

NEW URBAN ARTS
743 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903
USA

News in 2009

The **President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities** names New Urban Arts a **Coming Up Taller Award Winner!** The Coming Up Taller Award is the nation's highest honor in the field of out-of-school time arts and humanities programs, particularly those that reach underserved children and youth.

New Urban Arts is one of 20 organizations selected by the **U.S. Department of Education** for a national study of best practices in high school out-of-school programs.

New Urban Arts welcomes two new Arts Mentoring Fellows, **Emmy Bright** and **Kedrin Frias**. Emmy's work in arts education spans the field: from arts administrator and teaching artist to researcher and theorist. She holds an M.Ed in Arts in Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Kedrin is an alumni student of New Urban Arts where he has volunteered as an artist mentor for 7 years, positively transforming the lives of countless Providence teenagers.

RISCA funds the development of professional development workshops for educators, artists, and youth workers based on **Creative Correspondence**, New Urban Arts' 2008 summer inquiry program. Learn more online at: www.dearprovidence.org.

New Urban Arts was one of only 18 organizations selected to receive a grant from the **Rhode Island State Council on the Arts**, through the **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act**.

New Urban Arts' second **Conversations on Creative Practice** series launched in January bringing unique individuals to the studio to share how they integrate creativity into their personal and professional lives. Conversations was hosted by **Arts Mentoring Fellows**, **Peter Hocking** and **Andrew Oesch**. Special thanks to Arley-Rose Torsone, Jane Androski, Laurencia Strauss, Kath Connolly, Sarah Bernstein, Shea'la Finch, Jen Corace, Deb Dormondy, Champe Speidel, and Lisa Harrison Speidel.

Former New Urban Arts Volunteer and RISD Community Arts Graduate Student, **Felice Cleveland**, interviews Arts Mentoring Fellow, **Peter Hocking** for **Design*Sponge**, a popular design blog that has 4,000 readers!

NEW URBAN ARTS

is COMING UP TALLER in 2009!

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NEW URBAN ARTS

is a nationally-recognized arts studio and gallery for high school students and emerging artists in Providence, Rhode Island. Our mission is to build a vital community that empowers young people as artists and leaders to develop a creative practice they can sustain throughout their lives. In 2009, the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities named New Urban Arts a Coming Up Taller award winner, the nation's highest honor for arts and humanities programs serving youth during out-of-school time. We serve over 300 high school students, 20 emerging artists and over 2,000 visitors each year through free youth programs, professional development, artist residencies and public performances, workshops and exhibitions. Visit newurbanarts.org for more information.



Left: Brickwall project organized by Artist Mentor Zachary Clark with over 100 contributions from students, mentors and friends of New Urban Arts; Right: First Lady Michelle Obama presents New Urban Arts a 2009 Coming Up Taller award at a White House ceremony. Pictured from left to right are Executive Director Jason Yoon, Alumnus and STAB Chair Rosalia Velis, and First Lady Michelle Obama.

DEDICATED TO LIFELONG CREATIVITY

By using the arts to put young people in charge of their learning, we’re developing the next generation of citizens and leaders. At New Urban Arts, a sustainable creative practice is about continually seeking to bring people together. We recruit and train artists from a range of backgrounds to mentor high school students in free after-school and summer programs. Artists and young people work together without following a script. Everything that comes out of our studio is the result of artists and youth working as collaborators and peers. Over 90% of our seniors graduate high school and get into college. The majority of our students live in Providence’s poorest neighborhoods. In spite of the challenges they face, our young people graduate high school, go to college, and most importantly create opportunities for themselves.



A gallery visitor admires annual mail art installation organized in 2009 by Kedrin Frias.

How and why should New Urban Arts “grow?”

How do we change the lives of more artists and young people without sacrificing the family feeling in our storefront art studio and gallery? Last year, we wrestled with this question, among others, as part of a broad planning process. Our desire for “purposive flexibility” grounded our thinking. Building on a community process of discussion, deliberation and research, we’ve committed to the following priorities:

SERVE: Strengthen and refine our core programs to ensure that young people and artist mentors develop creative practices they can depend on throughout their lives.

SHARE: Extend our approach to a life-long creative practice by a) investing in an alumni network of mentors and students and by b) strengthening our communications strategy to influence the movement to make creativity and imagination a vital part of public life.

SUSTAIN: Secure our long-term future through diversifying and stabilizing funding sources, developing long-term assets, and securing a more permanent home.

These priorities balance our commitment to remaining local, small and nimble with the reality that national needs are too great to ignore. We hope the stories in this newsletter will help you see what our new commitments look like in practice.

You help us serve our local community by making possible hundreds of powerful connections among artists and young people every year. Artist Mentor Zachary Clark writes that teaching at New Urban Arts is about artists working with youth as collaborators and peers. And sometimes stumbling (and spilling paint!) in the process.

You help us share our practice, influencing national discussions on the arts, youth development and education. Harvard education graduate student Elena Belle White writes that what happens at New Urban Arts has “powerful implications” for education. And in the last year, we have been nationally recognized by the US Department of Education and the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, to name only two.

To sustain ourselves as both a local and national resource, we depend on many different members of our community – including you. In the enclosed newsletter, you’ll see how our alumni have helped organize people in unique and important ways, as well as the way our donors continue to support our important work.

Thank you for making all of this and much more possible. We invite you to read about how we’ve put our plans into action and to join us on our next great adventure.

Sincerely,

Myrth York, Chair, Board of Directors

Jason Yoon, Executive Director

To read our full strategic plan visit www.newurbanarts.org

2009 Studio Participants

staff

Jason Yoon,
Executive Director

Sarah Meyer,
Program Director

Jesse Banks III,
Studio Manager

Tamara Kaplan,
Operations Manager

Peter Hocking,
Arts Mentoring Fellow

Andrew Oesch,
Arts Mentoring Fellow

artist mentors

Jane Androski

Adrienne Benz

McKenzie Burrus-Granger

Caitlin Cali

Zachary Clark

David Colannino

Morgan Fagant

Ben Fino-Radin

Erik Gould

Julia Gualtieri

Abel Hernandez

David Karoff

Dionte Noble

Erica Palmiter

Jennifer Rice

Melissa Small

Lane Taplin

Emily Ustach

Isaac Wingfield

Meredith Younger

studio study buddies

Kian Shenfield

Dan Schleifer

studio team advisory board

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Amanda Abreu

Frances Adewusi

Emely Barroso

Jackson Boerner

Ashley Escobedo

Ava Ginsburg

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Jean Cozzens

Jo Dery

Deb Dormody

Corinne Enni

Bill Eyman

Jamie Fagant

Shea’la Finch

Will Krause

Kate Sanders-Fleming

Dennes Garcia

Miguel Garcia

Elena Gonzales

Seth Gruenwald

Osmary Guerra

Claire Harlan Orsi

Lisa Harrison

The Hive Archive

Phil Huerta

Jeff Hutchison

Heather Johnson

John Tabor Jacobson

Elizabeth Keith

Delia Kovac

Martha Kuhlman

Chem Lawn

Rhiannon Lee

Brent Legault

Adrienne Marshall

Tina McDonough

Melissa Mendes

Walker Mettling

Art Middleton

Simon Moore

Michael Moretti

John Nguon

Ashley Paniagua

Rachel Panitch

Patrice Payne

Carole Anne Penney

Breck Petrillo

Ben Pilgrim

Jennifer Renzi

Joanna Ruocco

Susan Sakash

Dania Sanchez

Dave Sharp

Alyssa Holland Short

Adam Short

Champe Speidel

Deborah Steinberg

Laurencia Strauss

Paul Tavarez

Raj Thakkar

Arly-Rose Torsone

Meg Turner

Daniel Valmas

Anusha Venkataraman

Rebecca Volynsky

Melissa Welch

registered students

Abigail Castillo

Abigail Falvey

Adam Lawton

Adderlin Taveras

Alantra Briggs

Aldrin Munoz

Alee Khang

Alex Ahlauist

Alex Palmieri

Alexis Cardenas

Alita Parham

Allegra Donadio

Allyson Clavin

Amanda Abreu

Amber Lopez

Andrea Campos

Andrew Dellorfan

Andrew Migliori

Angel Cortorreal

Angel Peña

Angela Hawkes

Angelica DelaRoca

Angie Rodriguez

Anne Foster

Ariana Buckley

Ariana Purro

Arielle Morgan

Ashley Escobedo

Ashley Tavarez

Ashlian Lebron

Ava Ginsburg

Berny Contreras

Beth Green

Bianca Bjorklund

Bolajide Adeyoye

Brandy Jones

Brian Chaca

Brian Sical

Briana Hutley

Briana Briggs

Bridgette Larmena

Calder Brown

Chalena Lillie

Chanel Velasquez

Chantelle Tangui

Charlene Wooten

Charline Manzano

Chez Sanchez

Christian Vialva

Christopher Calderon

Christopher Gomes

Cindy Cabrera

Cindy Lopez

CJ

Claribel Cruz

Cormac Hopkins

Courtney Brennan

Covith Sen

Crystal Moreno

Cynthia Argeramo



From left: Rosalia, Jason and Board Chair Myrth York and Representative Jim Langevin D-Rhode Island. The reception was in the Capitol Hill Visitors Center in Washington DC.

New Urban Arts Wins Nation’s Highest Honor for Youth Arts Programs

On November 4, 2009, the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities named New Urban Arts one of 15 Coming Up Taller Award Winners! The Coming Up Taller Award is the nation’s highest honor for the field of out-of-school time (OST) arts and humanities programs, particularly those that reach underserved children and youth. Coming Up Taller award-winners are selected by a rigorous peer review process that includes a panel and national jury of esteemed arts and humanities professionals from across the country.

Rosalia Velis, a New Urban Arts Alumna and the Chair of the Studio Team Advisory Board, and Jason Yoon, Executive Director, attended a ceremony in Washington D.C. to formally accept the award from First Lady Michelle Obama. Tamara Kaplan, Operations Manager and former Program Director, also attended the ceremony. In addition a contingent of New Urban Arts youth and staff descended on

our nation’s Capitol to lead arts workshops for the public and for a special reception later that evening hosted by Senator Jack Reed, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Representative Jim Langevin, Representative Patrick Kennedy and Providence Mayor David Cicilline.

This award is a testament to all of the amazing people that have contributed to our community in the last 13 years, particularly the incredible artists and young people who are our foundation. We express our deepest gratitude to the the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities and to First Lady Michelle Obama.

To find out the latest news about celebrating Coming Up Taller sign up for our e-mail list at www.newurbanarts.org

New Urban Arts Recognized by U.S. Department of Education as a Best Practices Program

New Urban Arts was one of 20 programs across the country selected by the United States Department of Education for a study of best practices in high school after school programs. The 20 programs were selected from a pool of 1,500 Twenty First Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) high school programs. The 21st CCLC initiative is a competitive program that financially supports centers like New Urban Arts that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. Representatives from the US Department of Education visited New Urban Arts to identify best practices in our work that lead to academic achievement. The final report will be completed sometime in 2010.

New Urban Arts is in the third year of a five-year grant through the 21st CCLC program.

To learn more about the 21st Century Community Learning Center program please visit: www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc

ARTOGRAPHY: Arts in a Changing America

New Urban Arts is one of nine organizations across the country selected to be supported by ARTOGRAPHY, Arts in a Changing America, a grant and documentation program of Leveraging Investments in Creativity, funded by the Ford Foundation. The goal of the ARTOGRAPHY program is to highlight the work of organizations engaged in exemplary artistic and organizational practices as seen through the lens of changing demographics. These organizations, selected through a national selection process, demonstrate the artistic rigor of community responsive organizations working among changing cultures within their communities. Through documentation and publishing the ARTOGRAPHY program will share lessons learned and best practices with the broader field to highlight the value of diverse artistic practices throughout the United States.

Visit www.artsinachangingamerica.net



The celebration continues online.
Link to photos, news articles, discussions,
artwork, and personal reflections at
www.newurbanarts.org

D’aisia Isom	Geraldly Recio	Jasmin Cruz Gomes	Jorge Guzman	Kimchua Heng	Mayra Lopez	Pauline Adhiamo	Sergo Gomez
Damel De La Cruz	Gerwin Sena	Jasmine Eaddy	Josafat Morales	Kiviana Ventura	Mecca Smith	Pedro Montanez	Shakiah Faris
Dana Heng	Giancarlo Garcia	Jasmine Silveira	Joseph Adewusi	Konthea The	Medina Smith	Pitu Sim	Shamikia Perry
Danielle Aubin	Gibson Prouty	Jazmin Rosa	Josue Cua	Krystal Falto	Melissa Roberts	Polly Feliaiano	Shannon Falvey
Danielle Brennan	Ginger Avila	Jazmin Tangui	JP Perry	LeAnn Torres	Melissa Varela	Quran Wright	Shaonessy Santana
Danni Aubin	Goldie Hang	Jean Febles	Julia Moreno	Leonardo Hernandez	Meredith Erion	Rassmeay Morm	Shawanna Doggett
Daqwon Poston	Grayson Hoover	Jeffrey Rosario	Julian Inciarte	Leonardo Nava	Michael Calderon	Raymond Morillo	Shirley Charles
Darlana Inlavongsa	Guadalupe Ortiz	Jeimilet Salda’na	Julienna Som	Levrys Taveras	Michael Cline	Raziel Chavez	Sidney Argueta
Darlene Dat	Hannah Candelaria	Jeleny Dele’on	Julio Alvarez	Liam Hopkins	Michael Ortega	Rene Rossi	Sidney Richardson
Darren Canonico	Hannah Lutz Winkler	Jenise Jones	Julius Inciarte	Lili Wilhite	Michael Thibodeau	Reyna Castillo	Sofia Cifuentes
Denniell Grijalva	Harold Threats	Jennifer Recinos	Kafumba Bility	Linda Bertholdt	Michala Guzman	Riara Espinal	Sokheang Heng
Diego Santana	Heather Vieira	Jennifer Sheys-River	Karen De Los Santos	Lindsay Catalain	Michell Rivera	Ricardo Silva	Sophie Candelaria
Dominique Fernandez	Hector Cabrera	Jenny Castellanos	Karina Lorenti	Lulas Urrego	Michelle Migliori	Roleelin Fenaendy	Stefano Goodinson
Edwin Leonardo	Herry Guerrero	Jereme Matos	Karol Lopez	Lynly Leanlouis	Mike Phenglee	Ronnie King	Stephanie Hernandez
Emely Barroso	Hilda Romero	Jessel Severino	Kaseem Daley	Lyssa Minn	Miles Spears	Rumaldo Urizar	Stephanie Luna
Emily Peguero	Howard Lara	Jessica Deroche	Kasey Northup	Maddie Lennox	Mindy Souvannalay	Sabina Sloman	Steven Ortiz
Emmanuel Nwadiashi	Isabel De La Cruz	Jessica Paz	Katarina Bruzzese	Maddie Siegmund	Mioneal Tillmqnast	Salinda Try	Symone Wiggins
Emmanuel Pierre	Isabel Otis	Jessika Lizardo	Kate Holden	Manuela Vadis	Monica Vadis	Sam Fritz	Taylor Heywood
Eric Medeiros	Jackeline Chacon	Jinel Brito	Katrina Clark	Maria Consuegra	Nathan Torres	Sam James	Tiffany Marro
Erik Martinez	Jackson Boerner	Joel Santos	Katrina James	Maria Diaz	Nathaniel Lilavois	Sam Stokes	Tiffany Urena
Ernesto Chacon	Jacob Rodi	Johanna Cepeda	Keenan Pinto	Maria Maidana	Naysha Peraha	Sana Kaiser	Tina Meetran
Esteban Ortiz	Jacques Achille	Jolan Thomas Smith	Kelsearose Ricard	Markus Acevedo	Neeza Velarquez	Sandra Jacques	Vidith Long
Ezoquiel Gonzalez	James Sanchez	Jonathan Gonzales	Kelvin Vilorio	Marleny Darosa	Neil Robertson	Sara Tolbert	Vina Saengdara
Felicia Smith	Jamie Northup	Jonathan Pena	Kendra Perez-Gomez	Marvick Felix	Nicholas Fieming	Sarah Leo	Yaruska Ordinola
Flaydencia Merisier	Jamila Gross	Jonathan Taveras	Kenneth Norman	Mary Khang	Nicole Brennan	Sarah Parr	Yusely Mendoza
Frances Adewusi	Janelly Dejesus	Jonilka Calcano	Kevin Gonsalves	Mathias Vialva	Norlan Olivo	Sathiarith Chau	Zach Valerio
Frances Vazquez	Janessa Frias	Joqiana Octavius	Kiana Bonita	Maxine Wright	Parrisha Louis	Saulo Castillo	Zane Silva
Genesis Saldana	Jarissa Escobedo	Jordan Wolfe	Kiara Febles	May Mona	Patrick Colannino	Sebastian Yidana	Zoe Anderson

The Nature of Youth Mentorship at New Urban Arts

In a graduate essay, Elena Belle White captures the unique relationships between artist mentors and high school students at New Urban Arts. Elena recently graduated from Harvard’s Graduate School of Education where she earned a master degree in their Arts in Education program. We’re grateful for her insight. Here are some excerpts from her paper.

Describing the studio she writes:

The space is open, light-filled and colorful. Music with a heavy beat is pulsing softly in the corner. Youth and staff enter the space, say their hellos, some give hugs. There are no doors or closed cabinets in the space – materials are open and accessible to all. Art-work covers the walls and hangs from the ceiling. Tables are pushed together and become piled high with art-making supplies. Chairs are pulled up. Now everyone is crowded around, engaged and working. The hum of collective work is evident and infectious. The youth here at New Urban Arts are in high school; most of the artist mentors are young adult emerging artists in college, graduate school or beyond, but it’s hard to tell the difference. Everyone sits at the tables together; no one seems to be in charge.

She describes the learning process at New Urban Arts:

The difference between working with youth, and for youth, is striking; mentorship at New Urban Arts is partnership. Several youth told stories about mentors who provided materials and an initial idea, then inquired about the youth’s interests and goals. Youth reported that this practice of questioning and encouraging their input helped to open space for them to be co-directors of the learning process.

“It’s all about trial and error”, one youth commented.

“You know how in a math book the answers are all in the back of the book? Well, here there’s no cheat sheet. Here, we learn things the hard way, but it’s better that way because then we know we know it.”

Concluding, Elena writes that New Urban Arts’ model has

“powerful implications” for community-based youth arts and education and can help educators and communities “honor youth voice and to reexamine the nature of youth/ adult relationships.”

Elena continues to explore her interest in youth and community empowerment through the arts and most recently worked as the interim Teen Programs Manager at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. To download her entire paper, please visit www.newurbanarts.org/blogs.html



Clockwise from the top of this page: Making buttons!; Students Janessa Frias and Ashley Escobedo work on a project for the year-end Art Party; Art Inquiry project by Tina Meetran; Artist Mentor Abel Hernandez and student Kasseem Daley work on a drawing together; Shooting “Revenge of the Mentors.” Janelly DeJesus attacks Artist Mentor Caitlin Cali !; Sketching for a mural project.



Artist mentors are like a glimpse into what we could be and I like that view very much.

Emely Barroso, student



Here at New Urban Arts my art becomes what I've always wanted it to be: experimental, fun, open, playful, shared, and most importantly, collaborative. There is no "mine" or "yours"—everything is ours.

Lane Taplin, artist mentor, 2008–2009



New Urban Arts has become my home. I feel inspired here. I am always productive in one way or another. At New Urban Arts there is ALWAYS someone I can talk to, someone is always interested in what I'm up to. It makes me feel important, significant, loved. I've never been happier than when I'm here.

Shannon Falvey, student 2008–2009



Find out how to...

Get involved with New Urban Arts. Everyone brings something unique to the community, and together all of these talents and efforts make us stronger.

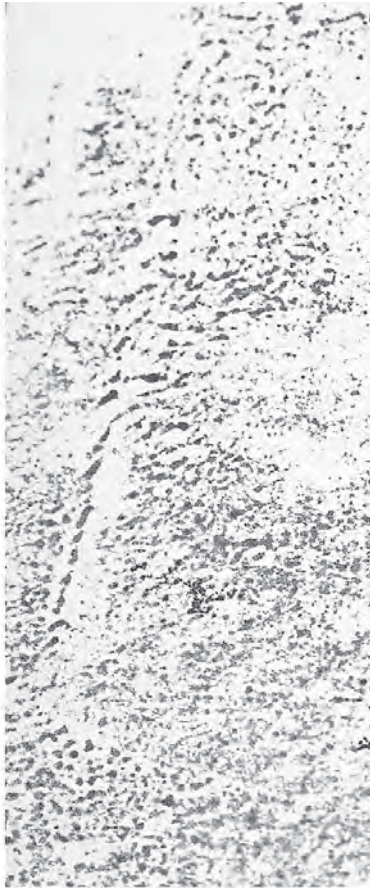
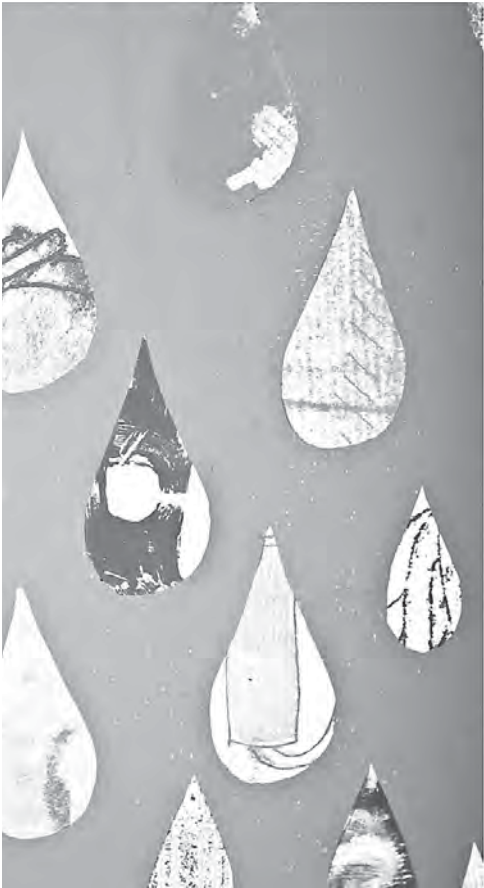
...enroll as a student anytime throughout the year.

...mentor for an entire school year, from October through May. We accept applications every September.

...volunteer for the duration of a special project, especially if you are skilled at carpentry, gallery installation or data-entry.

...become a donor of tax-deductible art materials and equipment or monetary gifts. Sponsorship opportunities are available for exhibitions, performances and our annual fashion show.

Application forms for students, artist mentors and volunteers are online at www.newurbanarts.org or at our studio at 743 Westminster Street.



Thank you, Andrew and Peter!

In the last two years, New Urban Arts Mentoring Fellows, **Andrew Oesch** and **Peter Hocking** have been vital members of our community, supporting our volunteer team of artist mentors, connecting with young people, sharing our model with new audiences, and helping us make new connections locally and nationally. They have built a strong foundation as our inaugural team of Arts Mentoring Fellows that includes: Conversations on Creative Practice: a dialogue with people in our community about bringing creativity into their daily lives; vacation week programs highlighting new media for young people to explore; and countless hours meeting and reflecting with artist mentors in our Artist Mentor Professional Development Program.

Please join us in thanking them for all of their hard work on behalf of New Urban Arts and the young people of Providence.

Cooling off New Urban Arts

Last summer, New Urban Arts was pretty cool thanks to air conditioners we bought with the help of **Michael Fournier** and many other generous donors who contributed to a special fund. It made a huge difference because our summer programs have doubled in enrollment. We asked Michael to share what motivated him to help out like this.

What first got you interested in New Urban Arts?

After moving to Rhode Island in 1996, I was interested in getting involved in a community organization as a volunteer. I had lunch with Tyler [Denmead] and he shared his passion and his vision. I appreciated where he was coming from and I said I'd be happy to be involved.

Where did the interest in fundraising for the AC fund come from?

We've been coming to the events here over the last five years even though I have not been on the board, I've been able to see what's happening, where the needs are, and stay involved. At the end of June of last year it was an extremely warm after-

noon. I just walked in to say howdy and Sarah and Jason were dripping wet from sweat, and people just looked horrible and there were fans everywhere. I said to Jason, "You can't be open like this. This organization has the capacity to do what it takes to ensure that there's proper air conditioning." At that point I said, "If you'd allow me, I'd be happy to take some leadership and run a mini-campaign," and Jason said "Sure!" I was just affected by the conditions that staff and young people had to deal with. I said to Jason "Give me a week. I'll call all board members and past board members and in a week to two weeks I'll try to raise \$ 4,000." And that's what we did.

Why do you continue to be involved with New Urban Arts?

Every time I am in the space, it continues to inspire me, the way young people seek to find their voice.

New Urban Arts depends on donors and organizers of all types. Do you want to chair or help with a special campaign or other fundraising efforts? Contact Jason Yoon at jason@newurbanarts.org

Donor Profile: Rosalia Velis

Last May, Rosalia Velis, New Urban Arts Alumna and the Studio Advisory Board Chair, came up with an innovative way to raise money for New Urban Arts. She posted this birthday wish on her Facebook page through the Causes application:

New Urban Arts has meant a lot to me over the last few years. I think it would just be the bees knees if you could donate even just a dollar to the cause. If you donate a dollar, and my other friends donate a dollar, then I have over a hundred dollars. Then again, if you donate MORE than a dollar, we're doing pretty spiffy. So think about it. And if you're familiar with New Urban Arts you KNOW it won't go to waste.

Summer Studio Coordinator, **Julia Gualtieri**, asked Rosalia to describe what motivated her:

JG: Can you describe how it worked?

RV: It was two weeks before my birthday and on Facebook, I am a member of the New Urban Arts Cause. They sent me a message that said, "this year instead of having all of your friends write on your wall, why don't you ask them to donate to your cause?"

JG: How did you promote the cause?

RV: I wrote a paragraph of why New Urban Arts is important to me and sent it to all 190 of my friends, mostly high school kids. I mentioned in the note that you don't have to donate a lot, even one dollar is awesome.

JG: What kind of response did you get?

RV: At first I didn't get any response and I was a little worried. Then a few people here and there started donating and writing that they planned to donate. By my birthday I had raised about \$75.

JG: Any advice to future donors?

RV: A lot of people worry about not giving enough. You don't have to donate \$1,000 to make a difference.

To find out more about fundraising through Facebook Causes go to: www.facebook.com/causes. Search for New Urban Arts and join our Cause!



Clockwise from top left: "People Like to Complain About the Weather," an installation by student Ava Ginsberg and Artist Mentor Julia Gualtieri; Providence Youth Open Mic; Rosalia Velis, alumna.



The Spot by Zachary Clark, Artist Mentor 2008–09

I’m Zack Clark, a first year mentor at New Urban Arts. Technically, I’m a painting mentor, but my most recent project with students is the front window installation. It doesn’t look like a painting, but paint is there, if you look closely. So, I’m legitimate in my title here.

Not knowing what to expect the first time I came to New Urban Arts, I walked into voices, paper clippings, lights covered in tissue paper, spilled glitter, ripped cardboard, and a ship half-constructed. Envelopes tacked to the walls. People sprawled on the floor. I remember not immediately being able to differentiate mentors from students, which was disorienting. But that place was happening. I wanted to belong.

But I didn’t exactly know how to navigate it. I wanted to do it right, to be a good mentor, find the right projects and say the right words. I felt I was hitting my stride after awhile. I thought, “Okay –we’re all onboard with this project. The students seem into it and I have some control and authority.” I felt what I had imagined a mentor should feel.

One day a new student came to my table: Bridgette wanted to paint. I happily provided paper and laid out the paints. “Go for it,” I said. A half-hour later, she had painted something great.

I wanted her to understand what made it such a successful piece. I raised my hands wildly to express my excitement, to demonstrate the strength of that stroke on the paper. I was all over the place in my fervor.

I don’t really know what made me forget that a brush was still in my hand. But it was covered – dripping – with red paint. In demonstrating my praise, Bridgette acquired a long crimson stripe across the sleeve of her white – very white– shirt.

During my frenzied attempt to wash out the stain at the sink, I had time to ponder important issues: who knew the line would bleed into a large pink semicircle so quickly; I wonder what New Urban Arts’s policies are regarding shirt reimbursement?

Most of all, I felt disappointed with myself. All my efforts to assert control as a mentor, and here I was babbling apologies, not knowing what to do next. I made this glaring red mistake –my incompetence staring back at me from Bridgette’s sleeve. After she left, I felt, “there goes that student.”

But Bridgette came back. She wasn’t wearing a white shirt, maybe intentionally, but there she was, at that same table the next week. Painting.

I got it then—that mistake wasn’t an indication of inadequacy. It was an equalizer. What I thought would invalidate my role made me more accessible to the individuals around me. It transformed us from mentor and student to collaborators.

Knowing all of the answers isn’t what the program is all about. All this space asks of you is to be present with one another, open to talking, learning, joking, and mistaking together. In our collective presence a community emerges, relationships are established, challenges are confronted and art is made.

I was told the spot came out.

Zach is currently doing a community-based artist residency in North Carolina and plans to return to Providence and New Urban Arts later this year. Bridgette, sans spots, has returned for her second year at New Urban Arts and served on our artist mentor selection committee. Zach gave this speech at our annual campaign fundraiser in April, 2009.

Upcoming Events

November 20: Artist Mentor Exhibition and Coming Up Taller celebration 4–7 PM at New Urban Arts

January 29: Student Mid-Year Exhibition

May 14: End of Year Art Party

Check www.newurbanarts.org for more details on our gallery events, as well as up to date additions to our event calendar.

College Corner

All seniors who have participated at New Urban Arts for at least one year are also eligible for free college preparatory support through our partnership College Visions. It is an amazing partnership, all of our seniors participating in this program gain acceptance to college, the majority of them low-income and/or first generation college students. College Visions’ Assistant Director, **Deborah Steinberg**, sat down with Operations Manager (and former Program Director), **Tamara Kaplan**, to talk about their approach to partnership.

TK: What role do you think College Visions (CV) and your partner organizations play in enhancing the long-term success of Providence high school students?

DS: The exciting thing about working with partners like New Urban Arts is that we can help translate the experiences that happen there into the college application process. Students have these really meaningful and formative experiences at places like New Urban Arts – developing a sense of curiosity and opportunity, interests and passions to explore. By the time they get to College Visions, they already know that college is important, but it’s hard to know how that connects to a college search and application.

At College Visions we get to help bridge that curiosity and passion with the nitty-gritty steps of the college process. On the one hand, the college process is filled with big ideas and questions. “What do I want to study? What do I want to be? What excites me? Who am I?” But on the other hand, the college process is filled with tons of little details and logistics. It’s copying tax forms, calling financial aid offices, addressing envelopes, meeting deadlines. You need to go back and forth between the big picture and the nitty-gritty all the time.

At their best, I think that College Visions and partner organizations like New Urban Arts are helping young people in Providence make good decisions – first for college and then hopefully throughout their lives. To think broadly, know their options, think ahead, pursue goals, follow through, and have mentors help you along the way.

To learn more about College Visions visit www.collegevisions.org

Studio Life Online

To find out what New Urban Arts is up to, including the latest opportunities to get involved and connect with the studio:

Sign up to receive our Monthly E-news:
www.newurbanarts.org

Follow us on Twitter:
twitter.com/newurbanarts

Join the conversation on our blog:
newurbanarts.blogspot.com

Find us on myspace:
www.myspace.com/_nua

Log in to find us on facebook:
www.facebook.com/newurbanarts

View the studio photo album on Flickr:
www.flickr.com/photos/newurbanarts

View how-to videos on the New Urban Arts Wiki:
<http://nuahowto.wetpaint.com/>

Download free curriculum from our thematic summer program, the Art Inquiry:
www.newurbanarts.org/blogs.html

Purchase printed publications of our Program Resource Guides, online at Lulu Press:
<http://stores.lulu.com/newurbanarts>

2009 impact report

304 students enrolled in our after-school Youth Mentorship Program this year.

Participation rates have continued to rise, with an average of **125 students actively participating** in the studio each month.

100% agreed or strongly agreed that New Urban Arts is a safe and supportive environment.

88% of students rated New Urban Arts’ programs “outstanding.”

98% of student participants agreed or strongly agreed that they have built strong, trusting relationships and developed a way of creating that expresses who they are.

20 artists and 2 tutors volunteered over 4,000 hours to mentor Providence high school students this year.

300 hours of summer programming offered paid internships in the arts for 30 youth.

12 seniors participated in College Visions, a yearlong college preparatory program, and now attend colleges around the country including: Bates College in Maine, Guilford College in North Carolina, Temple University in Pennsylvania, Clark University in Massachusetts, Eastern Connecticut State University, Brandeis University in Massachusetts and Brown University in Rhode Island.

2,200 people attended 22 events and exhibitions at New Urban Arts this year, all free and open to the public.

New Urban Arts’ **Hats On Annual Campaign Event raised over \$12,000** to support our after-school arts mentoring program.

Over \$60,000 in donations were received via the Annual Campaign.



Visit us sometime! We are located at 743 Westminster Street in the West End of Providence, Rhode Island. The best time to catch the studio vibe is weekdays from 3-5pm when students and artist mentors are here.

Visit our website at www.newurbanarts.org or call 401.751.4556 for more information.

thank you!

private foundations and public support

- National Endowment for the Arts
- The Rhode Island Foundation and The Richard and Vera Gierke Family Fund
- Rhode Island Department of Education 21st Century Community Learning Center Program
- Rhode Island State Council on the Arts
- Citizens Bank Foundation
- The Minerva Foundation
- Hasbro Children’s Fund
- Otto H. York Foundation
- The Champlin Foundations
- City of Providence, Department of Arts Culture and Tourism
- The Amgen Foundation
- Textron Charitable Trust
- Ocean State Charities Trust
- The Carter Family Charitable Trust
- Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
- The Handshake Foundation
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