back in 2015), Ted & Wally's has continued to support BFF's mission of Building Community Through Arts Engagement.

Not only has Ted & Wally's maintained its "Captain's Club" membership for 7 years, they have also supported BFF tangibly as a free to-go art kit distribution site, a public art host and proponent, a founding Green Team partner, a shuttle stop (back when we connected the Old Market and Benson during First Fridays), and by hosting youth engagement, all-ages learning, and TeenLine exhibitions during First Fridays. They also offer FREE ice cream to card-holding Friends of BFF members every First Friday! Cheers to the team at Ted & Wally's for always being there for your BFFs!

BFF has been a life line for Benson by supporting the growth of the artistic community and local artists, creating activities for adults and youth, while supporting local businesses, education, and diversity. We feel very grateful for BFF as a small local family business and as members of this community.

Jeanne C. Langan
Ted & Wally's Owner

2023 MEMBERS

Abby Heithoff and Tom Windle
Adam Nebel
Alex Dunwoody
Alex Jochim
Alexander Taylor
Alfonzo L. Jones
Alison Wurth
Anastasia Frost
Ang Bennett
Ang Gahan
Anna Vaughn
Anne Gustafson
Annie Butler
Annie Moylan
Anthony Holmes
Ariel Carrillo
Ashley Blake-Star
Barbara Popp
Bart Vargas
Benjamin Matukewicz
Bianca & Eric Hilsabeck
Blake Doyle
Boris Borisow
Brad Marr
Brandi Morton
Britt Wrick
Caitlin Little
Caitlyn Perman
Callaghan Cavanaugh
Cannon Dunker
Carlee Kling
Carmen Stukenholtz & Joe Rohleder
Catherine Burghart
Chelsey Foulk
Chloe Sweet and James Hasselbalch
Christopher Elits
Christopher Vaughn Couse
Clete Baum
Corryn Birkeland
Courtney Kenny Porto
Daly Chochon
Dan Cavanagh
Daniel Castaneda
Danielle Morgan
Darren Renfrow
Darryl Brown
Dave Crane
David Gilinsky
David Goldberg
Denise Levy
DéShaun Shelly
Diana Elizalde
Doug Hayko

Dre Black
Dutchess Quinn
Ellis Strings and Koozie Nebraska
Ellys D. Roxia
Emily Brewer
Enrique Lopez
Erin Foley
Fernando Antonio Montejano
Gabe Johnson
Grace Short
Gretchen Bayer
Hana Krommenhoek
Heather & Jameson Hooton
Henry Nelson
Hillary Moore
Howard Francis Thiel
Howard Thiel
Isabella Manhart
Jae Meyer
James Phillips
Jared Spence
Jasmine & Mike Eggert
Jasmine Brown-Camareno
Jason Alter
Jayna Heuertz
JD Simpson-Harris
Jen Yi-We & Lawrence Hernandez
Jenna Jenson
Jenni & Rob Blackford
Jerome Helm
Jessica Franksen
Jessica McKay
Jim Reiff
Joan Wilson-Sangimino
Joe Addison
Joe Benson
Joe Hruska
Johnny Redd
Jonathan Gombas
Jonathan Ochsner
Joseph Galas
Josh Eklow and Reba Rakstad
JP Gurnett and Brendan Parlor
JUN
Justin Holman
Katelyn Wingate
Katera Brown
Katherine Kough
Kathleen Anderl
Katie "Bugz" Brandt

Katy Cowell
Keiria Marsha
Kennedy Wallman
Kerry Mcmurtry
Keyonna Jeter
Kim Darling
Lana Labs
Laura & Neal Dueland
Leah Bevington
Leah Howard
Lew Lunbeck
Linda Hilliar
Lindsay Jump
Lisa & Tony Bilek
Lisa Lockman
Ly Jones
Lynn Renee Wehner
Lynne & Patrick Jensen
Maddie Hake
Maggie Sheehy & Kyle Richardson
Marco Flores
Marcus Shorney
Marcy Leuck
Mark Anderson
Maureen Pieper
Megan VanAusdall & Brian Schulte
Meghan Francis
Meleah Ackley
Melinda and Emil Kozel
Melissa
Amarawardana
Melissa Wurth
Melynda Walsh
Michael Era
Michael Hennings
Mick Mancuso
Mick Mancuso
Mindy I Leahy
Miti Mareddy
MJ Peters
Molly Clevenger
Montana Milner (Milner)
Natalie & Andy Matz
Neil Girmus
Nicole Weeks
Nique Clark
Olivia Bell
Oria Simonini
Pamela Adams
Parker Brown
Paul Ayayee
Purris Stilton
Quinn Corbin
Raiana Vierkant

Rayn Tot
Reagan Davis Pufall
Rebecca Bartlett
Rosie Zweiback
Ross Miller
Ryan Pfeifer
Sabina Alicia Eastman
Sally Otis
Sam Blessing
Sam Stivers & Greg Lilly
Samantha Guelden
Samantha Short
Samir Patel
Samuel Kenney
Sara Pate
Sarah Cavanagh
Sarah Ferguson
Sarah Nun
Sarah Placzek
Saraya Vogel
Scarlett Connor
Scott Micheels
Sener
Shelby & Josh Audiss
Siddarth Shah
Stephen Currie
Stephen Ray
Susan Merman
Teresa Conway
Thom Sibbitt
Tim Berg
Todd McCollister
Tony Cattano
Tori Hudson
Travis & Alissa Apel
Triletty Wade
Tyler Swain
Valerie St. Pierre Smith
V I Y
Wiley Jacob
Zach Schmieder
ZEROME CAGE

Members for LIFE
Amy Wise
Eileen Schmieder
Erin Carr
Jamie Hardy
Laura Simpson
Tara Bilek



OUR TEAM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Linda Hilliar President
Ang Bennett Vice President
Sarah Cavanagh Secretary
Erin Foley Treasurer

Makayla Harrie Inclusion Chair
Shelby Audiss Education Chair
Annie Butler Advocacy Chair

STAFF, CREW, & VOLUNTEERS

Alex Dunwoody
Petshop Gallery

Alex Jochim
Co-Founder + Executive Director

Ang Bennett
BFF Gallery

Angela Gahan
MaMO Gallery, Star Deli Gallery, + First Fridays

Annie Butler
Benson Creative
District Director

Callaghan Cavanaugh
Summer Intern

Daniel Castaneda (Sedra D'mente)
Crew

Daniel Cavanagh
Crew

Enrique Lopez
First Fridays

Erin Carr
Artist Markets

Jae Meyer
Development

Jared Spence
Artist Markets

Jerome Helm
Petshop Gallery + Artist Markets

Joe Addison
Petshop Gallery

Joe Rohleder
Digital Projections + Video

John-Paul Gurnett
Communications and Creative Director

Katera Brown
Lead Photographer + First Fridays

Katie "Bugz" Brandt
First Fridays + Development

Katy Cowell
Photographer

Kennedy Wallman
Summer Intern

Laura Dueland
Crew + Data

Laura Simpson
Youth and Education Coordinator

Lindsay Jump
Communications

Makayla Harrie
"Walk it Out" Host + Membership Coordinator

Maureen Pieper
Communications

Melynda Walsh
Youth and Education

Mick Mancuso
Photography Intern

Neal Dueland
Crew

Olivia Bell
First Fridays

Rayn Tot
Summer Intern

Sara Pate
HR Director

Sarah Ferguson
Petshop

Saraya "Ziggy" Vogel
First Fridays

Sener
New American Arts Festival

Tim Berg
First Fridays

Todd McCollister
Green Team

Tyler Swain
Crew

VIY
Green Team, MaMO Gallery, + Star Deli Gallery

Zach Schmieder
PETFEST



2024 KEY INITIATIVES

Youth + Education

After making strides in 2023, we want to continue the momentum of expanding BFF Omaha's opportunities for area youth through increased TeenLine programming, additional workshops, weekly classes held at Trudy's, and more.

Accessibility Improvements

BFF Omaha is "paving" the way to make our facilities and programs as accessible as possible! In 2024, we aim to install new ramps, pave gravel lots and pathways, improve doorways and bathroom facilities, and provide mobility aids, audio-visual aids, and interpretation services during all programs and events!

Benson Creative District (BCD)

After official designation in 2022, and hiring the full-time BCD Director in 2023, we are ready to make some moves! A partnership between BFF Omaha, Benson Business Improvement District, and Maple St. Construct, the BCD's mission is to advance creativity and the economic vitality in the historic Benson community.

2024 THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO:

4th Annual First Friday PRIDE

June 7th, 2024

Highlighting interdisciplinary LGBTQIA2S+ artists including exhibiting & live visual artists, performers, musicians, workshops, youth engagement, public art, and more!

11th Annual New American Arts Festival

August 2nd, 2024

Celebrating 11 years of Omaha's immigrant and refugee communities, cultures, artists, performers, and more!

The BFF Ball + Art Auction

November 8th, 2024

Don your Friday best, because The BFF Ball is stickin' to its new prime-time Friday night slot, along with a corresponding Art Auction inside the BFF Gallery. Expect visual art, performances, decadence, food, dancing, and fun.

PETFEST | August 17th, 2024

"If Maha Festival showcases the newest indie acts and Outlandia celebrates past national indie icons, Petfest is the ultimate showcase of the best talent this state has to offer." - Tim McMahan, Lazy-i.com

Green Team Community Cleanups

Every other Sunday morning
starting May 5th!

HOW TO SUPPORT

1

BECOME A FRIEND OF BFF MEMBER

It's totally cool and everyone's doing it. Members enjoy swag, monthly perks & discounts at First Friday events, special invitations to the annual BFF Ball + Art Auction, and the satisfaction of supporting community building and arts engagement.

2

MAKE A DONATION

Every donation counts! 93% of BFF's makeup is artists. And we are present, persistent, motivated, and resourceful! As creatives, a small donation to BFF has a BIG impact on the community.

3

BECOME A SUPPORTING PARTNER

In order to keep our programming vibrant, happenin', and GROWING, we depend on our Supporting Program Partners! Various promotional and partnership opportunities abound! Please email ALEX @ alex@bffomaha.org for inquiries and all sponsorship opportunities.

Support Online!

bffomaha.org/support

Support by Mail!

Checks payable to "BFF Omaha" can be mailed to 2729 N. 62nd St. Omaha, NE 68104



SUPPORT
BFF

