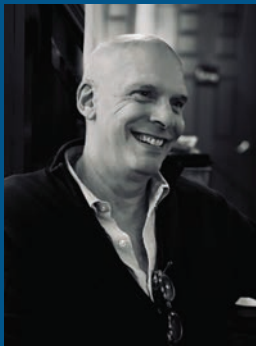


2025 Impact Report



GreenStage
GUILFORD
Live Arts

FROM THE DIRECTOR



It was a tough year to put on a performing arts festival. The political, economic and cultural climate was chaotic and the funding environment challenging, especially for diversity, equity and inclusion, arts, cultural and humanities programming. But our financial supporters, this arts-loving community and our volunteers were heroes, enabling us to stage a 2025 festival at which a couple thousand people came out to celebrate what’s good in the world.

GreenStage’s core mission is community-building, and to that end we collaborated with area partners to present eight new programs in 2024-25—one every other month on average. These events were designed to deliver the unexpected, to bring live performances and experiences to the Shoreline unlike anything else found here, and to engage the community in celebration, connection and learning. We continue to prioritize diversity in artistic genre, offering a platform for the voices of a multicultural society, and removing barriers between stage and audience.

Looking to the future, I’m excited to welcome Laura Davidson and Nellie Kurtzman as our new board chair and executive director. It’s been an honor and a lot of fun to be part of this organization, and it’s with enthusiasm and confidence that I’ll watch them creatively, energetically and joyfully carry GreenStage into its next great decade! I hope you’ll continue to share in the journey.

Warmly,

Peter Hawes

On the cover: Surcari, led by guitarist Lorena Garay, played traditional music and told stories from Puerto Rico, Mexico, the Andes and other Spanish-speaking lands. The Sean Nelson Jazz Orchestra, opposite, put its virtuosic spin on big-band music, featuring traditional and original compositions.

GreenStage’s 2024-2025 season was our busiest yet, featuring 33 events in four program areas: Live Arts Performance and Education, Artists’ Awards Grants, Community Building through the Arts, and Arts-Based Human Service.



“I am blown away by the excellent programming for GreenStage. Truly something for everyone and so much fun!”

2025 LIVE ARTS FESTIVAL

Our signature program, the biennial **GreenStage Live Arts Festival**, presented 20 live performances and hands-on workshops in music, dance and drama.



“Tears of joy were pouring down my cheeks as I marched around the green”



Musical entertainment at the 2025 festival included the Jordan TW Trio, opposite, right, playing traditional music and telling stories from Celtic northern Europe; Karim Nagi and Huzam, opposite, far left, performing instrumental music and illuminating the culture and history of the Arabic diaspora; Sera Smolen, Tom Mank and Luke Molina, opposite, bottom, collaborating on original folk and blues songs; and the Afro-Brazilian women drummers of Batalá New York, above, who energized downtown with a joyful parade around the Guilford Green, accompanied by giant puppets from Sova Dance and Puppet Theater.



Kotoko Brass, below, had the audience dancing under the tent with high-energy brass-band music and explosive percussionists from Ghana. Composer Jeff Beal, left, performed piano études and chatted with GreenStage board chair Laura Davidson and the audience about his music and inspirations. Poets Pat Mottola, Kashawn Taylor and Mark McGuire-Schwartz, L-R, opposite, read from their latest collections. Not shown: Indie-folk duo Goodnight Moonshine.



LEARNING IN ACTION

A core element of GreenStage’s mission is providing opportunities for people of all ages to learn from festival artists and to try their hands at various forms of music, dance and drama.

Children’s book authors Bob Shea and Pinkalicious engaged kids, right and below, with artmaking on downtown sidewalks, storytelling and crafts. Musician and educator Anitra Brooks, below right, led a community song circle, and Capoeira Esperança performed and taught capoeira, the Afro-Brazilian martial art that combines acrobatics, dance and fighting.



“I really appreciated the knowledge shared by the performers”

Percussionists from Kotoko Brass drew participants of all ages, below, to a popular Ghanaian drumming and dance workshop, while Sova Dance and Puppet Theater performed an interactive mask theater show featuring snakes, crows, rabbits, lions, lemurs and wild characters of all types. Not shown: Tango dance workshop with Gerardo Sorkin.



NEW WORK BY CONNECTICUT ARTISTS

Our **Artists' Awards** grant program commissions new work by Connecticut performers for premiere at GreenStage festivals.

GreenStage commissioned two new works for premiere at the 2025 festival. Composer Jen Allen brought her jazz sextet and a painter to perform a new composition, *One*, celebrating unity; and playwright Laura Thoma presented *Letter to My Soul, opposite, top*, a life-affirming communion between two queer women across space and time. The festival also presented the North American premiere of *Escape the Noise*, below left, a play exploring the impact of smartphone addiction on teen mental health—co-written, directed and performed by teens from Shoreline Theater Academy Kidz Konnection.



SCENES FROM THE CROWD

People and critters of all ages came out to GreenStage events in 2024 and 2025. Center middle, there was a full house plus some for evening shows under the festival tent; a butterfly dog, right, was spellbound by African dance; young families, top right and below left, enjoyed Pinkalicious stories; Batalá New York's high-energy drumming brought smiles, middle right; and bottom left to right, hundreds attended a multicultural GreenStage fundraiser at The Place, cared for by young volunteers.



Giant puppets, below, engaged with the audience on the Guilford Green; the teen cast of *Escape the Noise*, center, celebrated the North American premiere of their original play while family members and friends, far right, took in its serious message; a couple, bottom right, enjoyed the Spanish-influenced music of *Surcari*; and, bottom left, the audience couldn't stay in the seats for *Kotoko Brass*.



COMMUNITY BUILDING THROUGH THE ARTS

Collaboration with other southern Connecticut arts, cultural, educational and human-service organizations and businesses is central to our M.O., and our 2024-2025 season featured partnerships with 18 different organizations to help bring the community together through the arts.

Partnerships with the Arthur Murray Dance Center and Guilford Art Center brought storytellers Martin Dockery, top, and Jennifer Munro and Denise Page, bottom, to local studios and galleries. The multifaceted GreenStage Experience event in the fall of 2024, opposite, drew 400 people to The Place restaurant for sunshine, great food, and performances by three singer-songwriters, a Caribbean steel band, an a cappella vocal ensemble, percussionists from India and West Africa, and a comedian.



*“A wonderful way for a visitor
to connect with the local community.
Such a warm welcome!”*





GreenStage held a series of events at The Marketplace restaurant in 2024 and 2025, including eight open-mic nights that showcased local musicians, poets and storytellers; Tomcat Bob, right, was a frequent performer. A double-bill by the 20-piece steel-drum band of fourth graders known as The Howlers, below, and the jazz quartet led by their teacher at A.W. Cox Elementary School, Russ Kleiner, above, filled the house. Collaboration with Guilford Parks & Recreation produced Wings 'n' Strings, opposite, Guilford's first annual country and bluegrass festival; attendance topped 3,000.



WINGS 'n' STRINGS
July 26 3-8 PM

Country & Bluegrass Festival
FREE ADMISSION!
Proceeds from food and activities support Community Dining Room, GreenStage Guilford Live Arts and Guilford Parks & Recreation.
Guilford Town Green
(rain date Sunday, July 27, 2025)

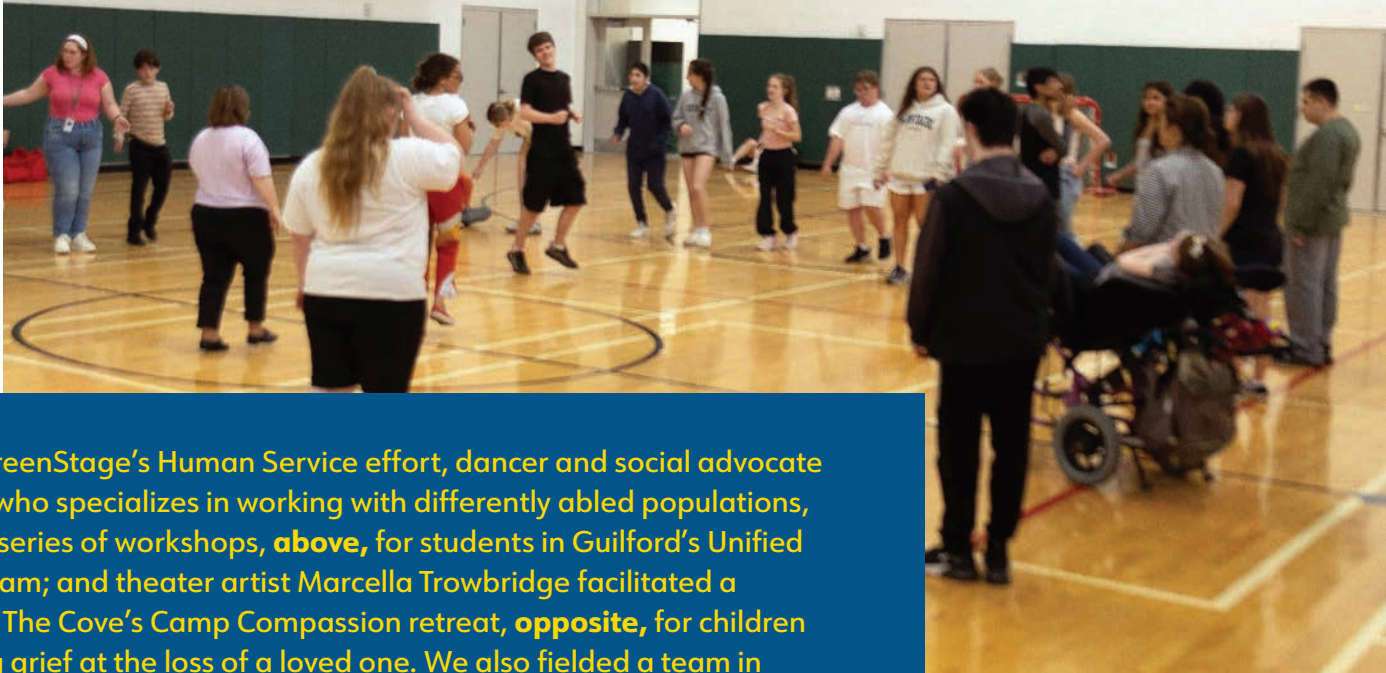
Food and Beer Garden!
 Photo Booth!
 Mechanical Bull Riding!
 Axe Throwing!
 Vendors!
 Petting Zoo!

LIVE MUSIC BY
 Goodnight Blue Moon • 4pm
 Kat Wallace & Friends • 5pm
 Austin City Nights • 6:30pm

Made possible by our major sponsors

ARTS-BASED HUMAN SERVICE

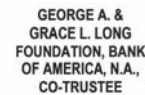
We partner with educational and social-service organizations, supporting their work with performing arts-based facilitation that fosters personal insight and identity, expression, empathy, resilience and healing, as well as social connection, understanding and cohesion.



As part of GreenStage’s Human Service effort, dancer and social advocate Kerry Kincy, who specializes in working with differently abled populations, presented a series of workshops, **above**, for students in Guilford’s Unified Sports program; and theater artist Marcella Trowbridge facilitated a workshop at The Cove’s Camp Compassion retreat, **opposite**, for children experiencing grief at the loss of a loved one. We also fielded a team in the Guilford Fund for Education’s annual spelling bee, **above, top**, and sponsored GFFE’s basketball tournament, supporting the fundraising efforts of this great community educational organization.



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LIVE ARTS

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The Great Give	\$9,628
Free will at events	\$4,022
Fundraising Events	\$3,670
Grants	\$107,102
Governmental	\$57,877
Community & private foundations	\$49,225
Program Income	\$1,795
Sponsorship/Advertising	\$8,700
EXPENSES	\$188,815
Development	\$15,775
Contract development staff	\$11,479
Marketing	\$77,066
Contract marketing staff	\$42,079
Operations	\$23,119
Accounting	\$1,615
Staff salaries & benefits	\$-
Contract administrative staff	\$12,918
Information technology	\$6,571
Insurance	\$1,330
Production	\$72,855
Artist grants	\$10,000
Performer fees	\$29,095
Contract production staff	\$3,500
Production expenses	\$30,260
2024-25 P&L	\$(10,303)
Cash	\$34,575



SEE YOU IN 2027



GreenStage
GUILFORD
Live Arts

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