

Rotary
Club of
Charlotte



THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

April 12, 2022

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Tim Miner, Co-Founder, Charlotte is Creative

By Jim Kelley

Catherine Bracey introduced our speaker, Tim Miner from “Charlotte is Creative”, and welcomed two local Charlotte creative artists Irisol Gonzalez and Deneer Davis who Tim will introduce to us later in his presentation.

Tim is a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill and is an experienced marketing director. He has had marketing positions with the likes of Charlotte Center City Partners, Visit Charlotte, Crown Communications, Crescent Resources, and Brixx Wood Fired Pizza.

In 2016, Tim and his business partner, Matt Olin, co-founded the Queen City Quiz Show that challenges players and guests with questions about Charlotte’s past and present designed to entertain, educate and prepare citizens to drive the future of the Queen City. In 2018, Tim and Matt started “Charlotte is Creative.” Matt and Tim also started monthly Creative Mornings Charlotte gatherings. Tim is the editor of the Biscuit – a newsletter that feeds all hunger for Charlotte Creatives. He also has an active role in the Charlotte Shout! events that are going this week in uptown Charlotte.

Tim’s agenda is to take a new approach to Charlotte’s creatives – to connect Charlotte’s creatives with businesses, to tap into creative ideas and creative changes for Charlotte.

Tim and Matt first met in high school. They created Charlotte Is Creative in 2018. Charlotte is Creative’s mission is to spark surprising and engaging connections between Charlotte artists, creative entrepreneurs, and the established business community to help them boost opportunity, livability, and success by working together. More specifically, the focus is on creating programs, initiatives, events, and grants that:

- **Connect emerging and disconnected creatives** in Charlotte to each other and to the resources they need to do their work and build their business.
- **Connect Charlotteans to the creative community** around them, to the people and experiences that set Charlotte apart and excite them about their city.
- **Connect companies to their employees**, and their customers.
- **Connect our audiences to stories** and information they can use to build their career or to enjoy and explore the community around them.

Charlotte is Creative provides HUGS (Helpful Unfettered Grants) which are \$250 micro-grants awarded monthly to for-profit and non-profit creative initiatives in Charlotte. Eight examples of what Charlotte is Creative has done – (1) They have provided over 300 HUGS to date. (2) The Beatties Ford Strong Project X Charlotte Symphony Orchestra launched a series of pop-ups in June at the Brookhill Community Center. (3) Working with The Mint Museum, a three-day pop-up exhibition at Mint Museum Randolph featured the work of more than 40 local artists of color and street artists. (4) Charlotte is Creative partnered with Charlotte Rescue Mission for Art as Transformation, a community-wide art installation raising awareness for addiction recovery, and Charlotte Rescue Mission's Miracle at Cedar Street capital campaign. (5) Charlotte is Creative and the City of Charlotte hosted a photo culinary tour along Albemarle Road in early November. (6) In the fall of 2021, **Wells Fargo** helped Charlotte is Creative pilot a new program that matches grant funding with business training sessions with local leaders to help seven creatives approach their work as entrepreneurs and invest in themselves for immediate and future success. (7) Flowers are blooming all across the Queen City and so is art in South End. Local creatives — musicians, fiber artists, painters, dancers, and more — will share their skills in public spaces and businesses as part of South End Blooms, a celebration of Charlotte's creative community with surprise, pop-up art experiences blooming every weekend through June 20. (8) Each year in Charlotte, 20 artists are juried in and featured in a \$3.3 million ad campaign made up of advertising displays on local roadways, mixed-use developments, Uptown streets, and the airport.

They started Creative Mornings Charlotte, a breakfast lecture series, which gives our city's fast-growing creative set a place to call home – to gather each month to get inspired, support each other, forge relationships, and collaborate. They are committed to showcasing Charlotte's creative thinkers, makers, and doers on a global level. To celebrate our city's creative talent and show the world who we really are. Every Creative Mornings Charlotte gathering is free of charge and open to anyone to attend. A recent breakfast had over 700 attendees. Their goal is to send creatives into their day/life with a surge of inspiration, lots of new connections and ideas and perspectives, and creative ways of thinking.

They started Queen City Quiz Show which is a live game show about Charlotte's history, trivia, and current events that travel to neighborhoods across the city and engage people where they live and work. The show is an entertaining way to arm people with information about the past and present to position them to dive in and help build the future of Charlotte.

Tim introduced two creatives that he works with – Irisol Gonzalez and Deneer Davis.

Irisol Gonzalez is a fine artist and muralist living and working in Charlotte, North Carolina. She immigrated from Costa Rica with her family at age 10. Having earned degrees in psychology and political science from Appalachian State University, she uses that background to pose moral questions through the symbolism in her art. She has traveled to Mexico and Central America to study Latin American culture and its roots in the Hispanic identity that currently exists in the United States. In her work, she explores the sentiments and physical experience of being

a brown female immigrant functioning in today's American political atmosphere. She was an Inaugural ASC Emerging Creator Fellowship Recipient in 2020 and completed a Fellowship with the League of Creative Interventionists in 2021. She is headed to Yale to get her PH.D.

DeNeer Davis is a proudly born and raised North Carolinian from Charlotte. She paints murals, street art, and designs wearable, painted clothing products. She has already become a local sensation from her Instagram page where she, among other things, promotes her customized shoes which she particularly loves to paint. DeNeer reached out to North by Northwest after a Google search for graffiti events.

*A recording of the program is available here: <https://vimeo.com/699083179>

The presentation begins at 14:06 minutes.