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An Introduction to Arts Incubators

by Mary Kahn, Associate Director, Arts Council of New Orleans

Arts incubators are a new, but growing, phenomena in the world of local arts agencies. They are facilities that create a nurturing environment for small and emerging arts organizations by offering low-cost or subsidized space and services. Arts incubators are part of a larger universe of business incubators of which there are more than 500 in North America, according to the National Business Incubator Association.

This issue of Monographs highlights six incubators that are concerned with nurturing arts organizations and facilitating their organizational growth and development.

The oldest arts incubator in this article started eight years ago while the business incubator movement is more than 20 years old. Business incubators have been created to promote the creation of jobs by assisting in the growth and development of new businesses. Candace Campell, in her study, *Change Agents in the New Economy: Business Incubators and Economic Development*, notes that "business incubators have been developed either in response to declines in manufacturing employment due to plant closures and regional economic crises or in hopes of nurturing a new base of industry or technology." A New Orleans arts incubator has received the majority of its funding from economic development sources. Its community recognizes it as a business incubator for the arts industry. This issue of *Monographs* highlights six incubators that are concerned with nurturing arts organizations by facilitating their organizational growth and development. Three of the arts incubators discussed have been in operation less than a year, three have been operating for at least three years, with Arts Bridge in Chicago opening eight years ago.

There is great similarity among these arts incubators. They all offer office space to arts organizations at low, subsidized rates. They provide shared office equipment — most notably computers, high quality copiers and fax machines. They emphasize organizational development by offering consultation and training. Each, however, is uniquely tailored to meet the needs of its community.

Arts Bridge, the oldest incubator, was started by a management consulting firm and is noted for its well-designed, comprehensive technical assistance program for its participants. All of the other incubators are products of local arts agencies. Each of these incubators were developed through community planning processes and are natural outgrowths of services and programs previously offered. The Fort Lauderdale incubator recently opened after five years of planning and development activities. It garnered strong public and private support for its enterprise, built many collaborative partnerships, and now operates in a refurbished public library. The Harrisburg incubator has a dance/rehearsal space and is making the latest computer technology available to its constituents. The San Jose and the Houston incubators were specifically created to address the needs of small, multicultural arts organizations; the other incubators recognize multicultural arts organizations as an important component of their



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constituency. The New Orleans incubator has the broadest mix of tenants, including a musicians' managed and operated symphony orchestra. In both San Jose and Chicago, organizations are expected to "graduate" and become independent in approximately three years. The New Orleans incubator is attempting to create a nurturing, stable environment for a mix of organizations and does not require organizations to rotate out of the facility. New Orleans also has a strong program that extends its services beyond the tenants, actively offering training and programs to 38 arts organizations and almost 200 visual and performing artists in the community.

All of the elements involved in arts incubators have long been around, but it is the combination of these aspects — the physical co-location of arts groups focused on organizational development, the shared resources, the intensive technical assistance over a multi-year period, and the emphasis on collaboration — that make the sum more than its parts and herald a new organization that can be recognized as an "arts incubator."

This article is meant as an introduction to one model of arts incubator. There are also other models. For example, the Colorado Center for Contemporary Art and Craft in Manitou Springs opened in 1988 "to support fledgling artists in the pursuit of art as a career." It seeks to provide artists with the business skills necessary to be successful in the marketplace. The facility contains studio space, retail shops and galleries, and offers educational programs. Canton, Mississippi, has a similar facility, Allison's Wells School of Arts and Crafts, which opened in 1991. It is hoped that this article will spark further discussions, articles and studies that will encourage local arts agencies to explore the richness and diversity the arts incubator model offers their community.

At NALAA's 1994 annual convention in Fort Worth, Texas, several representatives of arts incubators met, shared interests and concerns, and expressed a desire to continue a dialogue. The Entergy Arts Business Center in New Orleans organized a two-day mini-conference in August that saw seven arts incubators from around the country, and a number of heads of local arts agencies in Louisiana, in attendance. In addition to sharing information on their facilities and programs, attendees made recommendations for preconference topics for NALAA's 1995 annual convention in San Jose, California. Arts Incubators will be discussed as part of the Cultural Facilities preconference.

An important source of information and publications on incubators is the National Business Incubator Association, 20 East Circle Drive, Suite 210, Athens, Ohio 45701; phone 614.593.4331. Their publications are especially helpful to anyone considering this type of facility.

■ THE ARTS BRIDGE INCUBATOR PROGRAM

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"Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs subsequently conducted related research ... which reinforced Arts Bridge's feasibility study conclusions: access to ongoing technical assistance resources and a professional business environment would provide arts organizations with a catalyst for creative and administrative growth."

The "arts business incubator" concept was developed by a consortia of entrepreneurs, arts administrators and management consultants in Chicago, who founded CCR/Arts Bridge in 1986. The organization was chartered with a threefold mission: first, to strengthen the economic viability of the arts; second, to promote artistic and cultural diversity; and third, to enhance the role of the arts in the community. Arts Bridge's primary objective was to establish a program to provide a network of comprehensive support services for nonprofit arts and cultural groups.

Arts Bridge conducted a feasibility study, funded by the Chicago Department of Economic Development and the Joyce Foundation, that demonstrated both the need and the market for an arts business incubator. Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs subsequently conducted related research, and published Artspace and the Chicago Cultural Plan, which reinforced Arts Bridge's feasibility study conclusions: access to ongoing technical assistance resources and a professional business environment would provide arts organizations with a catalyst for creative and administrative growth.

Strategic alliances facilitated the incubator's development. Mgt Cornerstones, Inc., a management consulting firm serving nonprofit organizations, worked closely with Arts Bridge's Board of Directors to design a comprehensive technical assistance program for the incubator. Up-town National Bank donated an estimated \$50,000 for the custom renovation of the incubator facility and provided a subsidized lease agreement. The Joyce Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Beatrice Foundation underwrote significant support for the program's initial operations. The Arts Bridge Incubator Program opened its doors in 1987.

Initially, the incubator was driven by outside consultants and a program-oriented Board of Directors. As internal (staff) capacity and expertise has grown, the Arts Bridge Incubator Program has evolved and is now primarily a staff driven model. Arts Bridge's Board continues to guide the incubator's operations and cultivates new resources for the incubator and other Arts Bridge programs.

Incubator Participants: Potential incubator participants go through a screening and application process. Artistic merit and commitment to organizational development are the primary criteria for inclusion in the program. Arts Bridge seeks groups who excel artistically, reach into the community to develop new audiences for the arts, and aim to build an organizational capacity to support program viability and growth.

Arts Bridge maintains a balance and variety of groups in the incubator to avoid competition both for audience and funding dollars among participants. Synergy and peer support are fostered by the noncompetitive environment. Groups enter the incubator at different stages of development and demonstrate varying levels of management expertise.



Michol Sherman, Arts Bridge's Administrative Coordinator, provides computer database training to Jen Abrams of Guild Complex and Stacey Hurst of Hedwig Dances.

Incubator residents represent a diverse mix of artistic endeavors — dance, music, theater, and the literary, visual and media arts — and cultural influences that span the globe. Current participants include: Aloy Children's Dance Theater, the Chicago Ensemble, Flower of the Dragon Productions, Guild Complex, Hedwig Dances, Natyakalalayam, and Opera San Benedetto. Since the incubator's inception, 16 groups have reached their management goals, leaving the incubator better equipped to thrive as a solid presence on Chicago's cultural scene.

Technical Assistance: Annual planning serves as the underpinning to cultivate a proactive approach to viability and growth within each incubator participant group. Arts Bridge staff and consultants

work closely with participants to assess each group's needs, develop management objectives and gauge progress toward reaching these goals.

The Arts Bridge staff is available on an ongoing basis for consulting based on each participant's needs. This may include answering questions, making referrals, trouble shooting, and providing in-depth consulting in areas such as board development, organizational structure, fundraising, finance, marketing, programs and personnel. Arts Bridge contracts with outside arts management consultants to co-produce annual workplans with each group and meet with them monthly to monitor the implementation of the workplan's objectives. Arts Bridge underwrites additional outside consultation that provides each participant with specialized expertise.

The incubator hosts an ongoing series of management training and peer support/networking sessions. Bimonthly participant meetings are a forum for Arts Bridge staff and participant groups to exchange information and participate in a presentation that focuses on a relevant business topic. Roundtable groups offer discussions designed to address common issues facing individuals who serve a specific role within each organization (e.g. Board President, Board Treasurers, Executive Directors, Artistic Directors). Workshops provide intensive training in management areas tailored to the needs of incubator participants.

To compliment the consultation and management training, Arts Bridge maintains a variety of material resources, including a library of arts management books and periodicals; corporate,

government and foundation funding files; databases of press contacts, funders, volunteer recruitment agencies, and corporate volunteer programs. Arts Bridge also compiles a monthly calendar of funding deadlines, outside management workshops, and other resource information which is provided to incubator participants.

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The incubator's technical assistance program is designed to establish a knowledge base within each participant organization that is accessible to its Board of Directors, staff and volunteers. It provides the framework for guidelines to become independent from the incubator. Specific guidelines evolve for each group to parallel its capacity, sophistication and growth goals. These guidelines are integrated into each participant's annual workplan during its tenure at Arts Bridge, and provide goals, objectives and a solid management foundation for the organization.

Facilities: The Arts Bridge offices are accessible 24 hours a day. Each incubator resident is provided with furnished office space, a private phone line and voice mail. Participants are given unlimited access to office equipment, including computers, fax, conference room, kitchen and resource library. Arts Bridge's Administrative Assistant provides office support services such as computer and equipment training. A team of volunteers offer clerical support to participants.

Program Budget: Incubator residents pay a monthly participation fee of between \$275 and \$375. This fee is subsidized by Arts Bridge and represents only 25 to 35 percent of the actual costs of the technical assistance and office support provided. Other costs, such as postage, telephone calls and photocopying, are borne directly by participants.

Many of the incubator's services are available on a fee-for-service basis to arts organizations who are not participants (e.g. workshops, conference room rentals). This increases both Arts Bridge's outreach efforts and its earned income. The program's revenues represent 33 percent earned income of an approximately \$170,000 operating budget. The remaining revenues are generated by funding from corporate, foundation, government, and individual sources. Major contributors include the Illinois Arts Council, Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Polk Bros. Foundation, Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, Sara Lee Foundation, Northern Trust Company, WPWR-TV Channel 50 Foundation and Uptown National Bank. Maintaining a diversified foundation of contributed income is critical to the stability of the program's funding base.

Arts Bridge has also developed creative strategies to reduce the incubator's operating expenses. Uptown National Bank continues to subsidize the facility's lease agreement. Negotiating costs for equipment purchases has allowed the incubator to upgrade its technology resources while bearing little increased costs. Arts Bridge successfully solicits in-kind donations for printing and special events expenses. Interns and volunteers contribute invaluable support for the incubator and other programs. A majority of the consultants who work with incubator participants provide their services pro bono or at steeply discounted rates and the incubator

collaborates with other Chicago-based arts service and technical assistance organizations to provide resources, referrals, workshops and the like.

Public and private sector partnerships have been a key to the incubator's success. The program's activities have been supported by efforts with Lawyers for the Creative Arts, the Arts and Business Council of Chicago, CPA's for the Public Interest, Information Technology Resource Center, the Support Center of Chicago, the Uptown Chamber of Commerce, the Illinois Arts Council, Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs, local businesses and many others.

Looking to the future: The MacArthur Foundation selected Arts Bridge to participate in its strategic planning initiative, from which it will produce a publication on strategic planning for arts organizations. The focus of this endeavor for Arts Bridge is assessing the feasibility and market for new arts incubation and stabilization efforts. Arts Bridge has already begun new projects that expand artistic opportunities and visibility for its incubator participants as well as the broader arts community. In addition, Arts Bridge has mentored a number of emerging arts incubators across the county.

■ **The Multicultural Arts Incubation Program (MAIP)**

A Program of the City of San Jose's Office of Cultural Affairs

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Joe Rodriguez, Community Arts Development Program Officer

In 1991, the San Jose City Council accepted the Vision 2000 Report from the Mayor's Task Force on Multicultural Arts Development. This report documented the needs of the multicultural arts community in San Jose. The Multicultural Arts Incubation Program (MAIP) was created that same year to address these needs.

MAIP began as a three-year pilot project funded by a \$150,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts Local Arts Agencies Program, \$300,000 from the City of San Jose, and small additional grants each year from the California Arts Council. The project's goals were to assist leading San Jose-based multicultural arts organizations with their administrative and organizational development and fundraising ability. Principal components of the program included a grants program to support achievement of measurable objectives defined by each organization, technical assistance workshops, direct assistance by the Office of Cultural Affairs and Project staff, access to inexpensive office space at the Incubation Office Space, and marketing and performance experience in the City's America Festival and Performing Arts Summer Series.

In 1991, the San Jose Arts Commission reviewed applications and selected 14 San Jose-based

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multicultural organizations to participate in the first year of the MAIP. Groups were selected from various disciplines and ethnic backgrounds based on the following criteria: two years of experience in arts programming, commitment of the Board to become institutionalized, and residence in San Jose and connection to a culturally-specific community. After the first year, one group elected not to continue due to lack of interest in pursuing institutionalization and another group left the program because they met their institutional objectives within the first year. The remaining 12 groups participated fully in the project for three years, achieving significant progress toward institutionalization and organizational stability.

At the beginning of the project, each organization attended a workshop and identified measurable objectives to develop their Board, increase their contributed income, and plan for their long-range organizational development. More than \$150,000 was distributed throughout the three-year period to help groups achieve their development objectives. In addition, several practical workshops were planned to facilitate their objectives. The first year, workshops included nonprofit incorporation, nonprofit accounting and financial planning, and publicity through the *San Jose Mercury News*. During the MAIP's second and third years, workshops included audience development, volunteer recruitment and coordination, strategic planning, foundation and corporate fundraising and computer operations.

The Multicultural Arts Showcase has served as a laboratory for participating groups to develop marketing skills and promotional materials. The San Jose America Festival is an annual event held over the July 4th weekend. NEA funds supported the Multicultural Arts Showcase at the festival, which highlights San Jose cultural diversity. The Showcase stage featured San Jose's finest emerging multicultural arts groups. Multicultural arts organizations derived organizational, promotional and artistic benefits from their participation in the San Jose America Festival. Audiences at the annual festival are approximately 30,000 over the course of three days.

Because of MAIP's success as a pilot project, the Office of Cultural Affairs has converted the pilot project into an on-going program of the city so that the city can continue its leadership in incubating emerging multicultural arts organizations. The on-going program will be similar to the pilot: a three-year cycle of grant support and enriched technical assistance workshops and MAIP staff support. In light of funding limitations, the program will provide intensive incubation assistance to seven organizations rather than 12. A reduction in the number of groups will allow project staff to devote more time to each group so that groups can develop faster and further in the three-year period. This new cycle began in September of 1994.

Facilities and Equipment: The Arts Incubation Office is located on the second floor (18,000 sq. ft.) of a converted apartment building owned by the city. The facility has 10 furnished private offices, two large conference rooms, a mailroom with a copy machine and a fax machine, and a centralized computer workroom with three Macintosh computers and a laser printer.

Services: In addition to the use of the private offices, conference rooms, computer rooms and

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common office equipment, the Arts Incubation Office program provides technical assistance. Program staff and consultants are provided to help participants develop strategies to increase contributed income and improve administration, board development and marketing.

Funding: The city provided \$40,000 for initial building renovations and equipment. Utility costs (with the exception of telephone) and facility maintenance costs are funded from program fees charged to the participants. Funds from the city and the California Arts Council support program staff and technical assistance workshops.

Fees: To cover basic costs of operation, including utilities and maintenance, a nominal fee of \$100 or \$150 a month is charged, depending on size of space utilized.

Eligibility: In order to qualify for office space, arts organizations must: a) provide programs within the City of San Jose two years prior to applying; b) have the commitment of the Board of Directors to improve administration, operations, and contributed income in order to transition into a more permanent facility; and c) have tax exempt status acquired or pending. Priority is given to current participants of the city's Multicultural Arts Incubation Program and to organizations receiving selected City Arts Grants.

Bringing diverse organizations together in a single site has increased communication and multiplied productivity. Organizations have shared resources, pooled their part-time staffs and developed communal materials. By locating in a professional office space, rather than in private homes and other makeshift arrangements, Board of Directors and volunteers have a consistent location to meet and greater opportunities to contribute to their organizations. The Incubator Office Project has also enabled greater coordination in scheduling events and innovative artistic collaborations.

The Incubator Office Project currently houses nine of the most promising community-based organizations in San Jose and includes six MAIP organizations: Teatro Vision, San Jose Jazz Society, Abhinya Dance Company, Flamenco Society of San Jose, San Jose Minority Artist Guild, and Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americano. Three other organizations that receive city funding are also participating: Asian Heritage Council, Margaret Wingrove Dance Company and Mexican Heritage Gardens.

The premise of the Multicultural Arts Incubator Project is that long-term success in multi-cultural arts development requires that community institutions be developed to support the production of culturally specific arts. The emphasis is therefore on capacity. In a very short time, MAIP has shown remarkable success in incubating promising groups. Results have been impressive:

- MAIP organizations have all been incorporated and have become successful applicants for City Arts Grants;
- MAIP organizations have exceeded annual targets for 20 percent increases in contributed income;

- MAIP organizations have achieved increased visibility and exposure through access to major downtown performance venues during the Performing Arts Summer Series at the Montgomery Theater, Downtown Arts Series at the STAGE and the Multicultural Arts Showcase at the San Jose American Festival; and
- Seven of the MAIP organizations have established professional offices and staff at the Incubation Office Space while developing plans for more permanent facilities.

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 Mary Kahn, Business Center Director

"The Arts Business Center was based on the business incubator model that has emerged nationwide as an economic development tool."

In 1989 the Arts Council of New Orleans received a three-year grant of \$225,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts to assess the management and administrative needs of local arts organizations and to provide assistance to those organizations in meeting their identified needs. Eventually, 28 organizations participated in the program receiving individual assessments and consultations to address their priority needs. Before the grant was over, however, it became obvious that this program was only beginning to address the basic needs of organizations that the Arts Council was designed to serve, and that a structure should be developed to provide this type of service on an on-going basis.

In the summer of 1991, a concept paper was developed for an Arts Incubator that would include an Arts Business Center and an Artists' Guild Center. The Arts Business Center was based on the business incubator model that has emerged nationwide as an economic development tool. A business incubator in suburban New Orleans was extensively studied. Searching for nonprofit arts models led to discussions with Arts Bridge in Chicago, Pentacle (a support organization for dance groups) in New York City, and The Center for Nonprofit Management in Dallas. The Artists' Guild Center was based on the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, Virginia, and conceived as a facility for visual artists and craftsmen where they could both create and sell their work. Both components of the arts incubator were designed to build the arts industry and economic development monies were sought to develop them.

Funding Sources: The Louisiana Office of Economic Development gave the Arts Council a \$15,000 grant to develop a business plan for the arts incubator. The Entergy Corporation, a mid-South utility, was interested in the Arts Business Center as an economic development opportunity for the city. They committed \$50,000 a year for three years to initiate the Arts Business Center. "With the oil industry in Louisiana phasing down its operations, but with tourism still an important part of the local economy, the arts were one of the few job-creating

industries in the area," said Gary Silbert, Entergy's manager of community relations. The National Endowment for the Arts provided a seed grant of \$38,500 and the City of New Orleans' Economic Development Trust Fund awarded a \$150,000 operating grant to the Center. In 1994, the city reaffirmed its support of the Entergy Arts Business Center by awarding the Center a Community Development Block Grant.

"With the oil industry in Louisiana phasing down its operations, but with tourism still an important part of the local economy, the arts were one of the few job-creating industries in the area," said Gary Silbert, Entergy's manager of community relations.

The Arts Council of New Orleans opened the Entergy Arts Business Center in May 1992 to create an arts management resource center and a professional business environment to serve the creative and administrative needs of artists and arts organizations. The Arts Business Center, operated by the Arts Council of New Orleans, provides an affordable, permanent, and nurturing environment to both visual and performing artists and arts organizations.

Membership: Thirty-eight organizations belong to the Business Center, including six art organizations and three service providers who are tenants. Arts organizations pay a yearly membership fee of \$150 and receive reduced rates on forums and workshops and discounts from a number of businesses that support the Center. Individual membership costs \$50 a year and has similar benefits. In 1994, 185 individuals were members of the Business Center with 141 (76 percent) qualifying as low to moderate income. The membership includes 72 African Americans, six Hispanics, and four American Indians. A city grant supported free membership for individuals with low to moderate income.

Tenants: The entire sixth floor of the Commerce Building at 821 Gravier Street houses the Arts Council as well as seven tenants, including the Alliance for Community Theaters (ACT I), Cultural Communications, Louisiana Jazz Federation, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, New Orleans Ballet Association, New Orleans Film and Video Society and Nkombo. In addition, some service-related businesses are part of the Center, including a grant-writing consultant, a computer consulting and training firm, and a graphic design firm. Service providers must agree to offer discounted rates or some free services to arts groups. Tenant arts organizations benefit from low-rent office space and have access to a Macintosh computer lab, copier, fax machine, postage meter, resource library, and meeting rooms. Monthly tenant meetings provide participants with a forum to discuss their insights, successes, and challenges. The Business Center director meets regularly with each tenant to assist them as they work toward meeting their yearly goals.

Forums and Workshops: The Business Center provides monthly business forums and workshops in key management areas including: corporate structure, financing, fundraising, marketing, program development, legal, personnel and strategic planning. These workshops are attended by actors, directors, writers, musicians, composers, visual artists, craftsmen, arts administrators, educators, board members and other interested parties. In 1994, attendance at the Center's 27 forums and workshops totaled 831. Workshops range from two to eight hours, and are often held evenings and weekends to accommodate the needs of constituents. Workshops are regularly co-sponsored with such organizations as the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation and the Center for Effective Non-Profit Management. Workshops offered

include: "Writing a Business Plan," "Using Quicken Software to Maintain Financial Records," "Legal Issues - Contracts and Copyright," "Grants Writing," "Housing Opportunities for Low-Income Artists," and a variety of other topics.

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Technical Assistance: Staff regularly works with visual and performing artists and arts organizations to assist them with a variety of technical issues, but the enormous strength of the Center is its mission to leverage services for clients and to serve as a centralized source for referral. The Arts Business Center, for example, administers the Louisiana Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts (LVLA), in cooperation with the Louisiana State Bar Association, providing free legal services to low-income artists. In 1995, the Center intends to identify a small core of local attorneys who will commit to developing and expanding this important pro bono service; eventually a similar body of volunteer accountants will be developed. The Business Center is working to identify corporations who will volunteer their employees to work with nonprofit arts organizations. First National Bank of Commerce recently loaned a management analyst to help develop budget spreadsheets to Nkombo, which operates a summer camp for children centered on African arts and culture. The Center has also begun working with the Louisiana Senior Executive Service Corporation to employ their retired executives at a low hourly rate to help groups in such areas as strategic planning and marketing. Last year they worked with the Alliance for Community Theaters (ACT I) and the Louisiana Jazz Federation to develop strategic plans. Relationships are also being developed with such groups as the Center for Effective Non-Profit Management, the University of New Orleans' Enterprise Center and the Business Department of Dillard University.

Collaboration: Collaborative efforts are working to find answers to complex issues. A group health insurance plan was initiated lowering costs and providing increased coverage. The plan is open to all arts organizations who are members of the Center. Cost savings of almost \$28,000 were realized by participating organizations in 1994. A series of meetings was held to bring professionals in the arts and tourism communities together. Funded by the Audubon Institute, an arts and tourism marketing plan was developed in conjunction with the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation. The Downtown Development District has committed funds toward the implementation of the plan. Other funders are being sought so implementation can begin in 1995. An alliance to implement the Arts and Tourism Marketing Plan has been established with the Mayor's Office of Tourism, Arts, and Entertainment (MOTAE), the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation, the New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitor's Bureau, and the Greater New Orleans Black Tourism Network.

The Arts Council of New Orleans is creating the arts incubator as a focal point for advancing small business opportunities in the arts and for growing the arts industry. The first phase of the arts incubator, the Entergy Arts Business Center, is now completing its third year. The Arts Business Center is working with individuals to make them aware of how they can earn a living in the arts and to connect them with the many programs and services in the city that can assist them in becoming self-sufficient. The Arts Business Center is also working with arts organizations to promote collaborations and organizational development. The Entergy Arts Business

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Center received national recognition when Entergy Corporation received the 1994 Innovation Award from the Business Committee for the Arts and FORBES Magazine for its support of the Center.

The second phase of the arts incubator will be the Louisiana Artists' Guild, a highly visible marketplace and a major tourist destination site where up to 100 local artists and craftsmen will work and sell their creations. Land has been obtained for the project on Lee Circle at the edge of the city's downtown Historic Warehouse District. Architectural, marketing, and program plans, as well as the financing package, will be done in 1995 with construction slated to begin in 1996. The Entergy Arts Business Center will be located at the Louisiana Artists' Guild. Once fully operational, revenue generated will sustain the operation of both the Guild and the Entergy Arts Business Center.

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Andria Pinson, Executive Director

ArtServe's mission is to serve and strengthen the cultural community by bringing the tools, talents and varied volunteer resources of the business community to the arts. It addresses these objectives through three programs — the ArtServe Business Center, Business Volunteers for the Arts/Broward (BVA) and Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts (VLA). Together, these efforts are designed to provide arts organizations and individual professional artists with an administrative, management and legal support system, without which many of them likely could not survive.

ArtServe opened in September 1994 in the refurbished Fort Lauderdale Branch Library building after five years of planning and work by a wide spectrum of public and private groups. With the guidance of Mary Becht, director of the Cultural Affairs Division of Broward County, large grants were secured from the National Endowment for the Arts, the State of Florida and the Broward County Board of Commissioners. Individual and corporate donors enthusiastically supported the concept as well, with substantial gifts from Michael and Diane Bienes, JM Family Enterprises and the Knight Foundation, among many others. The Broward County Library System agreed to provide space in its Fort Lauderdale Branch.

When arts organizations become members of ArtServe (for a nominal annual fee of \$100), they have access to a smorgasbord of business services and other support systems at a fraction of the costs they might have to pay on the open market.

- Up to 23 cultural organizations can rent workspaces or offices accommodating from one to four people. Numerous additional groups will benefit by their ability to "drop in" to

use business center services.

- Members can use six conference rooms of various sizes as well as the building's auditorium, which seats 250.
- A computer center houses workstations for word processing and database management as well as laser, color and label printers. Plans call for a desktop publishing station with scanner to be added.
- A work room contains a high-quality photocopier, fax machine and ample space for preparation of mailings and other essential tasks.
- Available business assistance includes post office boxes, voice mail and message services, file cabinets and storage space. Tenants will provide and pay for their own telephones and related charges.

Member organizations will establish user accounts from which they will pay for their postage, copying, faxes and the like. "They will only pay for what they use," says Executive Director Andria Pinson. "We will only pass along direct costs of operating the equipment — all of which has been donated or purchased at cost. The costs will be very reasonable."

Other services in the planning stages include a centralized ticketing system; financial and accounting software that can be accessed by modem; on-line computer tutorials that help users to produce letters, news releases and spreadsheets; and a staff mail list manager who can help organizations extend their reach by sharing information with other groups.

The facility also houses offices for Business Volunteers for the Arts and Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, serves as a home base for ArtServe's Arts Incubator program (which helps emerging groups through basic consulting and technical assistance), features major art installations, and welcomes visitors into an attractive gallery that will be open to Broward-based artists organizations and individual artists.

■ Arts Development Center

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"The Center is about power

— the power for artists and

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MetroArts of the Capital Region opened its arts incubator, the Arts Development Center, in October 1994. The Center is about power — the power for artists and arts organizations to compete in contemporary society. Too often the arts are the weak sibling in the fast-paced 1990s. Now MetroArts, using over a quarter million dollars of community support, has assembled the means to empower arts producers to make the kind of impact that fully competitive players in today's society make.

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Sherry Shannon

Joan Small

Beverly Morgan Welch

Technology: A lack of technological know how in the 1990s means a lack of competitiveness. In the Computer Resources section of the Arts Development Center are three powerful work stations with the latest and best software for business, desktop publishing, graphics, and multimedia applications. To address the unfamiliarity with computers that characterizes so many artists and arts organizations, MetroArts will present twice-monthly software training sessions at accessible prices beginning in March 1995. The purpose is to increase the power and effectiveness of arts producers through their use of technology.

Office space and equipment: For an arts organization or artist, conducting business out of the spare bedroom eventually becomes an exercise in frustration that limits community impact, no matter how good the artistic product is. The Arts Development Center provides office space for short or long periods of time in move-in condition. Fully furnished and accompanied by a full range of office equipment, the spaces enable an arts organization or artist to be in a fully functional office within 24 hours with no capital outlay.

Dance/rehearsal studio: A 620 sq. ft. newly constructed space with hardwood floor, audio system, full mirror coverage, barres, and an adjacent spacious lounge provides accessibility for dance, auditions, rehearsals, and small performances at a location that is ideal for convenience in the Harrisburg area's geography. Since the Arts Development Center's opening, the dance/rehearsal space has been in regular use for classes by the area's only African dance company.

Management consultation: Through its own staff and through volunteer professionals in the community, MetroArts advises artists and arts organizations on a wide range of management issues including grantsmanship, special event fundraising, legal issues, board development, marketing, financial administration, and others.

Meeting space: A large board room and a beautifully appointed library are available in the Arts Development Center as meeting space for board meetings, workshops and seminars.

MetroArts' Arts Development Center has been carefully researched and designed to provide the most needed resources for the advancement of artists and arts organizations in the region. It is expected to stimulate the growth of the arts in the community in important new ways.

■ Management Assistance and Organizational Development Enterprise (MODE)

Business Center and Resource Library
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The Management Assistance and Organizational Development Enterprise (MODE) is The Cultural Arts Council of Houston/Harris County's (CACHH) response to requests for intensive, individualized technical assistance by multicultural, emerging, small and mid-sized arts organizations. In 1991, CACHH's Minority Affairs Committee specifically proposed arts incubators to direct services to the African-American and Hispanic communities. The need for technical assistance was further underscored by all arts groups in ArtWorks, the cultural arts plan for the Houston/Harris County region. A steering committee representing Houston's diverse arts community met for a year to formulate the mission and goals of MODE.

The Business Center is one part of the comprehensive services to arts organizations and artists provided by MODE's general and intensive service programs. MODE's mission is to build the organizational capacity of small, emerging and multicultural arts organizations, facilitating their artistic growth and strengthening them as channels for diverse cultural expression in the community. General services include an arts management workshop series, "brown bag" discussion sessions, a monthly networking "happy hour," publications, board development and a board fair. Ten arts organizations, selected by a panel, receive intensive services tailored to their organizational needs in an "incubator without walls" program. Work plans are monitored by assigned coordinating consultants, three of whom are volunteers from Business Volunteers for The Arts/Houston.

In May of 1994, a market analysis and plan was prepared for the Business Center by graduate marketing students from the University of Houston. The plan's market/client analysis, competitive analysis, break-even analysis, and pricing and promotion strategy were the basis for the services, hours and price structure designed for the Business Center and Resource Library.

The Business Center opened in December 1994 in a temporary office suite of approximately 800 sq. ft., including two incubator offices. The Center will expand to 2,800 sq. ft. this summer when CACHH moves to its new home in the historic Star Engraving Building. Design plans for the expanded Center include a small conference room, a computer room featuring both PC and Macintosh systems, five incubator offices, one intern/volunteer office and a resource library. Members will also have access to CACHH's board room for larger meetings.

In its current space, the Business Center will serve as home to two emerging arts organizations and up to 10 non-resident artists and/or art groups. All members receive special discounts to workshops. Additionally, incubator resident members are required to attend training and consultations based on individual workplans. Seed funding for the Center's rent and equipment was provided by CACHH. Additional equipment and furniture was donated by IBM through United Way's Gifts In-Kind Program, Exxon, Houston Symphony and private individuals. Business Volunteers for the Arts/Houston is a key collaborator providing volunteers and technical assistance consultants to staff the center. Members pay minimal participation and user fees to help offset Business Center expenses. ▼

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