LATITUDE is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Chicago, Illinois who maintains a community digital lab with high-end scanning and printing equipment, operates an artist in residence program, and organizes regular education & arts programming. Our mission is twofold: first, to provide affordable access to high end digital equipment and a production space for the creation of artwork, while offering artists and photographers technical assistance with this production; and second, to organize a diverse range of social, academic, and professional programming dedicated to the arts, including artists’ talks, workshops, reading and critique groups, print swaps, and an ongoing artist in residence program.

LATITUDE is operated by a small staff and a number of volunteer Lab Assistants who receive ongoing lab access and training. The lab is an educational and arts production facility for hundreds of artists per year, and our related programming (e.g. talks, workshops, and panel discussions) attracts many more.
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

COLLEEN KEIHLM

In 2023, I had the pleasure of working with Nalani McClendon while being a part of Latitude’s first Strategic Plan committee. Our focus of this Strategic Plan was less formal; our goal was to check in with you, our community, and define a vision for the future with you in mind. The Strategic Plan committee, which included Grace Coudal, Rod Sawyer, and Maria Dunevsky, held 30 interviews on zoom and in person to discuss what DIY users, film processors, and workshop participants are interested in seeing at Latitude. We talked about the shifts that have happened at Latitude under leadership changes and modifications caused by the pandemic. You let us know that, despite the challenges presented, Latitude stayed true to our mission by keeping the lab accessible to the public physically and financially. We received feedback that you would like us to be even more accessible physically and creatively by reaching out to other mediums, to see us create additional video and technical resources, expand our community, and have encouraged us to work towards being an all bodied space. This feedback could not make me happier as being a resource for our vibrant Chicago and Midwest art community is a joy of my job. I take great pride in seeing what our community has made when it is exhibited out in the world at galleries, public spaces, museums and personal spaces as well.

As an artist and educator, I want to support building a world where tools are made available to anyone who wants to use them. These tools create visual language that allow us to speak freely and creatively with one another. Therefore when a new building in our neighborhood became available and was open to helping us work towards a fully ADA accessible space it felt like the right time to make a move. Moving a business is difficult and time consuming, so 2024 will be a year of making 2003 West Fulton feel special. We will work towards sustainably growing our offerings and supporting our staff. I hope you will join us by enrolling in new classes and attending Artist in Residence events because community support has helped us make it to the other side of these intense COVID-19 pandemic years.

Change has been the only constant since I took the role of Executive director at Latitude and 2024 is gearing up to be just as different as the last. We’ve seen our community grow, offered more technology and knowledge, and have enjoyed gathering together in the lab again. It is with great thanks to every lab user that I write this letter from our new space, which is filled with DIY users. I also want to thank the staff that was there with us in those scary and often uncertain times. Those folks are Adam Schachner, Alex Wieder, Rachel Schafer, Lucy McDonald, Keanna Rose Boyko, Shawn Rowe, Lauren Grudzien, Marylu Herrera, Diego Rodriguez and Julia Williams. With the help of these current and former staff members, we opened to the public safely and maintained protocols that continue to support the lab today. Going forward, I hope you try the new classes that are being planned and attend the exciting events we have planned for 2024. There, you will get to meet new staff members Daeja Hansdóttir, Dennissa Young, Matilda Brumaugh, and Grace Kromah, who are helping us make Latitude a truly special space. We are making the choice to move through change with empathy and I’m honored and proud of the work we are engaging in.

Colleen Keihm
Executive Director
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Method of Accounting:

The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America.

Revenue:

LATITUDE’s income comes from Individual Contributions (13%), Foundation Contributions (30%), Government Contributions (9%), Print and Scan revenue (20%), Film processing and sales (5%), DIY Revenue (20%), and Workshop fees (3%). Service Bureau revenue includes printing and scanning for hire services. DIY revenue includes membership fees, ink costs, paper costs, and packaging fees. Workshops run monthly and the fees for each class vary based on production costs and instructor fees.

Fundraising & Development:

In 2023, Latitude held a Moving Fundraiser through GoFundMe. This fundraiser helped defray the cost of closing for a month as the organization moved in January of 2024. Alongside the GoFundMe fundraiser, Latitude worked with the cohort of 2023 Artists in Residence to host a print fundraiser for the same purpose. Both fundraising events raised a total of $6,000.
Expenses:

In 2023, LATITUDE’s major expenses included personnel wages (50%), benefits for full time employees (7%), rent and utilities (15%), technology costs (1%), professional fees (4%), and program expenses (23%). Professional fees include accounting services and instructor fees for workshops. Program expenses for 2023 include paper, ink costs, film and processing costs, and the fees undertaken within the artist residency program. In 2023 Latitude had to transition the 4900 printers away from refillable ink cartridges because Epson is no longer making them compatible. This will cause an increase in costs going forward.

Property & Equipment:

In 2023, Latitude purchased two monitors, more accessories for the Overhead camera scanner and a new computer for the Executive Director. Purchases were made possible through a generous individual donation from a community member.

Notes on Financial Position:

In 2023, Latitude saw a 22% increase in revenue as well as a 10% increase in expenses from 2022. Individual Contributions increased 3%, Foundation support increased 15%, and DIY increased 7%. Our DIY numbers are back to what they were prior to the pandemic. Print and Scan services were comparable to the numbers from 2022. Within Government Contributions, we are proudly supported by the Illinois Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts and DCASE. Foundation support comes from The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, Builder’s Initiative, the Reva and David Logan Foundation and the Driehaus Foundation.
Few major purchases were made for the organization this year as we continued to improve wages for our staff. A portion of our cash reserve went towards planning and executing a new lab space at 2003 West Fulton Street custom built for our organization. In October of 2023, Latitude announced the move of our facility to this new location four blocks away from 1821 West Hubbard. The reasons for this change align with our Accessibility Goals for the organization at large. Our 2003 Fulton location has more space for mobility devices, a Damen bus stop close by and a Damen Green Line stop that will be opening the summer of 2024.

Our 2023 residency roster featured 10 exciting artists at Latitude. Natasha Moustache kicked off the year with an amazing panel discussion with Anwulika Anigbo, upcoming resident zakiyyah dumas-oneal, and Jess Atieno. Kale Serrato Doyen, a photographer and historian, hosted a panel discussion of Chicago artists and how the city of Chicago has influenced their practices. Participants included Lissette Bustamante, Oluwaseyi Adeleke, and Juan Arango Palacios. Mara Baker hosted a class on how to make your own natural dyes and Natalee Decker provided a workshop on how to use the program Blender.

Administratively, Latitude entered into our first Strategic plan thanks to financial support provided by Builder’s Initiative. The Strategic Plan committee included Executive Director Colleen Keihm, former Programming Fellow Grace Coudal, former lab assistant and tutor Maria Dunevsky, and DIY user Rod Sawyer. The results of the 30 interviews and survey of 100 was that our community enjoys working with our approachable staff and would like to see the lab expand to more film and printing options. Staff worked with Maggie Wong for professional development creating a staff communication agreement.
LATITUDE IS A NONPROFIT COMMUNITY DIGITAL LAB IN CHICAGO.

We maintain a digital lab with high-end printing and scanning equipment, process 35mm and 120 color negative film, operate an artist in residence program, and organize ongoing arts programming. We gladly welcome all members of the public, including artists, photographers, students, educators, and enthusiasts.