



2017 | Grants Overview

THE MARY DUKE BIDDLE FOUNDATION



JARED LAZARIUS

2017 | Chair's Message

2017 was a momentous year for The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation: we said farewell to Jon Zeljo, who served as Chair of the board for five years and trustee for 12; welcomed new trustees Lois Deloatch and Allison Haltom; launched a new website; revamped our non-Duke University grantmaking programs; and, as we have for more than 60 years, made grants to nonprofits working in the arts and youth education.

While all of these activities are significant, the changes to our grantmaking priorities are of particular importance. Over the course of 2017, the trustees and staff focused on one question: How can our funding have a greater impact? All of our decisions were driven by careful consideration of how the foundation's financial and staff resources could have the most benefit. The grantmaking changes took effect in January 2018.

The foundation will continue to support the arts, artists, and K-12 education – long-standing priorities for MDBF. The primary difference is the articulation of more specific goals and criteria for each area (these guidelines are available on our redesigned website, <http://mdbf.org>). To enhance our impact in these areas, we also increased the maximum responsive grant amount from \$5,000 to \$10,000. To support the larger grant size, we will make fewer responsive grants on a yearly basis.

Another important change is focusing grants on the Triangle region of North Carolina, which we've defined as Chatham, Durham, Orange, and Wake Counties. Concentrating on the Triangle will allow us to deepen our engagement with the local community and strengthen our impact.

I want to note what hasn't changed. The foundation will continue to support the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, in recognition of the foundation's long relationship with the school. As outlined in the foundation's charter, we will also continue to make grants to Duke University and to the three churches of importance to Mrs. Biddle.

Lastly, we are pleased to have welcomed Ben Jones, great-grandson of Mary Duke Biddle, to the Board of Trustees in January 2018.

Christopher M. Harris, Chair

Arts

Supporting artists and arts organizations
for strong, vibrant communities



Durham Independent
Dance Artists (DIDA)



Chamber Orchestra
of the Triangle

13
nonprofits
received grants
totaling
\$160,250



40
nonprofits
received grants
totaling
\$209,000

Investing in innovative,
creative, and effective
approaches to teaching
and learning

Community
Music School



K-12 Education

Duke & Other



Nasher Museum of Art
"The Medici's Painter"

Duke Performances
Monk @100



Honoring the foundation's
legacy and building capacity in
the NC nonprofit sector

12
grants to Duke
totaling
\$494,000

7
nonprofits
received grants
totaling
\$32,500

Our History

Mary Lillian Duke Biddle (1887-1960) was born in Durham, N.C., the daughter of Benjamin Newton Duke and Sarah Pearson Angier Duke. She attended public schools in Durham and graduated from Trinity College, later named Duke University in honor of her grandfather, Washington Duke. Mrs. Biddle developed an appreciation for the importance of philanthropy from her father, who was the guiding hand behind many of the Duke family's charitable activities. Duke University, in particular, flourished in its early days thanks to the financial backing of her grandfather, father, and uncle James B. Duke, who were successful entrepreneurs as well as philanthropists.

In September 1956, she established The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation. Mrs. Biddle directed that at least one-half of the foundation's grants be made to Duke University and identified three churches as institutions important to her. Otherwise, she was intentionally broad in her directions to future trustees on how and where to distribute grants.

Mrs. Biddle valued the input and wisdom of her friends and trusted advisors, and, from the beginning, the foundation's Board of Trustees has included family and non-family members. The foundation continues her practice of actively engaging members of the community to serve as trustees. Currently, the board is comprised of three family and four non-family members.

Mrs. Biddle's vision for current and purposeful giving drives the work of the foundation's trustees and staff.



Cover: Claire Porter and Sara Juli, American Dance Festival, by Ben McKeown. Photo credits inside, clockwise from top left: (1) Zoe Litaker; (2) courtesy of Full Frame School of Doc; (3) J Caldwell, Nasher Museum; (4) John Rogers, courtesy of Duke Performances | Duke University; (5) Cindy McEnery; (6) courtesy of Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle.