

# CHARLES ALLIS ART MUSEUM

## Annual Report 2025



# Message from Leadership

“ We are not only preserving this historic home, we are reimagining what it can be.

Dear Neighbor,

2025—what a year it has been for The Allis! After The Villa Terrace’s separation from Charles Allis & Villa Terrace Museums, Inc. (CAVT) in December of 2024, a difficult decision was made to lay off 13 of the 14 staff members. In January 2025, The Charles Allis Art Museum found itself in a unique and challenging position of securing the future of the museum. For the first six months of 2025, remaining staff member, Jade Hess, and Board Chair, Marquayla Ellison worked tirelessly to champion The Allis into its next era.

In August 2025, the Board hired Interim Executive Director, Dr. Bill Wood to conduct a strategic plan and evaluate museum operations. Bill reimagined the staff structure to effectively meet the unique needs of The Allis and fostered relationships with local arts organizations in an effort to drive collaboration among Milwaukee’s creative economy.

Despite an admittedly rocky start to the year, we concluded 2025 with promise and hope. Over the course of 2025 The Allis:

- Developed and implemented a new staff structure
- Expanded current programs and added new programs
- Maintained an active calendar of distinct eight exhibitions
- Re-evaluated furniture collections storage
- Invested in community partnerships
- Reinvented and grew our membership program
- Met Milwaukee County’s goal to generate \$100,000 in revenue



The staff and Board’s dedication to the Charles Allis Art Museum’s mission throughout 2025 provided a stable foothold for us to carry on into 2026 and beyond. The groundwork laid in 2025 allowed us to acquire the historic Allis home from Milwaukee County in April 2026. As stewards of this notable Milwaukee landmark, we are delighted to care for it in an effort to offer engaging programs and exhibitions that serve the community and uplift local artists.

Kindly,

Handwritten signature of Carly Neil

Carly Neil  
Interim Executive Director



# Table of Contents

Staff & Leadership	03
Our Priorities	04
Financial Report	05
Membership & Attendance	07
Exhibitions	08
Public Programs	10

# Staff & Leadership



**Dr. Bill Wood**  
Interim Executive  
Director (2025)



**Carly Neil**  
Interim Executive Director (2026)  
Curator of Public Programs &  
Membership



**Jade Hess**  
Associate Curator of  
Collections &  
Intellectual Property



**Grace Dugan**  
Public Program  
Assistant



**Eliot Hess**  
Associate Facilities  
Manager



**Danny Kennedy &  
Emerence McDowell**  
Guest Services

## Charles Allis Art Museum Board of Directors

**Marquayla Ellison** | Board Chair  
Creative Director, *Elastic Designs, LLC*

**Carl Mueller** | Vice Chair  
Founder & Board Chairman,  
*Mueller Communications, Inc.*

**Kevin Smith** | Secretary  
Assistant Professor of Economics,  
*Beloit College*

**Thomas Frenn** | Treasurer  
Attorney (Retired), *Frenn Law*

**Jess Annabelle** | Member  
President, *MKE Real Estate Collective*

**Troy Giles** | Member  
Attorney, *Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren s.c.*

**Tiana Scott** | Member  
Realtor, *Real Broker, LLC*

**Annie Werner** | Member  
Real Estate Agent, *Keller Williams*

**Ben Williams** | Member  
Owner & Lead Editor, *Quail Comics Co.*

# Our Priorities



The Charles Allis Art Museum is a historic Milwaukee home reimaged as a contemporary cultural space—connecting art, community, and creativity in an intimate and engaging setting. We seek to fulfill Sarah and Charles’ legacy by serving our community through art, education, and connection. 2025 offered The Allis staff and leadership an opportunity to re-evaluate our purpose and better understand the role we play in Milwaukee’s creative community.

## 01 Equitable Access to Art



The Allis uplifts Milwaukee’s underserved and underrepresented artists and communities through exhibitions and programs. The Arts@1801 program offers Milwaukee area students unique opportunities including field trips, in-classroom artist talks, and curated exhibitions. This program offers students perspective on professional art practices and provides practicing local artists with paid opportunities. The exhibitions and Artist in Residence programs at The Allis focus on local voices. Our team seeks up-and-coming artists from the Milwaukee area and offers them a platform to develop their practice and reach new audiences.

---

## 02 Community Partnerships



At The Allis we seek out ways to work with our neighbors and creative communities throughout Milwaukee. Over the course of 2025 we brought in new creative and community voices. The Allis featured *Human Condition*, a community art exhibition; welcomed the public during quarterly Gallery Night MKE events, and hosted a creative economy round table with state and local arts organizations. These partnerships benefit organizations and individuals through resource and knowledge sharing, exposure to new audiences, and more.

---

## 03 Gathering Place



In a cultural landscape where third spaces are few and far between, one of our goals at The Allis is to provide opportunities for gathering. We offer free admission to exhibition openings and community events, participate in Museums for All, and provide low or no-cost programs as we are able. When available, corporate sponsorships and grant funding allows us to offer free or discounted admission to exhibitions and programs.

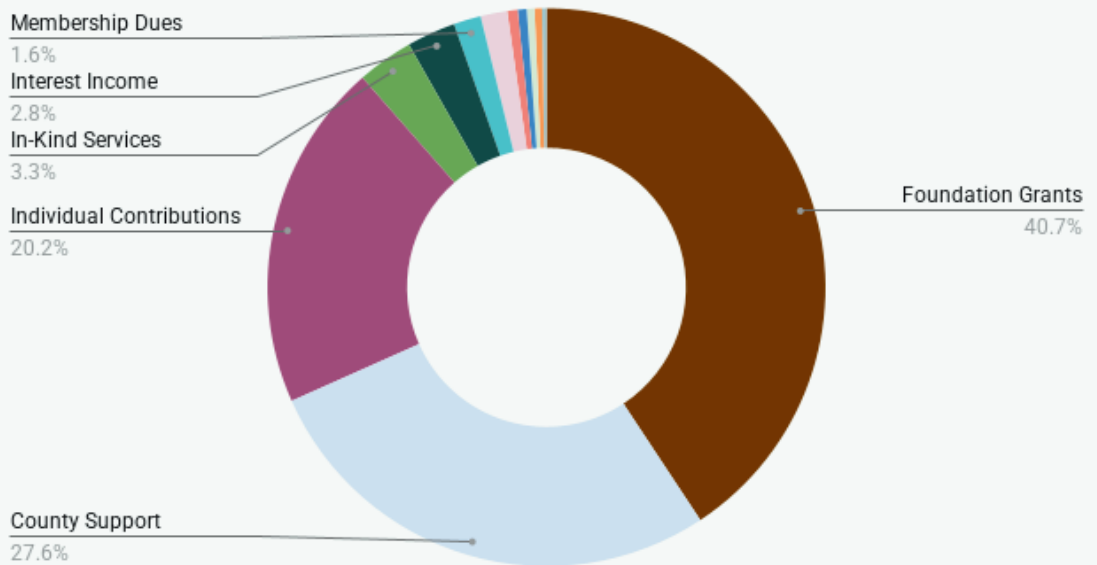
# 2025 Financial Report



## Summary

The Allis secured a major gift from David & Julia Uihlein, allowing us to exceed our 2025 fundraising goals. We had an net operating profit of \$24,566, despite a decrease in several earned income categories including program admissions, rental income, and beverage sales. These numbers increased toward the end of the year, building momentum for 2026.

## Income



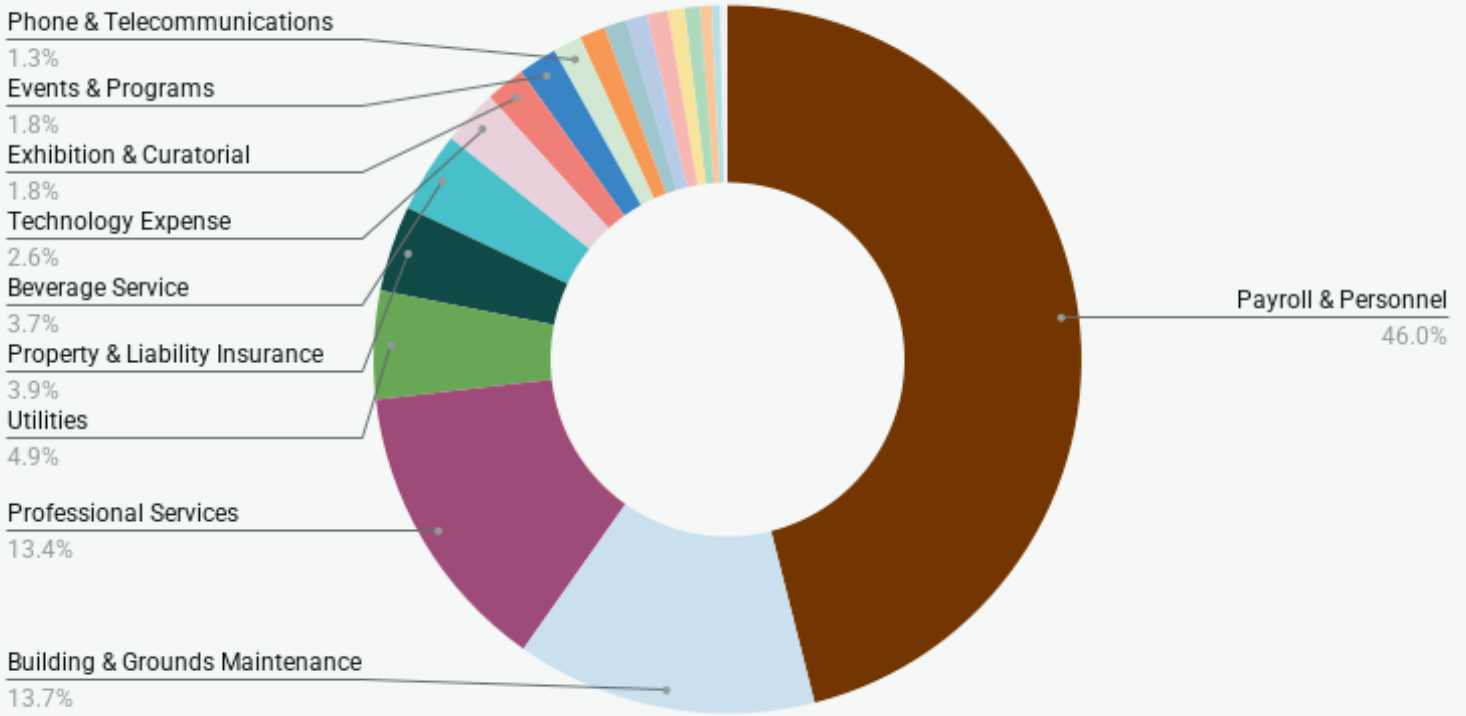
## Income by Category

Foundation Grants	\$165,856   40.8%
County Support	\$112,554   27.6%
Individual Contributions	\$82,341   20.3%
In-Kind Services	\$13,275   3.3%
Interest Income	\$11,522   2.8%
Membership Dues	\$6,425   1.6%
Museum Admissions	\$6,335   1.6%
Uncategorized Income	\$2,455   0.6%
Museum Store Sales	\$2,072   0.5%
Rentals	\$1,850   0.5%
Beverage Sales	\$1,726   0.4%
Program Admissions	\$1,066   0.3%

## Major Gifts

- Milwaukee County
- David & Julia Uihlein
- Herzfeld Foundation
- Bader Philanthropies

# Expenses



## Top Expenses by Category

Payroll & Personnel	\$175,797   43.3%
Building & Grounds Maintenance	\$52,461   12.9%
Professional Services	\$51,215   12.6%
Utilities	\$18,850   4.6%
Property & Liability Insurance	\$14,957   3.7%
Beverage Service	\$14,074   3.5%
Technology	\$9,756   2.4%
Exhibition & Curatorial	\$6,917   1.7%
Events & Programs	\$6,724   1.6%
Phone & Telecommunications	\$5,003   1.2%
Artist Honorarium	\$4,492   1.1%

Additionally, the Charles Allis Art Museum paid out a total of \$230,096 to the Villa Terrace Museum & Gardens in 2025. These reimbursement payouts included credits and refunded pre-payments owed to the Villa after the organizations' separation at the end of 2024. The sum paid to the Villa is not reflected in the operating reports above.

# Membership & Attendance

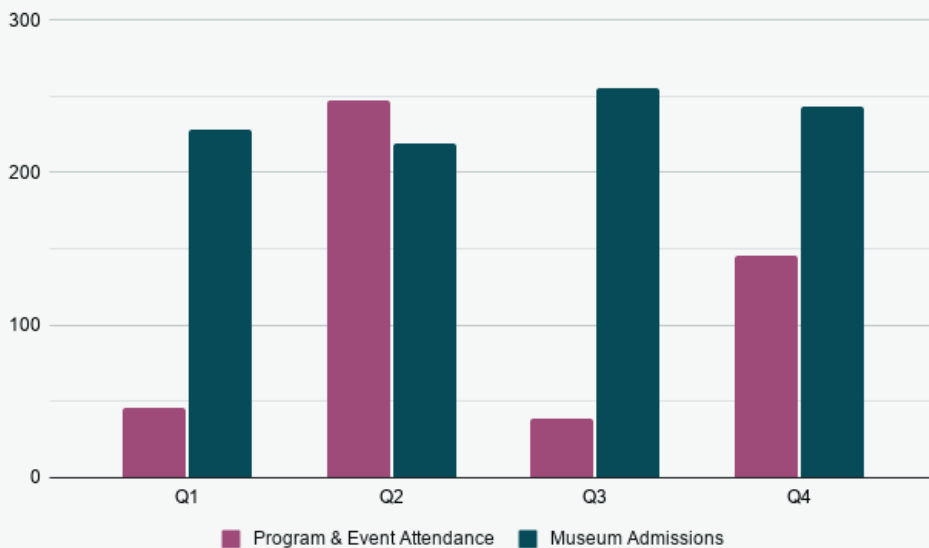


## Summary

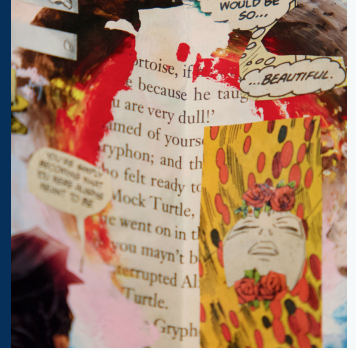
Over the course of 2025 we served over 1,500 individuals through programs, events, and museum admissions, and maintained 73 active museum members. General museum visitation remained steady throughout the year, totaling 945 visitors. Program and event attendance totaled 477, with a peak in the second quarter. This increase coincided with the *Spring Into the Allis* concert and Artist in Residence Hattie Grimm's *Bird Body* programs. We served the public during quarterly Gallery Night MKE events and "Vino Royall," a collaboration with the Milwaukee Wine Academy. Additionally, we served over 100 individuals through the Arts@1801 outreach program including students, their families, teachers, and community members.



## Programs & Admission Stats



# Exhibitions



## Summary

The Allis maintained an active and engaging exhibition calendar all year. Our small team curated and exhibited five distinct exhibitions in 2025 and concluded three 2024 exhibitions, most of which featured local artists. These exhibitions explored a wide variety of art forms, from traditional drawing and painting to found object art. We featured rising artists to offer up-and-coming Milwaukee talent a space to develop their practice and a platform to showcase their work.



## BIRD BODY

April 24 - September 25, 2025  
Artist in Residence Hattie Grimm

Featuring 20 wooden paintings and sculptures, this body of work draws inspiration from the migratory wisdom of birds and our own animal bodies—reminding us that our instincts, emotions, and physical sensations carry deep truths. Whether it's the warmth of joy or the sting of grief, Grimm invites viewers to be receptive to the messages carried in the body.

## Arts@1801 Student Showcase

June 13 - July 19, 2025  
Rufus King High School Students

Arts@1801 is a Bader Philanthropies grant-funded program that connects MPS students with local artists, curators, and gallery practices through opportunities including hands-on workshops, artist talks, museum visits, and exhibition opportunities in the classroom and at the Charles Allis Art Museum.



## Exhibitions Concluding in 2025

*left with your memories*

August 29, 2024 - February 23, 2025  
Artist in Resident Tracy Keller Nickolaus

*Talk Back Chapter Two: Collection*

August 29, 2024 - February 16, 2025  
Christina West & Meg Lionel Murphy

*Everyday Elegance: Finding Beauty in the Ordinary*

December 19, 2024 - April 24, 2025  
Community Exhibition

# Exhibitions



## Waves and Wings: Masterpieces in Motion

April 24 - September 25, 2025

Charles Allis Art Museum Permanent Collection

Waves and Wings demonstrates the myriad of eclectic bird imagery in the Allis Collection, aligning Japanese glazed vases with bronze vessels of elaborate landscapes. Watercolor and Wisconsin based Artist Bruno Ertz takes inspiration from the water landscapes of the Great Lake state to take us in flight with flawless depictions of avifauna in their natural habitat. Renowned oil painter Winslow Homer captures coastal life with the integrity of nature in Charles' and Sarah's Bedrooms, neighbored by select Collection chairs, lamps, and mahogany tables. Waves and Wings empowers guests to hover, rest, and take in the ambiance of the Charles Allis Art Museum Collection.



## Bated Breath: Neglected Possessions

October 30, 2025 - February 28, 2026

Leah Schlageter, Sea Green, and Catherine Martin



Bated Breath encapsulates the uncertainty of the future through the lens of three Milwaukee multimedia artists. Creating in the midst of destruction continues to be a method of liberation, a way of making beauty with the often stepped upon items, once valued, now taken for granted. Explore a world where we are allowed to make something meaningful in the midst of uncertainty.

## Human Condition: A Study of the Body

September 4 - December 11, 2025

Community Exhibition

This exhibition highlights resilience, vulnerability, memory, and transformation—inviting visitors to reflect on the diversity and nuance of being human. Eight artists represent their understanding of and relationship with the human form through photography, pastel, watercolor, acrylic, screen printing, and cut paper. Featured artists include Myriam Baudin, Kasia Drake-Hames, Ellie Garry, Cynthia Hayes, Francisco Ramirez, Anja Notanja Sieger, and J.M. Wood.



# Public Programs

## Summary

The Allis offered a variety of public programs in 2025 including exhibition openings, concerts, and workshops. The addition of a Public Programs staff member in October 2025 led to an expansion of program and event offerings toward the end of the year. We drew large crowds for BIRD BODY workshops and programs in the Spring, and had an impressive turnout for Doors Open MKE in the Fall. Several other gatherings including Spring Into the Allis, Lectures & Libations, and A Holiday Evening at the Allis offered the public additional opportunities to gather and enjoy The Allis.



## Arts@1801

In 2025 The Allis served approximately 75 Milwaukee-area students through the Arts@1801 outreach program. This included five field trips, eight artist talks, and one exhibition opportunity. The Allis partnered with Rufus King High School for the 2025 program.



*Top Right: Bird Parade w/ Hattie Grimm | May 10, 2025*

*Above: Bated Breath Opening Reception | November 6, 2025*

*Bottom Right: Arts@1801 Opening Reception | June 13, 2025*

# Thank you!

The Allis would like to extend a huge, all-encompassing thank you to our donors, members, sponsors, staff, volunteers, board members, and visitors! Our success in 2025 would not have been possible without you. We are looking forward to building momentum in 2026!



Charles Allis Art Museum, Inc.  
1801 N Prospect Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53202  
[www.charlesallis.org](http://www.charlesallis.org) | (414) 269-1101 | [info@cavtmuseums.com](mailto:info@cavtmuseums.com).