

University of North Carolina School of the Arts' History

The University of North Carolina School of the Arts is a free-standing campus within the University of North Carolina, and is quite different from its 16 sister institutions. Truly a cluster of conservatories, the School is a complex institution with a single, bold mission: to train talented young people for professional careers in dance, drama, music, filmmaking, and theatrical design and production. This training, coupled with the requisite liberal arts education, enables the School to offer undergraduate degrees as well as master's degrees. In addition, the School offers the high school diploma with arts concentration in dance, drama, music, and visual arts. While courses are offered that give students an historic perspective and context in each of the arts disciplines, the primary emphasis in all programs is on performance and production with more than 200 performances each year in campus facilities and on tour. International programs established in the early years in music and dance have provided unique performance experience for students. The School strives to foster an environment akin to that of an artistic colony where students are encouraged to develop their artistic abilities to the fullest. The School also provides a professional training ground where students actively and realistically are involved in preparing for the practical aspects of making a living as artists.

The premise upon which the School was founded in 1963 was indeed unique. Many good ideas, including the establishment of this special conservatory, coalesced during the tenure of Gov. Terry Sanford. State funds were appropriated to begin a performing arts school and a North Carolina Conservatory Committee was established to recommend to the governor a site for the School. In preliminary reports, the committee recommended that "the host city should obligate itself to support the school." In return, "the school must serve the city as an arts center." Not surprisingly, there was considerable rivalry among the major cities of the state to be the site of the new school. The citizens of Winston-Salem, home of the first arts council in the nation, vied for the School with particular zeal. In a two-day telephone campaign, volunteers raised nearly a million dollars in private funds to renovate the old Gray High School building – the city's contribution to the effort. An enticing incentive to the final host city was a challenge grant from the Ford Foundation to prompt the Legislature to appropriate public dollars to support the operation of the arts school.

Dr. Vittorio Giannini, a Juilliard composer, served as the founding president of the North Carolina School of the Arts. Giannini's vision of arts education shaped the School at its beginning and continues to make the School unique among its peers. During its formative years, the School also was guided by people of vision, particularly its Board of Trustees, which was chaired by Dr. James H. Semans and included Smith Bagley, Hugh Cannon, Wallace Carroll, James McClure Clarke and R. Philip Hanes, among others. Robert Ward, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and former member of the faculty of Juilliard, succeeded Dr. Giannini as the second president after Giannini's untimely death in November 1966. Ward led the School through its first decade, when policies and programs were still being developed. During his tenure, the School more than doubled its faculty and enrollment; established a School of Design & Production, separate from the School of Drama; and created a high school Visual Arts Program. Ward also presided over the incorporation of the School into the University of North Carolina in the early 1970s, when 16 public senior institutions became constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina. The title of "President" at the School was subsequently changed to "Chancellor."

A third composer, Dr. Robert Suderburg, became Chancellor of the School in 1974, following Martin Sokoloff, the Administrative Director, who served as Interim Chancellor from 1973-1974. Suderburg's tenure was marked by major capital improvements at the School, financed through increased contributions from the state and private sources. Among these improvements were the completion of the Workplace and the opening of the Semans Library; the partial renovation of the old Gray High School building; the acquisition of the former Mack Truck facility; and the renovation of the old Carolina Theatre, now the Stevens Center.

Dr. Jane E. Milley, a pianist and former Dean of the School of Fine Arts at California State University at Long Beach, assumed her post as Chancellor at the School of the Arts in September 1984, following Lawrence Hart, former Dean of Music at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, who was Interim Chancellor during the 1983-84 school year. During her tenure, faculty salaries were increased; the School received funding from the North Carolina General Assembly for construction of Performance Place and renovation of the Gray Building and Design & Production facilities. She secured increased state funding to operate the Stevens Center; acquired additional student housing; enhanced the visiting artists program; and received approval to develop a Master of Music program and to begin planning for a new School of Film.

In the spring of 1990, Alex C. Ewing was appointed Chancellor. He assumed the position in July 1990, following Philip R. Nelson, former Dean of music at Yale University, who served as Interim Chancellor during the 1989-90 school year. Ewing had been associated with NCSA since 1985, when he became chairman of the Board of Visitors. In 1988 he established the Lucia Chase Endowed Fellowship for Dance at the School, in memory of his mother, a co-founder and principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre. A man of diverse talents, Ewing almost single-handedly revitalized the Joffrey Ballet during his tenure as general director in the 1960s; he also owned one of the largest herds of champion Hereford cattle in the country. As Chancellor, Ewing oversaw the success of the School's \$25 million campaign for endowment and scholarships. He also orchestrated a combination of local, state and national support to secure the establishment of NCSA's fifth arts school, the School of Filmmaking, in 1993. Ewing took a special interest in NCSA's campus plan, successfully lobbying for the rerouting of Waughtown Street (a major city thoroughfare that divided the campus) and establishing a new main entrance to the campus, at 1533 S. Main Street. Other capital projects he spearheaded included a new Sculpture Studio, a new Fitness Center, and the start of the Student Commons renovation. Ewing also established fully staffed alumni and career services offices.

After Ewing's retirement, Wade Hobgood, Dean of the College of the Arts at California State University at Long Beach since 1993, was named Chancellor in February 2000, assuming the position on July 1, 2000. A native of Wilson, NC, Hobgood attended East Carolina University, where he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts in Communication Arts. During his five years at NCSA, he worked to secure passage of \$42.5 million in higher education bonds – approved by NC voters in the fall of 2000 – that allowed the School to build a new School of Music Complex, a new Welcome Center, a new “connector building” between the two high school residence halls, a new School of Filmmaking Archives, an addition to Performance Place, and a new wig and makeup studio and costume shop, as well as renovations to the Stevens Center (including the Community Music School), Workplace Building and Gray Building. Hobgood initiated a proposal to provide free tuition, room and board for North Carolina high school students accepted to NCSA; the initiative was approved by the NC Legislature in the fall

of 2001. In addition, he spearheaded the creation of the new Center for Design Innovation, a collaborative digital design project originally recommended by the regional Angelou Economics Report, and led the effort to secure \$12 million in funding. He also initiated the realignment of the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts as a privately funded, affiliate program of the North Carolina School of the Arts.

On July 1, 2005, Gretchen M. Bataille, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs of the 16-campus University of North Carolina, was named Interim Chancellor of the North Carolina School of the Arts. A noted scholar in the field of Native American literature, Bataille served as UNC's top academic officer since 2000, with responsibility for the development and implementation of UNC's academic mission. Bataille began her career at Iowa State University, where she was a member of the English faculty from 1967 to 1986. During her tenure at Iowa State, she initiated and chaired the American Indian Studies Program and directed numerous conferences and symposia on Native Americans and ethnic studies. She is a past Chairperson of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission and former President of the Iowa Humanities Board. Moving into academic administration, Bataille joined California State Polytechnic University at Pomona in 1987 as acting Associate Dean for Instruction. The following year, she moved to Arizona State University as chair of the English Department and Associate Dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In 1994 she was named Provost of the College of Letters and Science at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Three years later she joined Washington State University as Provost and Academic Vice President, a post she held until being named UNC Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs in 2000.

On May 12, 2006 UNC President Erskine Bowles and the UNC Board of Governors named John Mauceri as the chancellor of the North Carolina School of the Arts. Mr. Mauceri earned Bachelor of Science and Master of Philosophy in music theory degrees from Yale University, where he was also a member of the faculty for fifteen years. He is internationally known as a conductor, arranger and music director; he was the first American to hold the post of music director in both British and Italian opera houses. For the last fifteen years he has been the Director of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra in Los Angeles, California. A distinguished recording artist, he has won Grammy, Tony, Emmy and Drama Desk awards. In addition, he frequently writes articles on opera, musical theater and music for the American cinema.

In August of 2008 Governor Michael Easley signed legislation that had been passed by the North Carolina General Assembly changing the name of the school from the North Carolina School of the Arts (NCSA) to the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA). While the name was modified to better articulate the relationship between UNCSA and the University of North Carolina system, the school remains committed to its original mission and vision. The School of the Arts has seen its enrollment grow to more than 1,000 students from more than 40 states and 20 foreign countries and its faculty, full-time and visiting, numbers more than 170. While it's well-known graduates have won critical and public acclaim in concert halls, in films and on stages around the world, others have contributed to the quality of life in Winston-Salem and in large cities and small communities throughout North Carolina, the Southeast and the nation. For more information, visit www.uncsa.edu.