

Anastasis Theatre Co.

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026



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From the Executive Artistic Director



Dear Friends of Anastasis,

I recently attended the National Association of Community and Restorative Justice Conference. More than 1600 restorative justice practitioners from around the world gathered to grow our knowledge, build community, and find inspiration. It was a transformational experience for me and solidified my belief that Anastasis is moving in the right direction.

In the last year and a half ATC has grown in many ways. I am now a full-time employee and we have brought on two outstanding part time staff members. Barry Carman is the new Managing Artistic Director and Nature Medicine Song Jackson is our Restorative Justice Program Director. When I co-founded ATC, I never imagined I could be doing this work full-time with a support staff. Nature and Barry have made it possible to expand our programming to include restorative justice, build a strong foundation for lasting sustainability, and to update our mission, vision and values to reflect our new focus on justice reform and restorative justice. I want to thank my co-founder Colleen O'Doherty, all our current and past board members, our community council, and every artist and community participant who have made this new chapter possible.

Throughout the restorative justice conference one word kept coming up in breakout sessions, conversations and the keynote speech from Danielle Sered, executive director of Common Justice. Imagination. In her book, Until We Reckon: Violence, Mass Incarceration, and a Road to Repair, she writes: "This book is an invitation to grief; it is also an invitation to imagination. What is possible and what we deserve will almost surely require both."

I believe imagination is the key to a better way forward as community and a nation. The only way to build a better future is to first imagine it. Will we default to fear as we imagine what is next or will we ground our imagination with faith in humanity?

The new mission of ATC and our restorative justice programs position us to create space for our community to imagine what could be and share that vision through theatre, storytelling, and dialogue. I hope you will join us on the journey to create a more connected community that can imagine and build a more just future for us all.

Yours in Hope,

Haley Haas

A Renewed Focus



Over the past year and a half, Anastasis has engaged our community with intention as we set out to refine the scope of our work - focusing on the people, the stories, and the stakes driving the need for justice reform.

A four-month strategic process followed to develop the new mission, vision, and values that will guide Anastasis moving forward.

The Mission

Anastasis amplifies the power of story. We gather, create, and dialogue with the community around art that centers the impacts of the legal system on our collective well-being. We cultivate communal experiences where personal and cultural transformation will seed a more just future for us all.

Our Vision

Anastasis nurtures a world where storytelling is a powerful pathway for collective wisdom to emerge and shape the future.

A world where belonging is a birthright, where our communities are awakened in pursuit of our collective liberation, where the systems that connect us are rooted in restoration.

A world where an injustice to any is the responsibility of all.

Core Values

COLLECTIVE CREATION

We gather in the present. We model the future.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Together, we are resilient. Together, we are wise.

JOY

The joy of connection seeds transformation.

BELONGING

Access to community is a human right.

INTEGRITY

We keep faith with one another. We are accountable to one another.

RESTORATIVE & TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

Justice demands restoration. Justice requires care.

Rising Voices



Our Rising Voices Program uses community-engaged theatre to share the stories of people impacted by systemic harms. We begin with relationship-building through story circles and interviews. We then work with participants to develop the play. We cast community members alongside professionals and tour the show to partner sites. Performances are free and followed by a community conversation

2025/2026 Recap

By A Thread



By A Thread continued Anastasis' tradition of using theatre to amplify marginalized voices and foster transformative community dialogue.

By acclaimed Omaha playwright Kim Louise, this production was created in deep collaboration with women who have experienced incarceration. The play explores the resilience, humanity, and sisterhood that emerges within and beyond prison walls.





Ways to Win the Woods

Ways To Win The Woods was a leap forward for Anastasis in terms of scale and production partnerships but the core of the work still shines through: real experiences, active listening, community collaboration.

The script by Ellen Struve was developed through a series of workshops at MICAH House, an emergency shelter serving families and women. Through the lens of the tale of Hansel & Gretel, this original musical reflects the experiences of women navigating homelessness.

WTWTW was co-produced by ATC, Great Plains Theatre Commons and Omaha Symphony.



What's Next for Rising Voices?

Rising Voices: LGBTQIA2s+ | Fall 2027



Community-building and development workshops are underway for our next project centering the experiences of our LGBTQIA2s+ neighbors. In partnership with the Union for Contemporary Art, Omaha for Us, and Black & Pink National, Anastasis will tour the play beginning at the Shirley Tyree Theater in the Fall of 2027.

A team of five systems-impacted, queer devisers have convened to structure the production and engage in story circles and interviews with community members impacted by the legal system.

Restorative Justice



Restorative justice is a practice of restorative interactions guided by a facilitator. This work strives to transform individuals, relationships, communities and systems through the prevention, repair and deep healing of harm.

Our restorative justice circles begin with community-building. Every session includes personal and collective art making to explore each topic in new ways. In a world that feels divided, we strive to provide a space for deep connection and belonging.

Restorative Justice Highlights

Spring 2026 we offered Circles of Healing Arts workshops in Omaha and Lincoln. For two months we met weekly to explore restorative practice and healing arts. Both groups created beautiful art together, and most importantly, they made meaningful connections. We hosted community celebrations in both Omaha and Lincoln to share the incredible writing and visual art the groups made.

Restorative Justice Program Director Nature Medicine Song and Managing Artistic Director Barry Carman were invited to host a breakout session at this year's Tri-Faith Race, Religion, and Social Justice Conference. The theme this year was "Art as Witness, Catalyst and Calling." Nature led the workshop called Restorative Justice and the Art of Healing. We gave participants a hands-on demonstration of our new restorative justice programming.

Haley and Nature had an inspiring week at the National Association of Community and Restorative Justice Conference in New Orleans this summer. More than 1600 people from across the world came together to learn, grow and make new connections.





What's next in Restorative Justice?

Fall Circle Series

With support from the Woman's Fund of Omaha we are hosting Circle of Healing Arts: An 8-Week Somatic Healing & Creative Restoration Curriculum. This trauma-informed restorative circle is designed for women and femmes who have experienced gender based violence.

These sessions will support emotional restoration, nervous system regulation, embodiment, self-expression, and healing relationship building. We will host sessions in Omaha and Lincoln in September and October. Details on our website.

Open Circle

We will be hosting monthly drop in restorative circles in Omaha and Lincoln starting in September. These sessions are open to all and will combine restorative practice and healing arts activities. If you are looking for a place to connect with others and find more joy, this is for you. Omaha Circle will take place at 4:00 on the second Sunday of each month. The Lincoln circles will be at 4:00 on the third Sunday of each month. Details on our website.

Circle Up

Circle Up is our programming inside Nebraska correctional facilities. This program is a mix of restorative justice circles and performing arts workshops. We design each workshop series to fit the needs and goals of participants. When possible the residents share what they have created with community members at their facilities. We are currently planning workshops at NE State Penitentiary, Tecumseh State Correctional Institution, and Sarpy County Juvenile Justice Center.



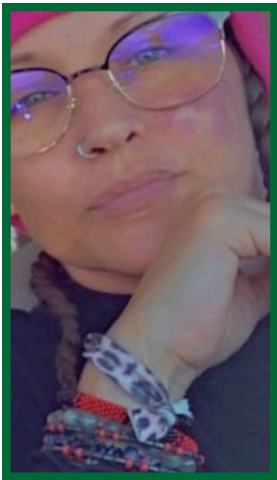
Growing the Work



Anastasis was honored with a capacity-building grant and cohort support from the Mid-American Arts Alliance in 2025 through their Cultural Sustainability Program. This investment has enabled a huge leap forward for the organization.

We were able to compensate Executive Artistic Director, Haley Haas, as our first full-time staff member. Combined with a new relationship with the Sherwood Foundation, we were also able in short order to add two additional staff positions to fully support our programming expansion.

Nature Medicine Song Jackson | Restorative Justice Program Director



Rooted in ancestral strength and guided by purpose, Nature creates spaces where art, storytelling, and restorative practice become pathways to healing, belonging, and transformation. Orphaned at nine and shaped by 20 years navigating foster care and prison, she learned the cost when systems fail to recognize our humanity. Today, she uses creativity, restorative circles, and community practices to restore connection.

Nature's multidisciplinary art explore resilience, identity, lived experience, and restoration. Her work has been exhibited through the LUX Center for Arts and Turbine Flats, and her visual art appeared on the cover of the 2020 edition of Illuminations. Art is a restorative practice, an invitation to witness, reflect, reconnect, and make space for stories often silenced.

Her performance work with Anastasis Theatre includes *By a Thread*, *Voices Unbound*, and *Mirror Trial*. She has shared spoken word through ACLU's Art from the Inside, contributed art and voice to the Free Earnest Jackson movement, and was featured on the cover of Nebraskans for Peace honoring Malcolm X's legacy. Nature is a Restorative Wellness Builder, CPSS, and WRAP facilitator with Malone Health & Healing.

Barry Carman | Managing Artistic Director



Barry Carman is an artist, administrator, and consultant with over 20 years experience at the intersection of art-making and community-building. Across his roles, he prioritizes human-centered program development, capacity growth, and strategic partnerships. Barry has been invested in Anastasis since its founding, serving both on the board and as a company member.

Currently based in the Pacific Northwest, he is the co-founder and former Artistic Director of Witching Hour (Omaha), and a former core company member of Out of Hand Theater (Atlanta). Most recently, he served as Director of Development for Bag&Baggage Productions (Hillsboro, OR).

He is a fierce advocate for new work, systems change, and dogs. He is queer, formerly incarcerated, formerly unhoused, and formerly unhinged...in no particular order. He loves comic books, sad songs, and his pups - Roscoe, Luna, and Bingus (in no particular order).



By the Numbers

Anastasis growth in capacity has meant a corresponding growth in service over the last eighteen months. Three Rising Voices projects have been in various stages of development.

Community circles for those projects, along with our ongoing in-facility workshops, and the launch of restorative justice programming have extended our reach and impact, bringing transformative communal experiences to more participants and larger audiences.

1,171
Attendees

11
Public Performances

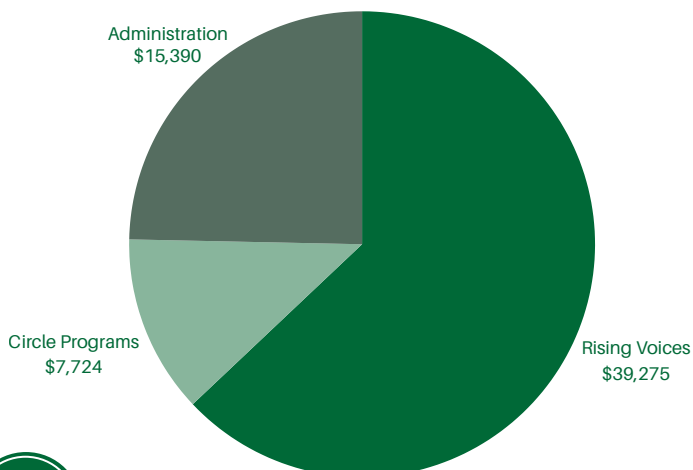
334
Participants

61
Paid Artists

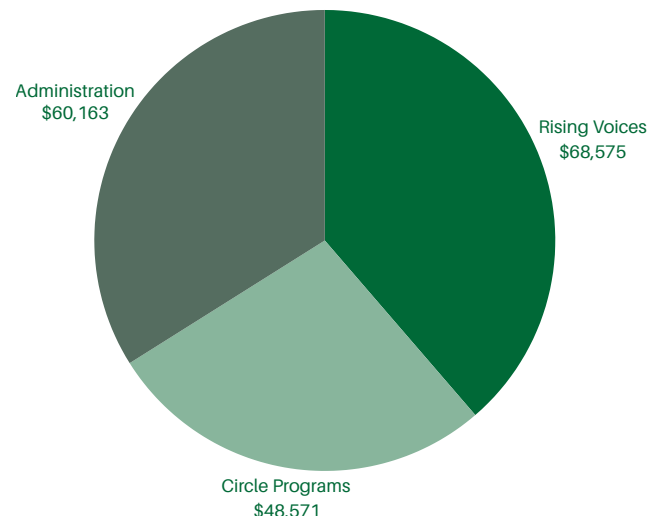
33
Workshops

6
Special Events

Budget FY2025
Total Expenses \$62,389



Budget FY2026
Total Expenses \$177,309



Board and Council



Anastasis is honored by the leadership, advice, and oversight provided by our board of directors and community council members. As we have transitioned to fully focusing on justice-involved communities, our board and council have evolved as well. Our members bring a combination of lived experience, personal expertise, and deep engagement with the issues and impacts at the heart of our work.

We extend a special welcome to this year's new board members, joining us in a season of transformation, with gratitude for investing their time and sharing their wisdom.

Board of Directors

Doriette Jordan | *President*

The Rose Theater

Carina DuMarce | *Secretary*

Girls Inc.

Dave Pantos | *Treasurer*

Dave Pantos Esq, LLC

Jason Whitmer

ACLU Nebraska

Eagle Feather

Omaha NE Youth 360

Kathleen Piper

SBA Nebraska District

Peggy Jones

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Sherie Thomas

Omaha Police Department

Nature Medicine Song Jackson

Malone Community Center

Barry Carman | *ex-officio*

ATC

Haley Haas | *ex-officio*

ATC

Community Council

Addie Barnhart

Creighton University

Alissa Ries

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

Bekah Jarde

Radio Talking Books Service

Charisa Ramsey

Teaching Artist

Clarice Donbeck

Healing Roots African Diaspora Garden

Denise Chapman

The Union for Contemporary Art

Ellen Struve

Great Plain Theatre Commons

Katherine MacHolmes

Collective Future Design Lab

Kathleen Combs

WhyArts

Nature Medicine Song Jackson

Anastasis Theatre Co.

Robert Nutt

Anastasis Community Participant

Ron Zank

University of Nebraska Omaha

Serena Ireland

Anastasis Community Participant

Sheila Fields

Bobby Byars Foundation

SaVonnie Yestanti

Anastasis Community Participant

New Board Members



Peggy Jones



Jason Whitmer



Eagle Feather



Sherie Thomas



Kathleen Piper

Circle Keepers



Anastasis Theatre Co. is profoundly grateful to our supporters who share our dedication to fostering trust, shared purpose, and genuine connection across differences. The following acknowledges the amazing humans whose gifts since January 2025 have empowered our mission.

Together, We are Resilient.

Aaron Pettes
Allana Pommier
Andrea Lang
Andy McGuire
Ann Forristal
Bill Hobbs
Brad and Molly Haas
Carol & Rick Russell
Catherine Olesen
Cheryl Winter
Christine Nikunen
Claudia & Tony Deeb
Daena Schweiger
David & Elsa Larson
David Pantos
Deborah & Steve Krambeck
Debra Diminico
Dennis & Ann Menke
Dianne Axlund
Don Keelan-White
Donald Hotz
Doug Koebernick
Dr. Jay Hubner
Gail and Craig Kennedy
Gary & Dona Eaves
Glen & Rita Goodenow
Grace Grennan
Gregg & Mary Lee Stewart

Hugh McGuire
Jacob & Sandy Hoffner
Jamie Blanchard
Janet Baggs
Jay & Carol Williams
Jean Novotny
Jennifer Gilg
Jenny Murnane
Jeremy Bouman
Jim & Anne Carroll
Jim McKain
Julia Hinson
Julie Livingston
Karen Bierle
Karen Kidd
Katherine Dawson
Kathleen McGuire
Kathleen Combs
Kathleen Piper
Kathy Haas
Kathy Miller
Kathy Tyree
Katie Cameron
Katie Weitz
Kevin Lawler
Kim Jubenville
Kimberly Yelick
Kirstin Kluver

Krista Freimuth
Laura Green
Marge Schlitt
Mary Barton
Matt & Mary Forristal
Megan Kwasnieski Falke
Michael & Mari Wilson
Michele Hodous
Mike & Anne McGuire
Mike Markey
Mindy Rush Chipman
Molly McGuire
Molly Sample
Peggy Lebrun
PJ & Amy McGuire
Quinn Corbin
Rex Walton
Rita Clark
Robert Nutt
Marilyn & Roger Huntley
Sandi & Bill Bruns
Sarah Ashley
Scott Working
Shannon McGuire
Sheila & Scott Riggs
Stephanie Kidd
Susan Aschinger
Tracy Baker

Seed a More Just Future.

Sponsorships are available for 2026/2027. As a sponsor at Anastasis, you make a flourishing future possible. Your sponsorship supports the community members at the heart of our work, and ensures the art we create is always free to the entire community. To discuss becoming a partner, please reach out to barry@anastasis theatre.org

Partners



Our partnerships are rooted in relationships, invested in reciprocal support, and focused on making meaningful change. We've partnered with community organizations, service providers, and advocacy groups, all invested in the common good.

Together, we amplify the power of storytelling to create space for reflection and provide the tools to take action. Profound gratitude to all who shared in our work and invited us into theirs.

2025-2026 | Program, Engagement & Advocacy Partners



2025-2026 | Funding Partners





*A full house awaits the start of Ways to Win the Woods
at the Hoff Family Arts and Culture Center.*

Anastasis Theatre Co.

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