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Contact

Katie Heineman, Development Director
katie@ncartsinaction.org
(919) 619-0483



Matching Grant Doubles Donations for NC AIA Expansion to Serve More Children

CARRBORO, N.C. (January 17, 2024) – [North Carolina Arts in Action](https://www.ncartsinaction.org), a nonprofit that teaches children life skills through dance and music at no cost to the students’ families, announces a matching grant from The William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust to raise funds to serve more children. The \$500,000 grant matches charitable donations until March 31, 2024.

“The William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust is making this generous commitment to inspire more community support and create momentum for achieving our \$1.3 million campaign goal to expand our programs to more schools,” said Marlon Torres, NC AIA Executive Director. “We are honored the Trust has chosen to support NC AIA as part of its service to humanity and dedication to community.”

NC AIA currently has 21 programs in 14 public schools in Wake, Orange, Durham, and Chatham counties. Since 2005, NC AIA has reached more than 18,400 children of all abilities and backgrounds using performing arts as a unique force for engaging and motivating children to realize their full potential. The NC AIA program is integrated into the school day and therefore all children have access to the positive effects of joyful learning through the arts.

The \$1.3 million fundraising campaign funds the expansion to deliver the NC AIA 16-week in-school program to more schools. Numerous research studies show that dance has mental as well as physical health benefits for children; for example, an NC AIA research study with Wake County Schools found statistically significant increases in students’ social studies and math scores after their NC AIA experience. Campaign funds also support training for NC AIA teaching professionals and expanded program evaluation to demonstrate NC AIA’s positive influence on children’s life skills and mental health.

“NC AIA uses a proven teaching methodology to motivate, engage, and inspire diverse learners. Data show how our joyful and rigorous program helps students develop self-esteem, resilience, critical thinking, and collaboration skills through the power of performance,” said Lars von Kantzow, NC AIA Board Chair. “The fundraising campaign enables our Board’s strategic plan to strengthen partnerships with schools and train teaching professionals in the pedagogy of the National Dance Institute in New York.”

“Their programming uses effective arts integration techniques to help our students connect their ideas to core subjects, using dance and live music as vehicles to increase understanding,” said Jeremy Tucker, Director of Arts Education for Wake County Public School System. “Our goal is to continue to strengthen and grow this partnership.”

For more information about donating to the matching grant, please visit <https://www.ncartsinaction.org/>

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North Carolina Arts in Action is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to teaching life skills by bringing in-school dance programs to elementary schools in North Carolina. Through fiscal partnerships with individual schools, along with private and public funds, we help children succeed through the transformative power of dance and music. Active in Title I schools, NC AIA develops in students the life skills necessary for success in the classroom and in life.