

Willow Grove Cultural Commons

Quarterly Stewardship Report

September - December 2025



Grand Opening

Willow Grove Cultural Commons opened on September 20, 2025. The official launch was attended by hundreds of guests, including elected officials, generous donors, and cultural heritage partners. Celebrations continued throughout September and October, and many artists and artistic ensembles shared their traditions and talent. These included:

- Cambodian Buddhist Society
Cambodian Ceremonial Performance
- Shaquita Grier
Yoga Class
- Fuad Foty
Arabic Music Performance
- Sandy Spring Bluegrass Jam
Live Instrumental Jam Session
- AmaZing Theatre Company
Presentation of short play Harriet Tubman: Defender
- Xianghua Liu
Ink Painting Workshop
- Athena Zhang Baker
Origami Workshop
- Geri Smith
Community Quilt Project
- Shanye Huang
Chinese Paper Cutting Workshop
- Alla and Milana Borovskaia
Traditional Felt Workshop
- Mayur Dance Company
Bengali Traditional Dance
- Wheaton Arts
Crochet Workshop
- Peace Mission Korean Dance Group
Korean Dance Performance and Drum Workshop
- Spotlight Academy USA
Indonesian Dance Workshop
- Jalal Kimia
Persian Drum Workshop





Willow Grove Partners

During the final quarter of 2025, Cultural Heritage Manager Elise Petersen-Deitrick was busy signing up artists and cultural heritage organizations from within the museum's member community as Willow Grove Partners. Once enrolled, these partners are able to reserve Willow Grove for rehearsals, meetings, and even ticketed public workshops and performances at any time of day, including evenings and weekends. This enables them to rehearse, meet, and engage the public on their own schedules, whether the museum is open or not. Partners have applauded the museum for providing this resource and have shared abundant positive feedback: one partner even noted that Willow Grove has become crucial to their success.

Current Willow Grove Partners

- AmaZing Theatre Company
- District of Raga (South Asian Performing Arts)
- Kimia Percussion Academy
- Dr. Spyros Koliavasilis (Greek and World Music)
- Frank Letkiewicz (American Instrumental Music)
- Moonlight Ensemble (Khmer Classical Music)
- Sandy Spring Bluegrass Jam
- Geri Smith (Textile Arts)
- Somapa Thai Dance Company
- Spotlight Academy USA (Indonesian Dance)



We are enrolling individuals and groups on an ongoing basis. If you or someone you know is interested in partnering with us, please contact Cultural Heritage Manager Elise Petersen-Deitrick at culturalheritage@sandyspringmuseum.org.



Willow Grove Activity During Q4 2025



Willow Grove was just getting started in late 2025. Museum staff were focused on enrolling partners and finalizing the details of the space use. However, it was already in great demand by a variety of organizations. AmaZing Theatre Company made especially good use of Willow Grove, booking the space nine times for rehearsals and meetings. Ben Kepler, a multi-instrumentalist member of the Sandy Spring Bluegrass Jam, used the space four times for gatherings of bluegrass musicians. Textile artist

Geri Smith hosted a monthly "sewing social" that has so far attracted more than 50 people, many of whom have participated multiple times. The Moonlight Ensemble and Dr. Spyros Koliavasilis used the space at least once, and three of our newest partners are slated to begin using the space in the first quarter of 2026.



Partner Spotlight: AmaZing Theatre Company

This theatre group, headquartered in Sandy Spring, creates meaningful productions to enlighten, educate, and entertain the community about the history and culture of Black, indigenous, people of color (BIPOC), while at the same time embracing the importance of inclusion and diversity. They produce a biannual 10-minute play festival and have performed numerous shows, including *The Mountaintop* and *Where the Stream May Take Us*. AmaZing Theatre has found Willow Grove and its Creative and Gathering spaces invaluable resources in rehearsing recent productions. In 2026, AmaZing Theatre will broaden their programming at Sandy Spring Museum to include an African-American storytelling program for children and families, led by professional storyteller Gordon "Soorah" Parks.

Interested in attending a partner performance or workshop? Keep an eye out for Willow Grove partner events on our [Events & Programs calendar](#). Willow Grove Partner events are noted as taking place at Willow Grove Cultural Commons.



A member of AmaZing Theatre Company rehearses at Willow Grove

"Willow Grove Cultural Commons fills a long-standing gap in the region: a free, accessible, high-quality rehearsal and performance space dedicated to community arts. Since its opening, Amazing Theatre has held numerous rehearsals in the facility, and the experience has been exceptional. Willow Grove is a place where emerging performers can discover their voices, seasoned actors can refine their craft, and community members can gather to witness the power of storytelling."

- Alice H. Thomas, Ph.D. , Executive Director, Amazing Theatre Company, Inc.