

City of Concord Event Arts Grant
Final Report of the 2025 Holidays at the Estate
Kimball Jenkins

January 26, 2026

Due to the generous support through the City of Concord's Event Arts Grant Program, the first *Holidays at the Estate* at Kimball Jenkins took place November 29, 2025-December 19, 2025.

Holidays at the Estate celebrated the magic of the season and united our community under an umbrella of creativity through a variety of free holiday inspired programs and immersive experiences.

As proposed in our original application, the **overall outcomes** of the event included:

1. Continue to serve the community through accessible, relatable and meaningful programs that enhance the daily lives of Concord residents and visitors
2. To collaborate with local partners, organizations, and businesses to engage the community
3. To help increase tourism and further establish Concord as a City of the Arts
4. To provide paid work opportunities to artists from diverse backgrounds who have a defined style and point of view
5. To help raise the profile of participating artists by providing ongoing exposure to their work
6. Continue to grow as an organization artistically, collaboratively, and revitalize Kimball Jenkins as a community hub for the arts and historic preservation.

Results

1. Free and open to the public, over 3000 visitors attended *Holidays at the Estate*. Children and adults alike enjoyed the illuminated campus and the decorated interior of the Mansion, viewing of the juried Winter Wonderland featuring 12 local artists, visits with Santa, and numerous free performances featuring local schools, community organizations, and artists.
2. Holidays at the Estates was a success due to the collaborative efforts of community businesses and organizations. Merrimack County Savings Bank, Bangor Savings Bank, St. Mary's Bank, ClarkDeragon Law, Gallagher, and Northeast Delta Dental provided assistance through employee volunteerism, cross promotion, and financial support. Local artists and organizations were featured every Tuesday in December engaging attendees with free performances. Kimball Jenkins collaborated with AARP hosting 180 members in the decorated mansion for an afternoon of community while enjoying seasonal refreshments and entertainment.

A highlight of *Holidays at the Estate* was the collaboration with the Woman's Club of Concord. The organization held their first Gingerbread house exhibition to raise funds to provide access for all at the Chamberlin House as well as initiate important

conversation about the need for more accessible and affordable housing in our community.

The exhibition was held at the Chamberlin House on First Friday in December. Following the one night viewing, the houses were moved to Kimball Jenkins as part of the *Holidays at the Estate* celebration. The houses were on view for an additional six days at KJ providing the opportunity for further community enjoyment and engagement.

Another exciting collaboration that occurred during *Holidays at the Estate* was the community Open Mic Night organized by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Concord. The evening featured a cafe set-up within our Carriage House and the opportunity for community members to perform their music and art in an accepting environment. The event was sold out and welcomed 20 performers from all communities to share their talents.

3. Many of the visitors that attended *Holidays at the Estate* came from distances outside the Concord area. While greeting attendees within the Mansion, conversations and gathered data confirms that 40% of attendees were from outside the Concord area. Visitors from Massachusetts, Vermont, and Maine took part in the holiday festivities at KJ, as well as many who traveled distances from across NH including Lebanon, Keene, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Dover, Sunapee, Peterborough, and Durham. Many of our visitors asked for recommendations of other places to visit and dine while in the Concord area as many were in town for an extended period and not visited before. Others had visited before but had never been to Kimball Jenkins and came specifically for the *Holidays at the Estate* event. Both scenarios demonstrate that Concord is a tourism destination that not only supports small local businesses and the arts, but raises an overall awareness of the city's unique opportunities such as *Holidays at the Estate*.
4. *Holidays at the Estate* featured a variety of free performances featuring artists from diverse backgrounds and styles. Paid artists featured included Granite State Bell Ringers, Melissa Elsman, Contralto, Avalyn Reed Trio, Andrew Pinard Discovering Magic, and Stranger Than Fiction Improv, all bringing a variety of performing arts disciplines to the community.
5. Kimball Jenkins provided ongoing exposure of the events and participating artists through marketing efforts such as paid advertising, social media, website links, and newsletters. Besides performing artists, *Holidays at the Estate* offered several opportunities for visual artists to participate. Our pop-up retail shop, The Artisan's Nook, featured 15 individual artist's work for purchase. The shop offered visitors the opportunity to purchase holiday gifts and at the same time provided exposure throughout the entire event for the participating artists. Additionally, KJ partnered with the Concord Arts Market (CAM) to offer two Saturday day-long events featuring 30 different individual artists and their work for purchase. Lastly, the Winter

Wonderland exhibition, featuring 12 individual artists, was on view in our Mansion throughout the duration of *Holidays at the Estate*.

6. *Holidays at the Estate* has the makings of becoming one of KJ's and Concord's signature events. The overall success in the event's first year is remarkable based upon overall engagement and feedback from attendees as well as participating artists alike.

Feedback

"The events held during Holidays at the Estate, in my opinion, were perfect for the community. There seemed to be a little of something for everyone that provided a fun reprieve in a time that can be tense. I was excited to participate in some of the activities. As a participating artist I was elated to have my work seen by so many. I have lived in NH for close to seven years now. I remember when we moved here and we would drive by the school and I would daydream about being a part of Kimball Jenkins. Now I have accomplished so much with the opportunities that have been presented through KJ, most of all this past holiday show in the mansion. My piece "Here He Comes" was sold and this was a great feat for me. Events like Holidays at the Estate provide opportunities for so many of us that just love art in some shape or form." - Diane Singlin, artist

"We live less than ten minutes away and drive by Kimball Jenkins every day wondering what it was. Then when the outside lights went on, I said to my wife, something was different and we should go check it out. I am so glad we did because now we will know to come to future events and our daughter wants to come to art class". - Attendee

"I never knew this place existed. I am so happy we found it and the lights are so beautiful. We will definitely remember for next year". - Attendee

"I had always wanted to see the inside of the house. I am so happy you opened it up for the holidays. The architecture and the lights are amazing". - Attendee

"My grandson is typically very shy but absolutely loved Mr. Aaron and when Santa arrived at the end of the concert, he cut the entire line and ran right up to him! Thank you for such a fun and festive evening". - Attendee

Holidays at the Estate truly was one of the best opportunities for Kimball Jenkins to connect and collaborate with the community, artists, businesses, and organizations. We estimate that over 50% of attendees experienced KJ for the first time and many live right in Concord. This type of exposure will assist in the continued growth of the organization while becoming known as the community's hub for the arts and a treasured historic campus.

Challenges

- The duration of the event (daily, November 29-December 19) proved to be too much due to the lack of volunteers and a small staff (2 full -time and 3 part-time).
- Weather played a significant factor in the overall attendance of the event as frigid temperatures and snow kept folks away on certain days.
- Despite our best efforts in marketing *Holidays at the Estate*, many community members have told us since its conclusion, they had no knowledge of the event.

Moving Forward

Holidays at the Estate was an overall success and highlight for Kimball Jenkins in 2025. Its overall outcomes were met and exceeded expectations as proven in the data presented. Our organization will pursue hosting this event annually with the hopes for continued support of the City and our community.

As far as any alterations, the event may move to a Thursday-Sunday schedule versus a continuous Monday-Sunday schedule until we can ensure enough staff and volunteer coverage. We will continue to seek additional collaborative opportunities with businesses and organizations to assist in the overall management of the event as well as provide further exposure.

We cannot thank the City of Concord for its generosity and belief in events such as *Holidays at the Estate*. These types of events foster community pride and unify residents. Thank you for establishing the Events Art Grant Program to help bring events such as *Holidays at the Estate* from a vision to reality.





