

Putnam Arts Council

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I. Description of Agency:

The Putnam Arts Council is a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) cultural organization chartered in 1963 by the NYS Department of Education for educational and museum purposes.

The Council is housed in the Belle Levine Art Center in Mahopac, a hub of cultural activity which has been a destination for artists and the public for over 60 years. Our 4,000 square foot building is 100% accessible and climate controlled. The Arts Council manages the Art Center where it offers an educational program in the visual, performing, and literary arts. Classes are open to the public and include senior discounts, scholarship opportunities, and pay as you go plans. Our extensive gallery program provides opportunities for area artists to display their work and enjoy the work of other artists. Social events around openings and closings which are open to the public, expand our reach and build our audience. Admission to the gallery is always free of charge.

The Arts Council provides leadership in the cultural development of the arts county-wide and connects artists and the arts to the public. PAC is a voice for the arts in community planning and has ongoing interactions with artists, arts organizations, and community presenters throughout Putnam County. PAC advocates for the arts county-wide, provides leadership in the cultural development of Putnam County while funding and presenting quality arts programs for the enrichment of Putnam County residents.

The Executive Director is the Chief Operating Officer and reports directly to the Board Chairperson. In 2025 the Board was comprised of 8 individuals from a variety of municipalities reflecting the community in interest, location, and background. Governance requires vision and oversight, which are primary Board responsibilities. Monthly Board meetings focus on organizational capacity, financial position, and growth as well as program development. New board members are nominated by the Board and voted on by the organization's membership at an annual meeting.

PAC's re-grant, planning, scholarship, and fundraising panels (all volunteer) and a variety of committees enable PAC to extend its reach and broaden its vision. PAC also offers volunteer opportunities for internships, community service to area teens and has participated in high school WISE Programs. The Council worked with Putnam County Youth Bureau, Putnam County Probation, Putnam ARC, as well as area high schools, connecting the arts to the community and the community to the arts.

II. Services Provided

As a Putnam County Outside Agency, PAC is contracted with Putnam County to "provide cultural and educational services which promote, foster and perpetuate the visual, performing and literary arts." In this capacity PAC publishes a county-wide cultural arts calendar, and offers onsite arts education classes, concerts, and similar activities or projects for the benefit of the residents of Putnam County. Exhibitions such as the Art in Public Places program; workshops in the visual and performing arts; a summer arts program; theater performances; advocacy and outreach to surrounding arts groups, technical assistance workshops, studio tours, and special events are characteristic of the work accomplished by the Arts Council. The Council administers a regrant program comprised of funds from Putnam County and New York State. 100% of those County funds were dispersed to support quality arts programs throughout Putnam County in a variety of mediums. Many of these programs are free and most are very affordable. We work with Tourism to curate, provide, and install artwork in the Bistro at Tilly's Table, located on Tilly Foster Farm, and look forward to offering art classes and/or a lecture series on the Farm when space is made available.

II. Mission Statement

To promote, foster, encourage the arts in all forms throughout Putnam County and its environs.

III. Population Served

PAC cultural and arts programs and activities presented at the Belle Levine Art Center are open to local and regional artists and residents and projects funded through our Community Regrant Program extend our reach to serve artists and audience county-wide. The entire county population is served by art in one form or another. Special discounts are offered to students 65+ as well as payment options and scholarships. Surveys, audits, reviews, and community panels help to identify community interest and inform decisions on offerings.

V. Significant Events & Accomplishments & Points of Pride

Exhibits: Art was exhibited in the Belle Levine Art **programs** – Center 33 weeks out of the year in 2025. We featured 8 open calls and 4 invitationals, featuring the work of 800-1000 artists and bringing audience from Putnam and surrounding counties. Partnership shows/invitationals were very well received including a collaboration with the Mahopac School District to feature middle and high school students art as well as a collaboration with Putnam County Youth Bureau to feature a student exhibition from their *Building Bridges Program*.

Arts Education / Classes & Workshops:

75 classes in the visual and performing arts were offered to people of all ages and abilities. Accommodating 800+ students annually.

Annual participation at Putnam County Fair and 4-H Showcase in cooperation with Cornell Cooperative Extension and Putnam County Parks & Recreation.

Visibility increased for the arts through posting our bi-monthly cultural arts calendar on the Putnam County Tourism site. Individual events highlighted by same via social media.

Podcasts recorded with Patterson Library and Putnam County Business Council.

Annual partnership with Assemblyman Slater to judge *Earth Day Art Contest* and meet with young artist participants.

Ongoing partnership with Putnam County Youth Bureau to present art exhibition “Building Bridges”

Continuation of 2 scholarship programs, one for adult artists and one to support tuition for children and or teens in need.

Ongoing senior discounts for art classes and exhibits made possible through a bequest, from a longtime friend and instructor.

Our Community regrant program funded by Putnam County supported 10 events in a variety of disciplines and offered to the public in a variety of towns throughout Putnam County. To highlight one: Brewster Theater Company gave a rousing performance of the musical 1776 at Drew Methodist Church in Carmel. This outstanding community theatre group has been a mainstay for cultural activity in central Putnam drawing audiences from across the county, Westchester, and Connecticut for 8 sold out performances this past summer. More than 27 local actors and singers put in over 4 months of non-stop artistic activity to mount this ambitious production; their presence is a boost to the many local businesses who support them.

VII. Sources of Revenue & Current Trends in the cost of services.

County funding remained stable and was essential.

Demand for art programs continues to grow increasing costs for same.

Private donations increased slightly over FY24.

Rotary Clubs and local banks provide small grants.

Options for Corporate / Foundations grants dwindle.

NYSCA funding is becoming more centralized.

Expenses continue to climb for marketing/advertising, postage, printing, and building costs including fuel, electric and maintenance of a 4,000 square foot building and approximately 1 acre of land.

VIII. Goals for 2026

Offer several REV250 programs including exhibitions and performances and work with the REV250 committee to help promote the events happening county wide.

Increase the number of popular programs which serve our community and also help to generate revenue.

Create a quarterly roundtable of cultural stakeholders facilitating networking, sharing of audiences and resources, and developing partnerships.

Identify new artists and support all Putnam County Artists in the creation of new work and service to the community.