



UNCSA

THE ASSOCIATES

## Campaigning for UNCSA

Lovers of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts are quite conscious of the extraordinary level of the performances which we are able to attend each year. We marvel, and do not take that excellence for granted. But it's easy to forget just how audacious the founding of UNCSA was in the first place. Rather than another liberal arts college, with some arts departments to give students a chance to express themselves while pursuing other priorities, the declared *raison d'être* for the new school was to serve as a conservatory for professional-level creative artists and performers in Dance, Design & Production, Drama, and Music. (Filmmaking was added in 1993.) This was to enter an arena which was already occupied by prestigious institutions with storied histories and huge endowments, and to carve that niche within a state university system. And the miracle of it was that it worked: The North Carolina School of the Arts, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, quickly became one of the nation's premiere arts schools.

Fifty-five years later, UNCSA continues to thrive, thanks to the energy and dedication of faculty, students, and supporters who cherish its mission and unique atmosphere. But sustaining this level of excellence with relatively modest funds and resources is not easy. On November 6<sup>th</sup>, Ed Lewis, Vice Chancellor for Advancement at UNCSA, and Clare Jordan, Director of Marketing and Philanthropic Engagement for CapDev visited The Associates monthly board meeting to tell us about *Powering Creativity: The Campaign for UNCSA*.

Ed Lewis became Vice Chancellor for Advancement in 2015, with all of the organizational, financial planning, and people skills that implies, including serving as Senior Director of Development at the Clarice Smith Performing

Arts Center at the University of Maryland. This being UNCSEA, Ed's background also happens to include outstanding professional accomplishments as a musician. A violist, he holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Michigan, and studied chamber music with one of the world's preeminent ensembles, the Guarneri String Quartet. In addition to his Advancement Office team, Lewis's ensemble for the Campaign includes Clare Jordan, of CapDev, who is also a member of the school's Board of Visitors.

In their presentation, Lewis and Jordan demonstrated how the painstakingly planned process has been designed to unfold in stages. Each serves to lay the foundation for subsequent stages and to reveal their maximum potential to help the school. The Campaign has been in what its team calls the “quiet phase” since its beginnings in 2016, including the “family phase,” with board participation. The “corporate and foundation phase” will commence early in 2019, and the Campaign will go fully “public” in 2020.

Lewis explained that the Campaign has already demonstrated that UNCSEA's constituency extends far beyond the boundaries of this city and state, to include accomplished alumni, their families, friends, and associates wherever their careers have taken them. They – and we – are all citizens of Pickle Nation.

This comprehensive campaign is about much more than bricks-and-mortar. UNCSEA has been recognized as the nation's best value in conservatory arts training, especially for in-state students. Nonetheless, to compete with much more expensive institutions that may be able to offer gifted students a full ride, the largest line item among the campaign's fundraising goals is for student *Scholarships*. UNCSEA will also need to continue to be able to attract the most gifted students with top-flight teachers. With some of the lowest salaries in the state university system, and curricula that require low student-to-faculty ratios, *Faculty Support* is needed to help the university recruit and retain qualified educators. A major emphasis of the Campaign is *Innovation*, to keep pace with ever-evolving artistic programming and the delivery of artistic experiences to ensure that the training UNCSEA offers will not become obsolete. Since UNCSEA is dedicated to the transformative power of the arts

for all, *Community Engagement* is another of the school's continuing commitments that is reflected in the Campaign. As an example, Lewis cites over seventeen thousand volunteer hours that UNCOSA's hard-working students have spent working with kids in this community's Title 1 Schools through the ArtistsCorps program. Finally, there is no denying the need to invest in the school's *Living and Learning Environment*, as we have seen in the recent postponement of much-needed renovations to Alex Ewing Performance Place. This campaign priority includes funds to renovate and equip existing spaces and dedicate funds for strategic real estate acquisition to prepare for any future university priorities.

If you can't remember UNCOSA's last campaign, that's because it hasn't conducted one "in decades." To ensure that each of the major non-profit institutions in the area has its best opportunity to have its philanthropic needs addressed, the Winston-Salem Foundation coordinates the scheduling of campaigns of this sort. This is UNCOSA's big chance to secure a solid financial foundation for its future.

The good news is this: UNCOSA is on its way toward that goal. The even better news is that once its mission has been fulfilled, UNCOSA will be better positioned to recruit and retain world-class artists, provide them with spaces and tools with which to perfect their crafts and explore new technologies and techniques, and build bridges between the university and the wider world.