The Colquitt County Arts Center is a longstanding hallmark of the Moultrie/Colquitt County community. Considered a strong community asset, the Center provides both ready access to the arts as well as classes for the community’s diverse population.

Although the Center boasts successful programs, in recent years, it has had difficulty finding consistent, sustainable funding. Due to the its large size, even keeping the lights on is an expensive task.

Committed to supporting the arts, the Moultrie/Colquitt County Archway Partnership Executive Committee worked to create a financially solvent and sustainable arts center as a critical part of its economic development strategy.

Archway professionals forged a partnership between UGA’s Terry College of Business and the Colquitt County community, to create a nine-student team comprised of Leonard Leadership scholars. Within the group were students from a diverse set of business majors, all of whom worked diligently to address issues related to board governance, marketing, management, accounting, and real property. The student team focused on developing recommendations for sustainability for the Colquitt County Arts Center as part of its annual capstone project.

Following four trips to Moultrie and much research, the students prepared a 55-page report of templates, designs and recommendations for a sustainable business plan, which they presented to the Colquitt County Arts Center Board of Directors. The project was deemed to be a success for the Colquitt County Arts Center, which has utilized many of the recommendations and is now operating profitably with prospects for sustainability.

Chris Cornwell, who advised the team of Leonard Scholars, attributes success to the teamwork among the university, students, and the community. “We knew the Moultrie people were committed to seeing this through,” he said. “It just became a terrific relationship that extended throughout the entire academic year.”

Advancing Community Priorities: Fostering economic growth and community development have been highlighted as key priorities for the Archway Partnership in Colquitt County. The work conducted on the arts center works to fuel a thriving and diverse economic backdrop, by providing increased access to arts and cultural experiences, as well as implementing sustainable business practices.