



FY 2025

EAST BAY CENTER  
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

# ANNUAL REPORT

A year of tuition-free arts education, youth excellence, and community impact



## LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Community at East Bay Center means so many things, for so many, but what I have heard our students say over and over is that the Center is a second home. It's a place where young people make friends for life, where they stretch out of comfort zones and learn about each other's cultures, and where possibilities and opportunities come alive. Each day, the 80+ faculty and staff at East Bay Center intentionally make the Center a welcoming and vibrant place for each student. It takes all of us together, our focused efforts and deep commitment, to deepen and grow this sense of community. The world can be a harsh place, but when students step inside the doors of the Center—the doors of any of our classes—they are protected and lifted up, ready to embrace the world.

In the pages that follow, we celebrate the impact made possible by our generous community of supporters. This report highlights a year of artistic excellence and opportunity, from student and faculty stories and program highlights, to major milestones such as our College Scholarship Program, the Creative Work Fund commission with Robert Moses, and progress along the Richmond Arts Corridor. You'll also find a snapshot of our financial stewardship, recognition of our donors and partners, and ways to stay engaged through giving, advocacy, and legacy support—because your investment continues to shape what's possible for the next generation of artists and leaders.

**Ruthie Dineen**  
*Executive Director, East Bay Center for the Performing Arts*

## BOARD MEMBERS

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# YEAR IN REVIEW

Milestones, Highlights, and Impact

## INVESTING IN YOUTH FUTURES THROUGH OUR COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Beyond artistic development, the Center offers individualized academic and college readiness support to our Young Artist Diploma Program students.

Critically, we now offer college scholarships for all graduates. The Irene S. Scully Scholarship at East Bay Center for the Performing Arts helps bridge the gap in our students' ability to attend college and continue their artistic training and practice, ensuring financial barriers do not limit their futures. The Perseverance & Motivation Scholarship offers young scholars the essential financial resources and crucial endorsement they need to pursue their journey in higher education. Together, these efforts are part of a broader, growing scholarship fund and college prep program designed to support students at many levels and inspire continued investment in their success. In 2025, we awarded over \$126,000 in scholarships to 22 students. Every Diploma graduate received a \$3000/year foundational scholarship and three students earned additional larger awards through a rigorous panel process based on merit.

**100%** of Diploma program seniors graduated from high school and enrolled in college in 2024, compared with only 27% of their Richmond High peers and 16% of Kennedy High peers who graduated college-ready. Graduates were accepted to top institutions including Stanford, Yale, and multiple UC campuses.

*(California School Dashboard)*





## IN VISIBILITY: A CREATIVE WORK FUND COMMISSION WITH ROBERT MOSES' KIN

In summer 2025, the Center premiered *In Visibility*, an original work created in collaboration with renowned choreographer Robert Moses, and his company, Robert Moses' KIN. Commissioned by the Creative Work Fund, the project positioned Center students not only as performers, but as creative partners in the development of a theatrical modern dance work.

Through choreography, improvisation, media, and voice, *In Visibility* centered youth artists' lived experiences—transforming both their perspectives and creative energy into a powerful, collective artistic statement. The process emphasized collaboration, authorship, and self-expression, reinforcing the Center's commitment to youth-driven artistry.

[To learn more about the creative process behind \*In Visibility\*, read the feature by Richmondside here.](#)



*What we're trying to do is create a work that blends all the voices in the room. I may come in with an idea, but it's immediately reshaped by the power of their energy and their youth. From there, we begin creating together. It's about the individual—about helping each artist find their voice and move their spirit forward through the work.*

**Robert Moses, Choreographer**





## A YEAR OF SCHOOL AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIPS

In FY25, our School and Neighborhood Partnerships program continued to expand access to cross-cultural performing arts education across Richmond schools. In collaboration with educators, parents, and school leaders, the Center served more than **3,500 students through 4,300+ hours of hands-on instruction** during FY25.

Students explored a wide range of disciplines, including West African, Mexican, and Afro-Peruvian art forms; Kodály general music; instrumental and vocal instruction; and diverse dance styles. Student growth was showcased in 28 performances, reflecting both artistic skill and creative confidence. Importantly, 93% of partner school sites reported that East Bay Center fostered a safe and supportive learning environment. We are grateful to the students, families, and school communities who made this work possible.



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## RICHMOND ARTS CORRIDOR: CULTURE, CONNECTION, AND COMMUNITY

Through active participation in citywide and countywide coalitions focused on health equity, cultural strategy, and youth development, East Bay Center helps shape systems and policies that support the well-being of Richmond families.

The concept of the Richmond Arts Corridor emerged from these cross-sector conversations. In 2022, as Richmond continued to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, local arts leaders came together to ask how the arts could support healing and collective progress. Following extensive research and consultation with community arts organizations, a proposal was brought to the Richmond City Council. In October 2024, the Council passed a resolution designating Macdonald Avenue and 23rd Street as the future site of a world-class arts corridor, affirming the arts as a cornerstone of Richmond's future.

From this effort emerged Richmond Renaissance, a grassroots collective guiding the development of the Richmond Arts Corridor. The Center is a core partner among the organizations that form Richmond Renaissance, together building a vision for the redevelopment of Downtown Richmond grounded in the transformative power of the arts to inspire, heal, and strengthen community.

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*...the Center plays a collaborative role in planning for the redevelopment of Downtown Richmond, grounded in the transformative power of the arts to inspire, heal, and strengthen community.*



## TUITION-FREE TRAINING, LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES

At our main site in the heart of Downtown Richmond, the Center engaged over 420 students, ages 3-18, through 4,640 hours of hands-on instruction.

Our curriculum takes a unique cross-cultural, multidisciplinary approach across seven artistic pathways: West African drumming and dance, jazz, Son Jarocho, chamber music, dance, theater, and voice. Paired with wraparound support services, our program offerings provide students with technical training, rigor, and skills while fostering social-emotional growth. Because of our generous community of supporters, all programs at the Center are now tuition-free.

During FY25, our Young Artist Diploma Program provided 110 students (grades 7-12) a supportive, dynamic space to build confidence and life skills through intensive artistic training, mentorship from highly skilled faculty, and opportunities to perform. Throughout the year, students accessed one-on-one and group counseling, crisis intervention, mental health referrals, college preparation and scholarship advising, life-skills workshops, and peer-led programming. Up to 10 students also joined the Student Leadership Group, fostering youth voice and collaboration with Center faculty.



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# STORIES FROM THE CENTER

Celebrating alumni, honoring faculty

## CAROLINA'S JOURNEY, YOUNG ARTIST DIPLOMA PROGRAM ALUM

Carolina's journey exemplifies the lasting impact of the Center's holistic approach to youth development through the performing arts. A graduate of the Young Artist Diploma Program (YADP) and a 2024 Irene Scully Scholarship recipient, Carolina is now studying theater at the University of Southern California, where she is thriving in a rigorous and supportive program.

Carolina joined the Center in middle school with an initial interest in music production. Through YADP, mentorship, and wraparound support, she discovered a passion for theater and blossomed into a multidisciplinary artist. During her time at the Center, Carolina became a core member of Voices of Reason, our resident vocal ensemble, and Iron Triangle Theater, our resident theater company. Known for her curiosity,

positivity, and artistic growth, she explored nearly every art form the Center offers and emerged as a role model for younger artists.

As a first-generation college student now in her second year at USC, Carolina continues to build on that foundation. This past summer, she performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland, a transformative experience that deepened her artistic voice. With the support of the Irene Scully Scholarship at East Bay Center for the Performing Arts, Carolina is pursuing her dream of becoming a professional actress—one she once never imagined possible.

[Learn more about Carolina's story here.](#)



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*When I first came to the Center, I was focused on music and singing, but being exposed to different art forms helped me discover acting. Now I dream of being a working actress. I didn't think I'd have the courage to pursue it, but I do—and I know my younger self would be very proud.*

*Carolina, Young Artist Diploma Program Alum*





## HONORING THE LEGACY OF CK AND BETTY LADZEKPO

At our 14th Annual Gala, we proudly honored longtime faculty members Dr. CK Ladzekpo and Betty Ladzekpo, whose visionary leadership has profoundly shaped the Center's curriculum and impact for over 45 years. This recognition came one year after Dr. Ladzekpo created *Hogbetsotso*, commissioned by the Center through Hewlett 50 Arts Commissions, and presented on our stage, bringing ancestral storytelling into powerful dialogue with our present day community.

Together, Dr. Ladzekpo and Betty Ladzekpo developed the Center's West African Drum and Dance pathway, mentoring generations of faculty and staff, and teaching thousands of students over the decades. Their work established not only a rigorous program of study, but a living cultural legacy rooted in lineage, discipline, and community responsibility.

[Watch our honoree video here.](#)



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*I started dancing at the Center in 1991. It saved my life. I was a very rambunctious child, and my mother was trying to find a way for me to channel my energy. Dance became that path—the rigor of learning musicality, the rigor of learning movement. Learning the legacy here and the way it's taught is something that never really leaves you.*

**Myisha Harden**, Young Artist Diploma alum, professional dancer, Ensemble member



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*When CK came from the continent bringing African culture to the Bay Area, it was exciting—it was special. It felt like a fulfillment. CK and Betty set the standard. They brought an approach to teaching and engagement that was the world I had been waiting for culturally.*

**Mallie Kofi Nyamake**, Oba Minister, Wo'se Community Church; member of the first-generation Ensemble, 1975



# INVEST IN IMPACT AT THE CENTER

# WITH GRATITUDE TO THANK YOU OUR SUPPORTERS

Allison Yamanashi	Contra Costa County Community Development Block Grant	Elise Prowse	Kathleen Taylor	Paul LeMahieu and Mayumi Shinohara	Susi Weissmann
Amar and Anita Hanspal	Contra Costa Health	Ellen J. Hershey	Katrine and Harry Gray	Paul Witt Monts and Lily Shih	Tamina and Edal Alon and Family
Amy and George Gorman	Courtney Horn	Elliot Levin and Beverly Pinto	Kavita Vora	Quest Foundation	The California Endowment
Amy and Glenn Friedman	Craig Severance and Karen Lovdahl	Eric Scott Lillybeck Estate	Ken and Sue Currier	Rachel Katz	The ELMA Music Foundation
Ana and Brian Dineen	Crankstart	Ethan and Liz Diamond	Kenneth Kuchman and Carolyn Muir	Richard Sterling	The KAVAH Fund
Andrew Lion	Creative Work Fund	Fenwick Family Foundation	Kim Adams Charitable Fund	Richard X. Zhu	The Kresge Foundation
Anna Roberts	Crescent Porter Hale Foundation	Frank C. Worrell	Kirannada Foundation	Richmond ECIA Community Grant Program	The Richard Roselyn Lindheim Memorial Trust
Aram Fischer and Antonia Elisa Soler Blasco	David Pearson	Frithjof and Ellen Dale	Koret Foundation	Richmond Fund for Children and Youth	The S. P. Fund
Artem and Karine Chubaryan	David Vliet and Isabel Dominguez-Vliet	Fullerton Family Foundation	Kristen Rozansky	Rita Roberts	The San Francisco Foundation
Barbara Forsstrom	Dean and Margaret Leshner Foundation	Gabino Arredondo	Leslie Medine	Rob Miles and Ariel Schindewolf	The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Barbie Wong	Delvecchio and Kelly Finley	Gani Haylee	Linda Lazeretti	Robert Hayes and Gretchen Adams	Thitirat Chaisiwamongkhon
Bay Area Cultural Equity Funders	Dennis and Robin Gustafson	Google	Lisa Sardegna	Robin Miller and Daniel Rossi	Tides Foundation
Ben Baab	Dennis Landin and Sharon Makimoto Landin	Gyongy Laky and Tom Layton	Litchfield Donor-Advised Fund	Roger Honour and Kari Ontko	Tim and Roberta Montgomery
Bernard E. & Alba Witkin Charitable Foundation	Diane Espaldon and Daniel Wilson	Heather West	Lizbeth Hasse and Joe Orrach	Rosemary Corbin	Todd Foster
Beverly Galloway and Chris Curtis	Donald B. Greenberg and Beverly Daniels-Greenberg	Hellman Foundation	Louis L. Borick Foundation	Rudolph Steiner Foundation	Tom and Barbara Sargent
Bill and Stephanie Mellin	Donatello Bonato and Jane Kaplan	Howard and Karly Wiley	Lucinda Lee Katz	S. H. Cowell Foundation	Tony Valdivia and Brett Conner
Bill and Stephanie Mellin	Donna Brorby	Ian Burbage	Ludmyrna Lopez	Samuel McVeety	Tracy Flanagan and Rick Trautner
Bjarne and Shari Hansen	Douglas and Louise Williams	Irene S. Scully Fund	Marcos Novaes	Sean and Amy Goforth	Valentin Brard
Brenda K. Williams	Douglas Berman and Linda Siperstein	Isaac Pastor-Chermak	Maria and Douglas Bayer	Seth Tager and Andrea Fullington	Virginia Landin Nelson and Keith Nelson
Brigid McCaw and William Finzer	Douglas Lee	Jacquelynne Baas	Marie-Christin Anthony	Seth Fischer	Virginia Wolfe and William Mayer
Caitlin Trahan	E M Downer Foundation	James Greenberg and Judith Bell	Marla Spivak	Sharon Makimoto Landin	Wayne and Gladys Valley Foundation
California Arts Council	Ebube Anizor	Jared Bobrow	Mary and Jay Vyas	Sheila Von Driska	Wendy Brown
Calvin Wheeler and Sarajane Miller-Wheeler	Elaina Genser	Jean-Francois Paquelin	Mary Ann and Jeffrey Chanin	Stephanie Wei	Zalec Familian & Lilian Levinson Foundation
Carl and Lisa Brodsky	Eliot Gizzi and Valerie Gutwirth	Joel Ramirez and Fatumata Kamakate	Maxine Heiliger	Stephen Koch and Kathryn Nyrop	Zellerbach Family Foundation
Carl and Lisa Brodsky	Elisabeth Lindheim	John Darning Fund	Mayra Padilla	Steven and Jacqueline Tulsy	The donor has elected not to provide at the East Bay Community Foundation
Carnegie Hall - PlayUSA		Joshua Knox	Michael Levin	Steven Takemoto	Anonymous (3)
Carol L. Owens		K&F Baxter Family Foundation	Monica Pressley	Susan and Steve Chamberlin	
Chamberlin Education Foundation		Kaiser Permanente	Nicole and Melvin Barnett	Susan Lindheim and James Spencer	
Charlie Bullock and Kristen Sandifer		Karen Klein and Ben Golvin	Pacific Harmony Foundation	Susannah Sallin	
Cheryl Garland		Karen P. Nelsen	Pajes and Steven Serman		
City of Richmond		Kathleen Maloney and Melinda Thomas	Pat Scott		
Claire E. Henry			Paul Chin and Sharon Pastori		

Included here, please find a list of individuals and institutions that generously contributed \$250 and above to East Bay Center for the Performing Arts during the period of 7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025

## WAYS TO GIVE

East Bay Center is tuition-free thanks to the support of individuals and institutions who believe in the power of creativity and community.

You can make a new gift today by:

- Scanning the QR code below to give securely online
- Mailing a check to:  
East Bay Center for the Performing Arts  
339 11th Street, Richmond, CA 94801

Looking for other ways to give? We also welcome:

- Gifts from your donor-advised fund
- Gifts of stock
- IRA distributions
- Matching gifts from your employer
- Event sponsorships
- Multi-year pledges to sustain our work long term
- Legacy gifts through your estate plan or will
- Contributions to our endowment

To learn more or start a conversation, please contact Giuliana Blasi, Director of Advancement at [development@eastbaycenter.org](mailto:development@eastbaycenter.org).

*Thank you for making  
a lasting impact.*



Federal Tax ID (EIN): 94-1692171





The Center is doubling down on our commitment to provide students with inclusive, high-quality arts programming that promotes healing, and helps youth reach their goals. As a vital space for youth development and expression, the Center is focused on expanding mental health and wraparound support, which is particularly critical for our students in this challenging moment; strengthening equity in arts education; investing in artist leadership and youth voice; and advocating for arts education.

Like many organizations, East Bay Center has been affected by shifts in the broader funding landscape. Yet still, the Center's financial trajectory reflects steady, strategic growth. Over the past two years, we were able to pivot from COVID relief and leadership transition funding—which sustained operations post-pandemic—to replacing those time-limited funds and supporting continued growth. Our operating budget increased from \$3.3 million in FY22 to \$4.6 million in FY25.

## OUR ENDOWMENT

The Center is building a strong financial foundation to secure its mission for generations to come. Our endowment—now exceeding \$7 million—offers donors a lasting way to support long-term stability and program excellence. Contributions to our General Endowment directly sustain operations and key initiatives, including the Margret Elson Wellness Fund, which prioritizes student wellbeing, as well as the Jordan Simmons Fund, which supports the Young Artist Diploma Program.

Our endowment campaign strengthens this foundation by enabling the Center to meet rising demands while maintaining the highest standards of educational and artistic excellence. By FY27, we aim to grow the endowment to \$13 million, ensuring our students can grow and excel now and in the future.

## PLANNED GIVING AND LEGACY CIRCLE

Friends and supporters who include East Bay Center in their estate plans or contribute to our endowment become members of our Legacy Circle, a special community of supporters committed to the Center's long-term future.



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

For the Year Ended 6/30/2025

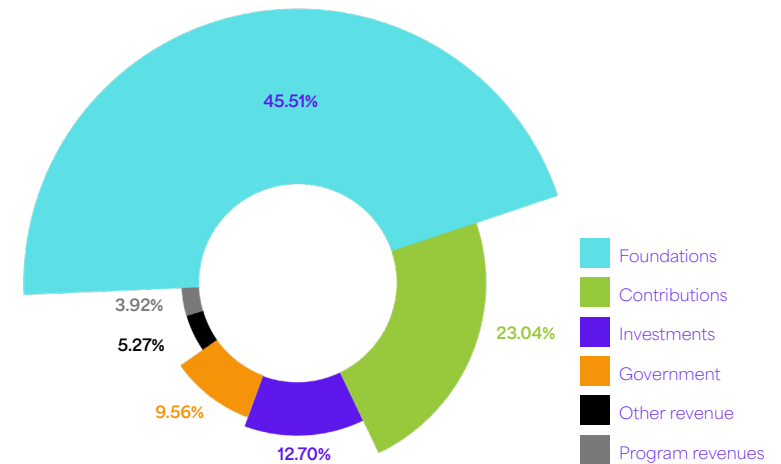
### SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Foundations	<b>2,742,297</b>
Contributions	<b>1,388,353</b>
Government	<b>576,014</b>
Gala, net	<b>254,389</b>
In-Kind Donations	<b>36,685</b>
Corporations	<b>23,376</b>
Endowment Income, net	<b>567,459</b>
Investment Income, net	<b>197,771</b>
Program Revenues	<b>236,045</b>
Other Revenue	<b>3,101</b>
<i>Total Support and Revenue</i>	<b>6,025,490</b>

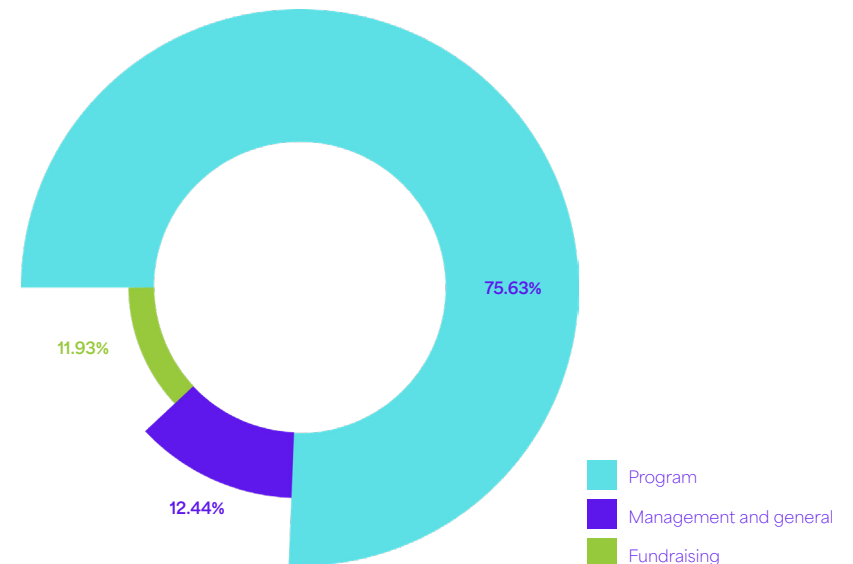
### EXPENSES

Program	<b>3,328,041</b>
Management and General	<b>547,367</b>
Fundraising	<b>525,177</b>
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<b>4,400,585</b>
Impairment Allowance for LLC	<b>-1,055,000</b>
Change in Net Assets, after Impairment and Taxes	<b>569,905</b>

### REVENUE SOURCE



### EXPENSE CATEGORIES



## SOCIAL MEDIA

[Facebook.com/EastBayCenter](https://www.facebook.com/EastBayCenter)

[Instagram.com/EastBayCenter](https://www.instagram.com/EastBayCenter)

[LinkedIn.com/company/eastbaycenter](https://www.linkedin.com/company/eastbaycenter)

## CONTACT US

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(510) 323-2489

339 11th St. Richmond, CA 94801

Federal Tax ID (EIN): 94-1692171

## LINKS

[Eastbaycenter.org](https://www.eastbaycenter.org)

[Youtube.com/user/eastbaycenterarts](https://www.youtube.com/user/eastbaycenterarts)

[Bit.ly/eastbaycenternewsletter](https://bit.ly/eastbaycenternewsletter)

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**FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

