



Executive Summary  
The North Carolina School of the Arts  
Response to the UNC Tomorrow Commission Report  
Our State, Our School, Our Future  
May 1, 2008

## **Introduction**

Responding to the needs of North Carolina is not new to the North Carolina School of the Arts (NCSA). Since the beginning, the North Carolina School of the Arts actively engaged in fostering the arts and culture in communities across North Carolina. More recently in its history, in response to major economic shifts in the North Carolina economy, the NCSA developed initiatives to make the State more globally competitive by leveraging the creative talents of its students, faculty, and staff to accelerate the growth of existing creative enterprises and generate new opportunities.

The North Carolina School of the Arts welcomed the UNC Tomorrow process. The UNC Tomorrow Initiative allowed us to investigate our current level of engagement and explore opportunities for new engagement that will strengthen the NCSA, our local community, and the State of North Carolina. The UNC Tomorrow process reinforced the fact that the NCSA has an important role to play as the performing arts leader within the University of North Carolina (UNC) System. In our response, we define where and how we currently lead and we describe newly discovered opportunities to expand our leadership role. The following is a summary of our response that highlights a few of the initiatives of the NCSA that address the findings in each section of the UNC Tomorrow Commission Report.

### **A. Global Readiness**

The UNC Tomorrow Commission found that “UNC should educate its students to be personally and professionally successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and to do so should enhance the global competitiveness of its institutions and their graduates” (Recommendation 4.1). The distinctive educational mission of the North Carolina School of the Arts is to prepare students for professional careers in dance, design and production, drama, filmmaking, and music, in a context that includes solid liberal-arts instruction. Dancers, designers and theatre technicians, actors, directors, filmmakers, and musicians must constantly engage in critical, knowledge-based, media-enhanced innovative thinking, creative problem solving, teamwork, and display a strong commitment to a rigorous work ethic and to professional standards of behavior. The Student Learning Outcomes formulated by each of the campus’ conservatory programs, in terms of which programs, courses, and students are annually assessed, testify to the centrality to NCSA of the “soft skills” identified by the Commission.

### **B. Increasing Access to Higher Education**

The UNC Tomorrow Commission recommended that UNC “should increase access to higher education for all North Carolinians, particularly for underserved regions, underrepresented populations, and non-traditional students.” Several programs within the school are designed to introduce young people to the arts and to the possibility of auditioning for, and attending, the North Carolina School of the Arts.

- The NCSA summer sessions in dance, music, drama and filmmaking are designed primarily for high-school age students to provide arts training that they might not otherwise receive in public schools.
- NCSA also hosts tours of its facilities for GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) in North Carolina.
- North Carolina high school students can attend high school at NCSA free of tuition and room and board.
- Approximately 67% of NCSA's students receive some sort of financial aid. NCSA awards approximately \$1,372,783.00 per year in private, Foundation and institutional trust scholarship monies, most of which are based on merit, not need.

To further increase access, the NCSA's School of Filmmaking is in the process of changing its curriculum so that it will be significantly easier for students in other UNC schools and in North Carolina community colleges to transfer into the School of Filmmaking's BFA program in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of college. The new curriculum will be aligned with both the general education requirements and the general film requirements in these other schools.

### **C. Improving Public Education**

The UNC Tomorrow Commission found that "UNC should be more actively involved in solving North Carolina's public education challenges."

#### Existing Programs that Support Public Education

- The Open Dream Ensemble is a performing and teaching ensemble that serves as the flagship project of the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts. Open Dream Ensemble is dedicated to serving youth through original, multi-disciplinary performances and residencies that support the public school curriculum.
- Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Arts Staff Development Days
- The Community Music School
- The Preparatory Dance Program of the North Carolina School of the Arts.
- cARTwheels

### **D. Economic Transformation and Community Development**

In Section 4.4: Our Communities and Their Economic Transformation, the major finding challenges UNC to be more actively engaged in enhancing the economic transformation and community development of North Carolina's regions and the State as a whole.

#### Existing Programs - Economic Transformation

- The Center for Design Innovation (CDI) is the newest UNC inter-institutional research center, established in 2005 to conduct programs related to design and digital technologies. The CDI was developed in response to the findings of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy performed for the Northwest Piedmont Triad Region of North Carolina. The study encouraged the development of entities to catalyze and facilitate the accelerated growth of the existing creative enterprises cluster in the region to replace rapidly disappearing textile, furniture, and tobacco employment. The CDI brings together the North Carolina School of the Arts, Winston- Salem State University, and Forsyth Technical Community College.

- Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) – In 2006, the Piedmont Triad Partnership (PTP) was awarded a \$15 million U.S. Department of Labor WIRED grant to support innovations in workforce development to transition the Piedmont Triad economy. The PTP decided to focus its efforts on 4 strategic clusters that offered the greatest potential return on investment. These clusters are health care, transportation and logistics, advanced manufacturing, and the creative enterprises and the arts. This is the single most important economic transformation initiative underway in the Triad and the NCSA is firmly integrated into its implementation.

#### New Program - Economic Transformation

NCSA School of Filmmaking is in the process of reinventing itself to better meet the needs of the film industry in NC. The new NCSA School of Filmmaking Center of Excellence will not only produce a workforce of fantastic leaders and storytellers, but it will also have a profound economic impact to our community and state overall. Some key components of the Center of Excellence plan include:

- Increase Film Tax Incentives to 25%(currently 15% in NC)
- Building of Motion Picture Sound Stages
- “Center of Excellence” and “Top Tier” status for the School of Filmmaking at NCSA. There are three components of what we need to make it into the Top Tier:
  - Equipment Investment & Maintenance
  - Investment in Infrastructure
  - Additional Faculty and Staff (for graduate and undergraduate programs)
- Expansion of Graduate Programs is an essential component of the Center of Excellence. Planning for a joint MBA/MFA degree to train executives and entrepreneurs in creative content/business/management in coordination with the Kenan-Flagler School of Business at UNC-Chapel Hill is underway. In addition, a 2-year MFA and a 3-year MFA in documentaries with areas of concentration at multiple UNC campuses are also being explored.

#### Existing Programs - Community Development

- The NCSA Stevens Center - The Stevens Center is dedicated to the training of the students of NCSA and as an entertainment venue for Winston-Salem and the region. The Stevens Center is committed to enhancing the cultural, social and economic needs of the community while maintaining the highest level of service to the patrons, performers and presenters. The Stevens Center is the largest performance space of the North Carolina School of the Arts and is home to NCSA’s Something For Everyone series as well as the Winston-Salem Symphony (WSS), Piedmont Opera Theatre, annual productions of The Nutcracker (a joint production of NCSA and WSS), the RiverRun International Film Festival and several other local and state arts organizations. Attendance at Steven Center events exceeded 130,000 in 2006-2007.
- NCSA Summer Performance Festival In Manteo, NC - NCSA has completed 10 summer seasons at Roanoke Island Festival Park offering a new level of cultural entertainment and opportunities to the local community and the more than 250,000 tourists to the Outer Banks each week. Since its inception, there has been a steady increase in the annual attendance and 2007 broke the all time attendance record for the events.
- NCSA Community Music School - The Community Music School (CMS) seeks to engage and enrich the lives of the local community by introducing music to people of all ages. Almost 300 students (250 families) from birth to senior citizen visit the CMS at the Stevens Center each week to attend a private lesson or group class.

- The RiverRun International Film Festival - is one of the country's fastest-growing regional film festivals. Located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the festival annually presents a rich blend of new films by established and emerging filmmakers, showcasing a diverse collection of cinematic voices from around the world.

## **E. Health**

Although it would be impossible to argue that any campus does not have a role to play in the health and well-being of the citizens of our State, it is not an area where the NCSA will lead. Most of the findings of the UNC Tomorrow Commission are related to training healthcare professionals and providing healthcare services. These are not within the NCSA's mission.

## **F. Environment**

The UNC Tomorrow Commission found that "UNC should assume a leadership role in addressing the state's energy and environmental challenges". NCSA continues to be a good steward of the environment and is a progressive partner in the state's effort to improve sustainability, reduce energy consumption and educate our students and community. The campus community is engaged and active in environmental issues and efforts are centralized and guided by the NCSA Sustainability Committee.

### Sustainability

- NCSA has completed an initial study that identifies the resources needed to make the campus a "green" campus. This study identified \$89M in one-time costs and \$2M in recurring costs to meet our sustainability goals.
- NCSA has been very active in reducing water consumption through several initiatives. The NCSA has reduced water consumption by at least 20%.
- NCSA has been active in reducing petroleum use by purchasing high fuel mileage vehicles, battery operated vehicles and bicycles.

### Energy

- NCSA was awarded a \$120k grant from the Governor's energy reserve fund. This grant will allow us to upgrade light fixtures to T8 lamps and electronic ballasts, install motion sensors and perform HVAC retro commissioning. The projects are expected to yield \$40k annually in energy savings.
- NCSA has an aggressive HVAC controls program. This program includes daily monitoring of temperature set points, continual adjustments to set points as needed and aggressive adherence to Governor mandated set points.
- NCSA has made initial commitments to determine the feasibility of Energy Performance Contracting. NCSA hopes to begin the process of entering into a performance contract in the next 12 to 18 months.

## **G. Outreach and Engagement**

The UNC Tomorrow Commission found that "UNC should become more directly engaged with and connected to the people of North Carolina, its regions, and our state as a whole." Below are some examples of existing and new outreach and engagement activities at the North Carolina School of the Arts.

### Existing Programs

- Community Public Performances – each year the NCSA produces hundreds of performances as an integral part of our arts education programs. These performances involve all 5 art schools and students from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade through post-graduate programs in venues on and off campus.
- The Fletcher Opera has presented its Education Outreach Program *Sid the Serpent Who Wanted to Sing* to over 1,000 school children so far this year and with Student Night at the Opera has reached over 2,500 school age children. Since its inception, the Fletcher Institute has presented programming to over 21,000 students in 15 counties from Mt. Airy to Wilmington.
- The Artist Reaching Children in Hospitals (ARCH) program is an excellent example of the arts ability to change and improve lives while providing meaningful experience for our young artists.
- The Kenan Writers' Encounters is a series of public lectures, master classes, workshops, and multimedia presentations devoted to the exploration of creativity across the arts. Inspired by the perspectives of renowned and rising authors and artists whose visions bridge the world of letters and other arts, The Kenan Writers' Encounters invite local and state communities, NCSA conservatory artists-in-training, faculty and interested members of the public to share extraordinary conversations with our participating writers.
- When appropriate and based on availability of funding, our outreach extends beyond our State. Some recent examples are the performance of West Side Story at the prestigious Ravinia Festival in Chicago last spring, a group of students performed with the Chancellor and the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra in Austria last fall, and 2 students performed with Chancellor John Mauceri at the Grammy Awards in Los Angeles this winter.

### New Programs

- UNC Festival of the Arts –the event showcases the arts across the UNC System and provides an opportunity for the invited guests and the public to be regenerated by art. All 17 campuses of the UNC system are invited to send performing arts groups from their campus to join in the celebration. The event is designed to open the NCSA campus to all citizens of the State with performances and activities for people ages 1 to 105.
- CDI Idea Exchange – a weekly public forum at the CDI in which participants exchange ideas related to the growth of creative enterprises in the Piedmont Triad. Over the last year, these Thursday lunch-time forums have become a well-tuned method of listening to community needs. Over 900 people have participated in the Idea Exchange to date. Its success has led to the recent expansion of the Idea Exchange to include sessions on Tuesday evening.