



## Considering the Considerable Contributions of Bennie L. Williams



Bennie Lucille Williams has always felt the music first.

Since she was a child, growing up in small-town Texas and listening to former slaves turned sharecroppers sing in the Quarters, she knew the rhythms were a guiding force for her. She heard these songs in her neighborhood when her best friend who lived in the Quarters would come to tell her the singing had started. She heard them in the church she attended every Sunday with her family.

When she would hit one of life's low points, she heard them in her own head and heart. She and her friends would sing them on the playground at school. When they were looking for entertainment, her family sought out chances to see Wings Over Jordan, a prominent Black choir during the 1930s and 40s. She heard these essential spirituals championed by Black intellectuals like Mary McLeod Bethune

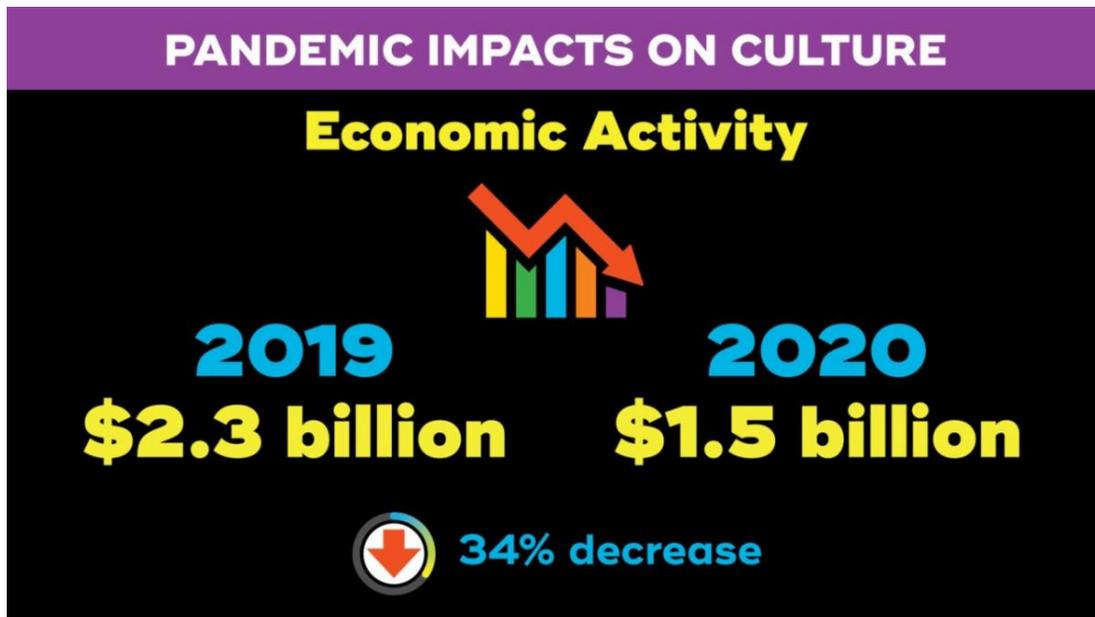
and Melvin B. Tolson, who spoke at the two Black colleges – Wiley College and Bishop College – in her hometown of Marshall.

“That’s my ancestors’ music. That’s the music from my people,” she said. “I’m black and I’m proud. And these songs tell us clearly, ‘You may oppress my body, but you will not oppress my soul. And you will not take the song out of my heart.’ These are songs of resistance.”

[Read More](#)



**We fund culture.**



During 2020, organizations from across the sector lost about a decade’s worth of financial growth. That’s why funding you make possible through the SCFD is so critical. In 2020, you provided \$64 million in stabilizing funding to ensure that our arts and cultural organizations endure. That’s why we can proudly say that not a single organization funded by the SCFD closed during the pandemic. [You can see a full economic impact report recently released by the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts.](#)



## Engage with Us

### Remembering a cultural hero

Early January brought the passing of Michael Massey, a long-time Denver attorney and passionate advocate for the arts. Among his other contributions to our cultural landscape, Massey served as the chairman of the SCFD, chairman emeritus of Historic Littleton, Inc. and as Board of Trustees President for the National Repertory Orchestra. He was also a loving, giving, and witty husband and father. The entire cultural community appreciates his meaningful contributions and sends their thoughts to his family and friends.



### Help us welcome new members to the SCFD Family

Each year, arts, culture, and scientific organizations have the opportunity to apply for eligibility for SCFD funding. Here's a big SCFD welcome to those newly eligible organizations.

- [Boulder Opera Company](#)
- [Sprout City Farm](#)
- [Intermezzo Academy of Music](#)
- [Evergreen Music Festival](#)
- [Boulder MUSE](#)
- [JLF Colorado](#)

### Celebrate the best with Colorado Business Committee for the Arts

Celebrate outstanding arts & business partnerships on March 15! CBCA's annual Business for the Arts Awards luncheon honors exemplary collaborations, philanthropy, and leadership to advance the arts in Colorado. [Register today for this high-energy, inspiring event.](#)

### SCFD Board of Directors news

The SCFD is governed by a board of directors with representation from district member counties Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson. The board oversees district funding and ensures the district is running the way voters intended. The board meets eight times a year and all meetings are open to the public.

- The next meeting of the SCFD Board of Directors will be held virtually at 1 p.m. on Feb. 24. [Get more information for joining meetings and see the full calendar of 2022 board meetings.](#)