



PITT COUNTY
ARTS
COUNCIL AT
EMERGE

ARTZIVE

2024

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**Thank you to the ArtZine sponsor:
Ms. Harvey Wooten**

Cover Photo: The Emerald Loop Shelter featuring
Terry Claborne and Ron Kimber at Town Common
Credit: Aaron Hines, City of Greenville

Visit www.pittcountyarts.org for more information.
Pitt County Arts Council at Emerge
404 Evans Street · Greenville, NC 27858
(252) 551-6947 · info@pittcountyarts.org



A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

2024 is shaping up to be a year of completion, celebration, and community for the arts in Pitt County. Many projects were stalled with the onset of the Pandemic. The good news is

that they continued. In this issue of the ArtZine, we document two public art projects that have been in the works for 3-5 years.

The Paddock Memorial, by artist Jessica Bradsher, stands next to where the Paddock Club operated for more than 30 years, and gives a space of reflection and celebration for our LGBTQ+ community. We are thrilled that our programming will go beyond public art, and Emerge will be producing quarterly Paddock Club Pop-Ups at the State Theatre. We are also continuing to help enhance the State Theatre's productions, sponsoring Magnolia Arts Center's Jesus Christ Superstar and SpazzFest's Wayne Hancock, IV and the Strange Band, Caroline Still, and Morgan Hudson and Company.

The first Emerald Loop Trolley Shelter, by artists Haddad/Drugan and Rakia Jackson, recognizes the Shore Drive neighborhood which once stood on the Greenville Town Common. This interactive public art has color changing lights that affect the imagery of both the past, showing a historic picture of the houses on 1st Street, as well as what the future holds. This is now another stop on the African American Cultural Trail as well as the GREAT bus system.

Lastly, the legacy of Emerge Gallery is that we are a learning lab for ECU students. This is at the heart of why I started Emerge. These former students hold a special place in my heart, as they are all doing amazing jobs in the arts throughout North Carolina.

Thank you for playing such an important part for the arts in Pitt County. If you haven't become a member yet, please consider doing so. This helps us continue our important work for our community.

Sincerely,

Holly M. Garriott
Executive Director

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Arts Organizations in Pitt County

A Place in the Heart Theatre Company	Greenville Quilters Guild
Alleycat Records	HeARToscope
The ArtLab at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences	Jaycee Park Arts & Crafts Center
Ayden Arts & Recreation	Katura Dance
Ayden Historical and Arts Society	L'Academie de Danse
Black Creatives of Pitt County	Magnolia Arts Center
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Emerald City Big Band	Pitt County Schools Arts Education
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Emerge Gallery & Art Center	Quilt Lizzy Ayden
Farmers & Makers Market	R. A. Fountain General Store
Farmville Community Arts Council	Smiles and Frowns Playhouse
Faux & More...Lisa Jordan	Spazz Presents
Fisk Opus 126 - St. Paul's Episcopal Church	The State Theatre
The GlasStation	Tar River Community Band
Greenville Brushstrokes	Up the Street Fiber Arts Studio
Greenville Choral Society	West Side Strings School
Greenville Civic Ballet	Wine and Design
Greenville Museum of Art	Winterville Historical and Arts Society, Inc.
Greenville Theatre Arts Center	

Arts Organizations and Artists in Pitt County
are listed in the Art Venues and Artist Directory

<https://www.pittcountyarts.org/community/arts-venues#/>

<https://www.pittcountyarts.org/artists/artist-directory>

Connecting Our Arts Community

Looking for things to do?
Here is a comprehensive calendar of
arts related events in Pitt County!
pittcountyarts.org/events



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Register yourself as an artist in Pitt County
www.pittcountyarts.org

The Artist Directory of Pitt County showcases the creative talent of all the arts disciplines in our area as well as promote and connect them with opportunities.

Add yourself today!
emergegallery.com/artists/artist-directory



Community Artist Network (CART'N) has a mission to inspire and celebrate the Pitt County arts community. CART'N strives to build a community of artists that support and uplift each other.

Join them: linktr.ee/cartn_links

Collaborating with arts organizations presents a unique opportunity to breathe new life into an important Downtown venue, The State Theatre. This partnership not only fosters community engagement but provides programming that appeals to diverse audiences and showcases the rich artistic talent within our community.

When Magnolia Arts Center began planning their season last year, one of the first productions they agreed upon was Jesus Christ Superstar. The decision was based on the play's enduring popularity and the aim of introducing it to a new, younger audience. Given that their venue at Magnolia Arts can only accommodate 60 ticket holders per performance, the production committee decided that securing The State Theatre as an alternative venue, would benefit the theater and, most importantly, offer the chance to share this experience with a broader audience.

What a success this partnership created! Over 1000 tickets were sold and many of the nightly performances were sold out. The creative staff of Magnolia Arts Center is already planning for another collaborative effort.

Arts Collaboration

Magnolia Arts Center and The State Theatre

Emerge Gallery & Art Center is committed to further enhancing the State Theatre's productions by sponsoring future events such as Shana Tucker: ChamberSoul Cello & Songs as part of the African American Music Series in November, and SpazzFest's Wayne Hancock, IV and the Strange Band, Caroline Still, and Morgan Hudson and Company in November.

Below: Jesus Christ Super Star Opening Night Final Bow; Opposite Page: Collage of images from Opening Night and dress rehearsals (provided by Lana Miller)





Jessica Bradsher is a visual artist specializing in metal sculpture and painting who lives and works in Greenville, North Carolina. She creates with themes ranging from whimsical to contemplative in her outdoor sculptural pieces. Her work has led her to recently install public sculptures across the United States. Jessica earned her MFA in 2018 from East Carolina University and currently teaches visual arts and sculpture at John Paul II Catholic High School in Greenville. She believes it is important to be an example to her students of a productive, working, successful artist to show the next generation the possibilities found within the arts.

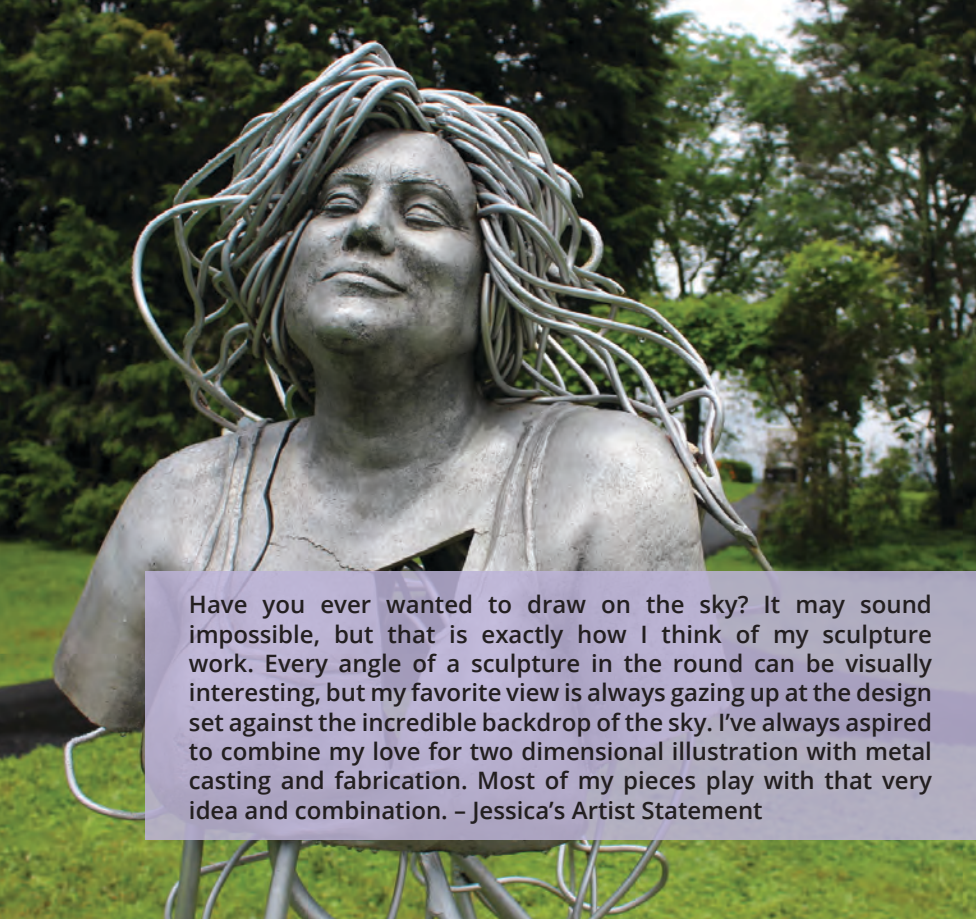
Artist Feature

Jessica Bradsher

"As an artist in Pitt County, I am fortunate to reside in the midst of the rich artistic heritage and cultural legacy that has emanated from East Carolina University for decades. I am surrounded by inspiration and talent that certainly cultivates a thriving atmosphere for creatives. Having spent the majority of my life in Greenville, I take immense pride in the flourishing arts community that we have collectively established here."

When Jessica was 16, she bought a horse instead of a car and had to then find rides to get to the farm where she boarded her. When Jessica was 18, she sold the horse in order to attend art school at East Carolina University where she learned to weld sculptures of horses instead.

Jessica has driven her truck filled with sculptures through the streets of New York City, across the Mississippi River, and through the back lots of Disney World in Orlando, right behind Space Mountain. She's also parked in the streets of Nashville and driven over the 17.6 mile Chesapeake Bay Bridge. Her work has been all across the east coast. People often ask Jessica why she does not fly to her sculpture deliveries when she tells them how far she goes, but the whole point is to transport large scale work!



Have you ever wanted to draw on the sky? It may sound impossible, but that is exactly how I think of my sculpture work. Every angle of a sculpture in the round can be visually interesting, but my favorite view is always gazing up at the design set against the incredible backdrop of the sky. I've always aspired to combine my love for two dimensional illustration with metal casting and fabrication. Most of my pieces play with that very idea and combination. – Jessica's Artist Statement



"It was quite an honor being selected for the Paddock Park Staircase sculpture. It is one of the largest pieces I've ever created, and I learned so much about how to handle the scale. I had to ask for help from my apprentice, my friends, and the good people at Makerspace of Greenville to make it happen. In the end I was proud of my execution of the design and I just love how it seems to sparkle in the sun in it's permanent location." - Jessica Bradsher, artist

Emerge Gallery & Art Center, Home of the Pitt County Arts Council, facilitated the creation, installation, and dedication of this public art sculpture to honor and celebrate the LGBTQ+ community.

The dedication of the sculpture took place on Saturday, June 29, 2024 and was followed by a well-attended after party at The State Theatre. The Pop-Up Paddock Club event included performances by Purina Chow, Ebony Summers, Michelle Warren, and Jamie Monroe, along with DJ Robert Murray.

The sculpture, designed by Jessica Bradsher, incorporates the salvaged steel spiral staircase that was integral to the Paddock Club's interior. It was installed on the site of the former Paddock Club, an establishment founded as a country and western night club, and then changed in format to serve as North Carolina's longest-running LGBTQ+ club operating from 1973 until 2003.

The Paddock Club Memories and the Future

The staircase that is central to the work was salvaged before the building was demolished by Jeremy Jordan, James Moretz, Michael Anderson, and Glen Haddock, the owners of Limelight, a club that operated in the same space following the Paddock Club's closure.

Emerge has paired with The State Theatre to create a schedule of Paddock Club Pop-Up events throughout the next year. Mark your calendars now!

Saturday, October 12 event featuring

Purina Chow (Miss Dickinson Avenue 1987), Emory Starr (Miss NC America 2010), Geena Davis (Miss Greenville America 2015), and Vivian Vaughn (Miss NC America 2015).

Saturday, December 14 event featuring

Purina Chow (Miss Dickinson Avenue 1987), Kirby Kolby (Miss Gay America 2012), Aqua Tika (Miss Dickinson Avenue 2001), and Jessica Blackwell (Miss Greenville America 2013).

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**Trailblazing Women
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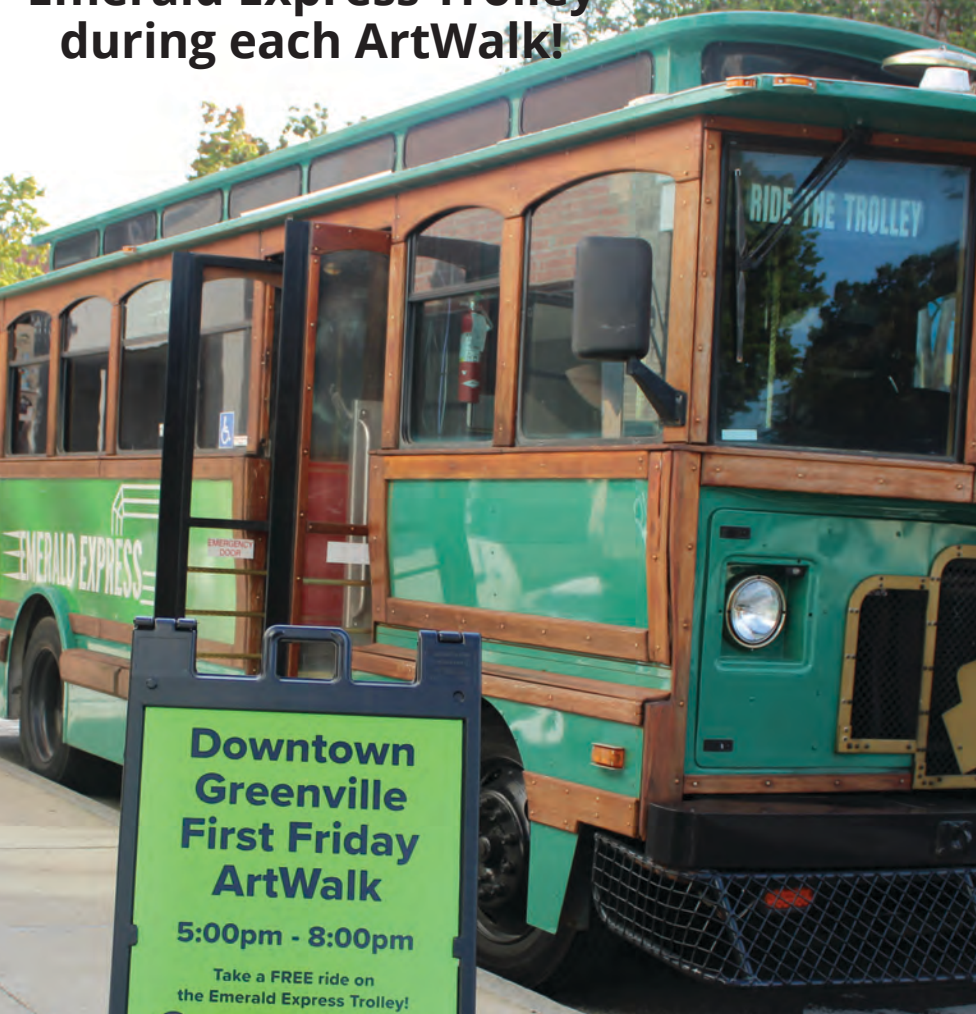
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StArts Through the generosity of private donors and administrative assistance from The Pitt County Arts Council at Emurge and ECU's College of Fine Arts and Communication, ECU StArts provides free-of-charge Alexander Series tickets to underserved members of our community through non-profit and student organizations. Let's make this community for everyone, ECU StArts!

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Home of the Pitt County Arts Council

The Emerald Loop Shelter at Town Common is the first of three shelters planned along the Emerald Loop as a stop for the Emerald Express Trolley, the GREAT Bus System, and the African American Cultural Trail.

The Emerald Loop Shelter at Town Common is the second public art element to commemorate this previous neighborhood. Like the Sycamore Hill Gateway Plaza, the new shelter is a stop on the African American Cultural Trail. The shelter is located on Town Common near the intersection of 1st Street and Cotanche Street.

Town Common used to be the location of the thriving Shore Drive neighborhood, where many African American community members lived. It was razed to the ground in the early 1970's to make way for "urban renewal," causing many community members to be relocated. The City of Greenville turned the area into a large city park called Town Common. For decades the history of the land was not widely known. This changed in 2021, with construction of the Sycamore Hill Gateway Plaza in Town Common, commemorating where the Sycamore Hill Missionary Baptist Church stood before it was burned in an act of arson.

The Emerald Loop Trolley Shelter

Pitt County artist, Rakia Jackson, was selected to collaborate and coordinate with artist team Haddad | Drugan, along with Pitt County Arts Council staff, and SmART City Stakeholders. The artwork Rakia created conceptually connects the past, present, and future of Greenville's community and Town Common. It inspires future hopes and dreams of what Town Common can be for our community to come together and be inclusive and harmonious.

One side of the public art piece is a historic photo of the Shore Drive neighborhood on 1st Street from the Digital Collections at East Carolina University. The historic photo has been colorized to accentuate the porches of each house.

The Shelter itself represents the front porch of one of the houses and the Vines Sisters recordings that play in the background are reminiscent of an African American spiritual being sung in the interior of the house.

It was important to include a musical component to this public art after receiving feedback from the community engagement meetings. So many former residents talked about how their mothers and grandmothers' singing voices could be heard throughout the neighborhood as they did their house work.

Photo below: Holly Garriott and Rakia Jackson

Photos center spread: Trolley Shelter at Night, the Vines Sisters performing at the dedication, Alice Vines standing behind the swing at the Trolley Shelter, and Rakia Jackson and Ron Kimber discussing the artwork



"To know the history of Sycamore back in the 70s and still be faced with unfairness around similar topics makes me push even harder to share my work in this community, especially to speak light into these stories and memories. When the "Unite Against Racism" street mural was completed it became the first mural in town featuring black artists. I said then I want to continue to push for BIPOC visual artists to be a part of these spaces and put my personal stamp here." - Rakia Jackson, artist





"Nature is often my muse. I love making pieces inspired by it, working with its inherent beauty, and then adding my own creative twists along the way." - Holly Felice, artist



The City of Greenville's newest park now has a uniquely created piece of public art! Wildwood Park has a large-scale sculpture of a butterfly on top of a milkweed plant, by North Carolina artist Holly Felice in front of the Welcome Center. This was a fruitful collaboration between the Pitt County Arts Council at Emerge and the City of Greenville's Recreation and Parks Department.

Wildwood Park has more to offer than outdoor sporting as it hosts a variety of family friendly entertainment like Sunday in the Park, BBQ, Blues & Brews, and Festival of Fright. The public art adds to a wonderful line-up of performing arts that are scheduled this fall including Lakeside Live.

Photo on left: Holly Felice with recently installed sculpture
Photo below: Morgan Hudson and band performing at BBQ, Blues & Brews

Wildwood Park

Greenville Recreation and Parks



Emerge Gallery was created in 2000, by Holly Garriott and several other ECU School of Art students. Holly worked with Mike Dorsey, Director of the School of Art at the time to bring back a course called ART4000: Community Arts Management. 12 students were in the first class which actually met before the doors even opened to the public. For over 24 years, Holly has had thousands of ECU students take a class or intern within EmERGE Gallery.

Here are just five examples of her students continuing to make an impact with the arts. We asked them to reflect on their time at EmERGE and how it has shaped their current roles.



Past, Present, Future EmERGE's Legacy in the East

"My time at EmERGE provided me with a lot of the skills I've needed in my career: arts administration, teaching, business management. I don't think I'd be anywhere close to where I am without skills and knowledge it provided me, and I'm glad to be part of a "family" of arts administrators in North Carolina who share our knowledge, resources, and ideas so freely with each other."

- Jonathan Burger was an Artist in Residence at EmERGE and is now the Executive Director at Craven Arts Council & Gallery, Inc.



"Emerge really gave me a range of experience at a young age. Naturally, I'm an introverted, shy person. Emerge gave me a safe space to challenge myself and hone skills that I don't feel came naturally to me. Emerge taught me to be resourceful, how to manage bookkeeping, how to manage people, how to speak up, how to be organized, how to communicate, how to collaborate, how to teach and be in front of people, how to take big ideas and break them down into tiny little steps, and how to chase my passions and make a positive difference in my community and therefore the world. Emerge taught me to care in the first place. The list goes on with how much Emerge has taught me and I will be forever grateful – which is why I still donate religiously to an organization that has meant and given so much to me. I know from the inside how hard Emerge works to make the world a better place. Due to that experience, I became Executive Director at age 30 and have made lasting and positive impact in my home county of Wilson County. There is no way I would have been able to do that without the ECU internship I had there first that connected me to a community outside of ECU and the opportunities that Emerge gave me afterward."



- Cathy B. Hardison was the Programs Director at Emerge and is now the Executive Director at Wilson Arts.



Photos (left page): Group photo of Cathy Hardison, Holly Garriott, Jonathan Burger, and Anna Hinson during a recent visit to the Arts Council in Wayne County. Jonathan Burger presenting at Craven Arts Council & Gallery, Inc.
Jonathan Burger teaching at Emerge Gallery & Art Center.
Photos (right page): Cathy Hardison in Wilson, NC.
Cathy Hardison at the Rock the Arts event in Greenville, NC.

"The initial impact of Emerge began in 2013 when I took Holly's Community Arts Class. Learning about community arts, I thought, 'this is what I was meant to do!' Despite the requirements of my teaching fellows scholarship, this passion stayed with me throughout my teaching career. I rose from studio artist to Executive Director of the Arts Council of Wayne County by 2024 because of Holly and Emerge's influence."

- Anna Hinson was a student at Emerge and is now the Executive Director at Arts Council of Wayne County.



"There's no doubt that my time at Emerge was crucial in developing my understanding of the importance that spaces like Emerge have in our communities. As a student, experiencing the benefits of community arts programming on the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of a place really set me on a path. These days, my passion and focus include making sure our youth have access to those benefits and as the new Arts in Education Director with NCAC, I'm excited to collaborate and support folks doing that work across NC!"

- Lizz Wells was a student and intern at Emerge and is now the Arts in Education Director with North Carolina Arts Council in the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.





"While attending ECU and pursuing my BFA with a concentration in ceramics, I took Holly's Community Arts Management class as well as a semester internship at Emerge. During this time, Emerge became a homebase for me as a student and Holly became a mentor. As a young professional, Emerge was a safe space for me to grow and learn and the staff were always available for me to ask questions. I have been in my role with the City of Greenville as the supervisor for the Jaycee Park Center for Arts & Crafts for over 8 years now and work closely with Emerge on many events and programs. I would not be where I am now without the education and support I received at Emerge. Emerge acts as an incubator for many young artists and art professionals. I am so thankful to have had Emerge and its staff in my life as a student and young professional and continually grateful that I get to work with them today."

- Sara Caropreso Ford was a student and intern at Emerge and is now the Recreation Supervisor at Jaycee Park Center for Arts and Crafts with the City of Greenville Recreation and Parks.



Photos (left page): Anna Hinson in the gallery at the Arts Council of Wayne County. Lizz Wells at A+ Schools of NC event.
Photos (right page): Sara Caropreso Ford representing Jaycee Park Center for Arts and Crafts. Sara Caropreso Ford in the classroom at Jaycee Park.



The Garriott Supporting Students

The Garriott is a scholarship for current East Carolina University students in the School of Art & Design. The scholarship is named in honor of ECU alumna Holly Garriott, Executive Director of the Pitt County Arts Council at Emerge. The scholarship was created by board members Ms. Harvey Wooten, Jane Austen Behan, and Myriah Shewchuk. It is funded by Ms. Harvey Wooten, to support a School of Art & Design student as they refine their craft, all while honoring the work of Executive Director Holly Garriott.

Being involved on the Board of the Pitt County Arts Council at Emerge has driven home how lucky we are to live in a city with a dedicated arts advocacy team. It helps to set us apart from other towns in eastern NC as a premier destination for cultural activities.

Since moving to Greenville over a decade ago, we have been excited to see the vibrancy and life that art is injecting into our community. We were first drawn to the Pitt County Arts Council's workshops and classes on metalsmithing, bookmaking, and photography, but realized that Emerge does so much more. Walking along town, we see the new pieces from the DownEast Sculpture Exhibition along the Greenway, painted murals in the revitalized Dickinson Avenue District, and works by local artists decorating numerous businesses across town. Art brings the community together, whether it is art for the sake of joy, art for the sake of life, or just art for the sake of art that Pitt County Arts Council strives to promote. We are proud to be members of Emerge and love seeing what supporting the arts in Pitt County is accomplishing for the future. - Larry and Caroline Houston

Member Highlight

Larry and Caroline Houston



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A woman with blonde hair, wearing a patterned shirt, is shown in a workshop setting. She is holding a small, thin metal ring between her fingers and a tool with a red handle. The background is slightly blurred, showing various workshop equipment.

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