



PROVIDING A HOME FOR
SCIENCES, ARTS & LITERATURE TOGETHER.

2025-2026

FISCAL YEAR REPORT



Where Arts, Science,
and Community *Connect.*

SUPPORTING THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT INSPIRE,
EDUCATE, AND ENRICH OUR COMMUNITY EVERY DAY.

ONE BLOCK. ENDLESS IMPACT.



SALTBLOCKFOUNDATION.ORG

243 3rd Avenue NE Box 7 • Hickory, NC 28601 • 828-324-4906

Business Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been my honor to serve as the SALT Block Board of Directors President for the past two Fiscal Years. I am equally honored to be succeeded by our new President, Julia Matheson, who will lead the Board for the next two years as I finish out my term as Past President.

My two years as president have been filled with positive change and energy. We have welcomed a new Executive Director, Business Manager, and in 2025 we welcomed Alicia Blackburn as our dedicated Marketing Manager. Alicia brings years of creative experience and marketing expertise to the SALT Block Foundation, and we couldn't be happier to have this dynamic individual working to ensure our community understands and supports the role of the SALT Block Foundation. She joins an incredible team that keeps the SALT Block Foundation's daily operations running smoothly.

And speaking of that role, the highlight of this past year was the replacement of the aging Switchgear in the 101-year-old Arts & Sciences Building. A Switchgear is the electric heart of a building, and after 40 years of service, ours needed a transplant! It took nearly a year for the custom-built device to be manufactured and delivered and a week for the complete installation, but now the "Heart" of the Arts & Sciences building is healthy and ready to power this historic building for years to come.

The natural beauty of "The Block" was also enhanced by the Harley's Walk area renovation, a project generously funded by local donors and foundations. Old plantings were removed and replaced with vibrant flowering shrubs, greenery, a stone bench and other accents. It's a lovely spot four seasons a year on our southwest corner.

The SALT Block Foundation Friends (SBFF) are going strong, and I encourage you to join the fun and enjoy exclusive events that highlight "The Block" and our resident organizations.

And finally, due to the support of many, The Don & Kirvin Norwood \$500,000 Matching Campaign was successfully concluded ahead of schedule, securing \$1,000,000 for our Capital Endowment, helping to ensure our historic buildings will be maintained for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support and generosity. I am honored to have served the SALT Block Foundation and hope we can welcome you to "The Block" this coming year.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth Rogers".

Beth Watts Rogers
Board of Directors Past President
SALT Block Foundation





THE HEART OF THE BUILDING

The Arts & Sciences Building received a new custom-built electrical switchgear system, ensuring reliable power for the campus and safeguarding this historic landmark for years to come.



\$1 MILLION INVESTED IN THE FUTURE

The Don & Kirvin Norwood \$500,000 Matching Campaign concluded ahead of schedule, securing a total of \$1 million for the SALT Block Foundation's Capital Endowment.



HONORING A LEGACY

David Zagaroli was named Board Member Emeritus, and the City of Hickory proclaimed February 3rd as "David Zagaroli Day." His vision helped transform a vacant high school into today's SALT Block.



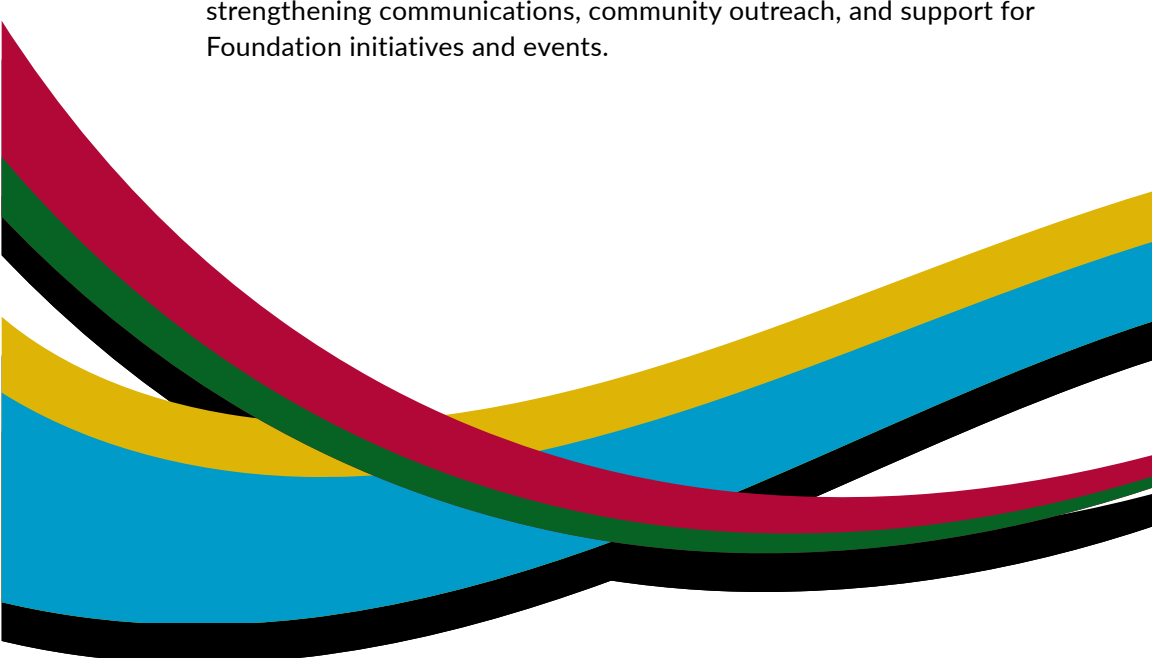
A WINNING DERBY PARTY

The 2026 Derby Party brought the community together for an unforgettable evening while raising critical funds to support the preservation and future of the SALT Block.



INVESTING IN OUR TEAM

The Foundation welcomed Marketing Manager Alicia Blackburn, strengthening communications, community outreach, and support for Foundation initiatives and events.



YOUR IMPACT

— BY THE NUMBERS —

Every dollar invested in the SALT Block Foundation helps preserve our historic campus and sustain the organizations that inspire our community.



\$215,579

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Invested in preserving and improving our historic campus.



\$158,182

UTILITIES

Keeping the campus powered, comfortable, and operating every day.



\$139,372

ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

Raised through the generosity of donors who believe in our mission.



\$478,898

ENDOWMENT WITHDRAWALS

Providing sustainable support for infrastructure and operational needs.

Together, we are preserving a place where science, the arts, and literature thrive.



PROUDLY SUPPORTING OUR RESIDENT ORGANIZATIONS



HICKORY
MUSEUM
OF ART



WESTERN PIEDMONT
SYMPHONY
MATTHEW TROY, MUSIC DIRECTOR

MATCHING CAMPAIGN

We are thrilled to share that the Don & Kirvin Norwood \$500,000 Matching Campaign has officially reached its goal! Thanks to the generosity of donors throughout our community, \$500,000 in matching funds have been secured for a total of \$1,000,000 pledged to the SALT Block Foundation's Capital Endowment.

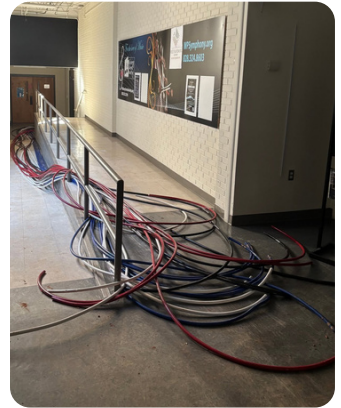
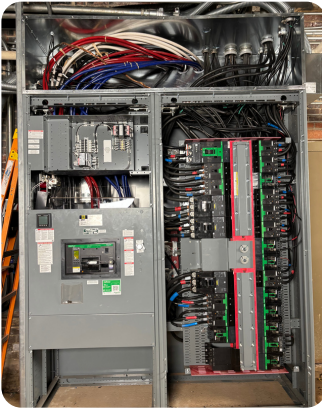
The Capital Endowment focuses exclusively on infrastructure needs, such as HVAC replacement, roofing, glass, power systems, major structural repair, parking lots, technology installation and upgrades, and other essential infrastructure needs.

The Capital Endowment will help secure the future of the SALT Block by providing sustainable support for critical infrastructure needs for years to come through this dedicated Capital Endowment. It ensures that our resident organizations, Catawba Science Center, Hickory Museum of Art, Western Piedmont Symphony, Hickory Choral Society, and Arts Culture Catawba, can continue focusing on the exceptional programs, performances, exhibitions, and educational opportunities that enrich our region. **This pivotal fundraising success will allow The SALT Block Foundation to continue its mission of funding the majority of infrastructure and operational costs for our resident organizations.**

To everyone who contributed and pledged to this campaign, please accept our heartfelt thanks. Your generosity is an investment in the future of the SALT Block and the cultural life of our community.

Because of you, this treasured campus will continue inspiring, educating, and bringing people together for generations to come.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US BUILD A STRONGER FUTURE FOR THE SALT BLOCK!



Photos from replacement of the switch gear (2025).

MILESTONE

We were honored to celebrate long-time Board Member and advocate David Zagaroli, who was named Board Member Emeritus, while City of Hickory Mayor Hank Guess officially proclaimed **February 3 as “David Zagaroli Day!”**

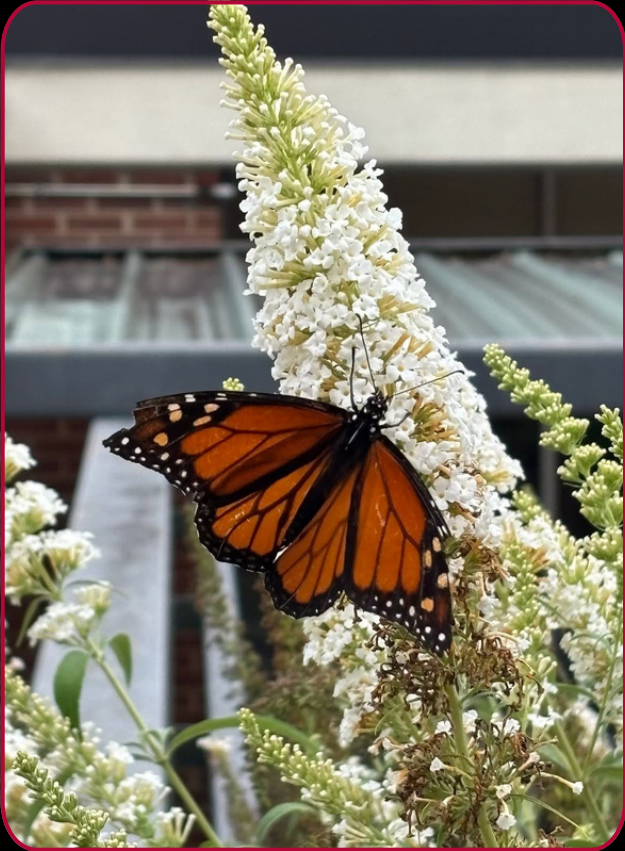
Here on The Block, we are deeply indebted to David's vision. In 1984, he saw the possibility of transforming an abandoned high school into what is now a vibrant Arts & Science Center for our community. Quite simply, there would be no SALT Block without David Zagaroli.



David Zagaroli with City of Hickory Mayor Hank Guess.



BUILDINGS & GROUNDS



SBFF



DERBY



ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The SALT Block Foundation provides the essential support that keeps the SALT Block thriving. By funding the majority of shared occupancy costs, including utilities, building and grounds maintenance, capital improvements, building management, and security, the Foundation helps create a strong and sustainable home for **Arts Culture Catawba, Catawba Science Center, Hickory Choral Society, Hickory Museum of Art, and Western Piedmont Symphony.**

This shared model allows our resident organizations to focus their resources and energy where they matter most: creating programs, exhibitions, performances, and experiences that enrich our community and enhance the quality of life throughout our region.

We take care of the place so they can fill it with possibility.

Learn more about the SALT Block Foundation and the work we do at saltblockfoundation.org.





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