We believe that all young people, no matter their place in society, should have the opportunity to become more creative and independent thinkers.

Learn more online at: newurbanarts.org
Dear Friends,

I first walked into New Urban Arts almost 12 years ago for my interview to become a volunteer in The Youth Mentorship in the Arts program—our core after school program. Now, as I write this, we’re preparing to embark upon our 22nd school year. Technically, the program doesn’t begin for a couple more weeks, but students have been here all week conducting those same interviews to select new artist mentors.

As I watch artist mentor candidates step into their interviews, with a mixture of excitement and fear on their faces, I think about my own first impressions of this place. I walked into the studio expecting to meet with Sarah, our program director at the time, but she ended up sitting me down at a table with a group of students. They immediately began asking me about myself and why I wanted to volunteer at New Urban Arts.

At the time, I was working as a policy researcher, doing work that I deeply believed in, but it was often exhausting and disillusioning. In contrast, that interview was exhilarating. The students’ clear sense of ownership and agency was like nothing I’d ever seen. I felt like I was getting some small taste of the freer world that I was supposedly working towards in my job at the time.

These days, we try to do better at letting mentor candidates know that students will be interviewing them, but otherwise, not much has changed.

Before the interviews, students begin by discussing the previous year—what went well, which art forms were popular, which areas of the studio needed more attention, and other important reflections on our programs. They then envision their ideal staffing pattern for the studio. How many mentors should we have in each discipline? What days and times should they be present? They also spend time discussing what makes a good artist mentor. There’s a lot to consider: artistic skills, teaching experience, and an ability to relate with our high school students.

After students take this time to articulate the needs of the New Urban Arts community, the selection proceeds similarly to that of a traditional hiring process. Students review artists’ applications, including resumes, cover letters, and portfolios. They decide who to bring in for interviews, which they then conduct—all with support from our program staff.

Now that I get to see the process from the other side, I’m more aware than ever of the time, labor, and resources that go into the mentor selection process, and I’m still impressed by how well it captures what’s special about New Urban Arts’ approach to education and youth development.

We believe that young people can and must have a role in shaping their own educational experiences. We believe that the role of educators is to support young people to articulate and achieve their own goals. And we believe that with this support, young people will make the right decisions.

I’m choosing this moment to reflect on the mentor selection process not only because it’s happening right now, but also because this is the first time in a few years that we’re beginning the school year without launching some big, new initiative. Three years ago, we were debuting the resident artist mentor position. Two years ago, we were finishing a major renovation and figuring out how to adapt to a much larger space. Last fall, we were launching the NUA Knights program, which you can read more about on page 6.

This fall, it feels like we have some time to think back on those moments of growth, to take stock of what’s changed, and to reaffirm what is about those values and practices that have remained the same. I’m proud to say that the role of youth in the mentor selection process is one such practice, and I know that if I walked into New Urban Arts for an interview today, I would leave with the same feeling of exhilaration that captured my spirit 12 years ago.

Sincerely,

Daniel Schleifer

“We believe that young people can and must have a role in shaping their own educational experiences. We believe that the role of educators is to support young people to articulate and achieve their own goals. And we believe that with this support, young people will make the right decisions.”
In May 2017, New Urban Arts’ 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant, our largest source of funding, was renewed at a higher level for five years. We received funding for existing programs and to create a new program at Central High School, NUA Knights. In addition to Central, we continue to partner with Classical High School and the Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts (TAPA). In July 2017, Yolbel Gonzalez began a one-year stint as our Americorps VISTA for Development, taking over for Saulo Castillo. Summer intern Luke Denton also joined us. In August 2017, we hired Tracy Jacques as the NUA Knights Site Director. In a first for New Urban Arts, her office is physically located offsite, at Central High School. We also completed the installation of a new wheelchair lift. In September 2017, we launched the NUA Knights program. (Read more on page 6.) Meanwhile, Anedy Alba took on a new role as our Youth Engagement Associate, while Dana Heng joined us as the Resident Artist Mentor in Painting and Drawing. We also started the year by launching our first Advanced Coursework Network class in music production, taught by Resident Artist Mentor in Music Tom Van Buskirk.

In May 2018, Youth Programs Manager Ashley Paniagua Cavallaro was named a 2018 New Leaders Council Fellow. The New Leaders Council is a leadership development organization helping strengthen local communities by providing its fellows with opportunities to engage and challenge current and future policy issues. In March 2018, we welcomed two more new board members: Adrienne Adevyemi and Pamela Laurens. In April 2018, we celebrated New Urban Arts’ 21st Birthday. In May 2018, after a yearlong course of study, Executive Director Daniel Schleifer graduated from the Institute for Nonprofit Practice Core Certificate Program, affiliated with Tufts University. Also in May, Malakita Thorne, one of New Urban Arts’ co-founders, came back and visited New Urban Arts for the first time in almost 20 years.

2017–18 Highlights

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We welcomed four new members to our board of directors: Jen Petrenzia, Angel Peña, Winnie Lambrecht, and Mike Tanaka, who rejoined the board after a few years away. In other board news, Mary Lee Partington became the Chair of the board, and Lois Harada was elected Vice-Chair. Finally, Director of Programs Emily Ustach was selected as a National Afterschool Matters Fellow for 2017–2019. A partnership between The National Writing Project and the National Institute on Out-of-Schooltime at Wellesley College, the fellowship brings together 25 out-of-school-time professionals from across the country to engage in reflection, inquiry and writing activities that position them to inform and contribute to the quality of programs, practice, and the broader field.

In October 2017, Charmaine Porter joined us as our AmeriCorps VISTA for NUA Knights. In November 2017, New Urban Arts was selected to participate in a three-year study conducted by The New York University Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, in conjunction with the University of Michigan and AlgoKith. The study, funded by the William T. Grant Foundation, seeks to understand how participation in afterschool organization supports young people’s critical consciousness and developmental competencies.

2017–18 People

2018–19 Events

Mentor Show
Friday, November 9, 5–7pm
Cardboard Pancakes Holiday Art Sale
Saturday, December 8, 10am–5pm
Mid-Year Makings Student Art Show
Friday, January 5, 5–7pm
Not College Fair
Friday, March 29, 3–5pm
Annual Event and NUA Birthday Bash
Friday, April 12, 7–10pm
Art Party Year End Art-Show
Friday, May 17, 5–7pm

Events

Enroll as a student anytime throughout the year.
Mentor for an entire school year, from October through May. We accept applications every August.
Application forms for students and artist mentors are online at newurbanarts.org or at our studio at 705 Westminster Street.
Become a donor of tax-deductible art materials, equipment, or monetary gifts.
Donate through PayPal online at: bit.ly/NUA-Give
Review our art supply wishlist at: bit.ly/nua-wishlist
Become a sponsor for exhibitions, performances, and our annual silent auction. Please contact Sophia at sophia@newurbanarts.org for more information on sponsoring New Urban Arts.

Ways to get involved
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Programs

All Programs are free and open to high school students.

The Youth Mentorships in the Arts Program, our core program, partners artist-mentors with small groups of low-income high school students who develop powerful mentoring relationships through free yearlong after-school programs. Mentors foster self-discovery through community building and creative arts projects designed collaboratively with youth. Students also access the following services:

- Studio Study Buddies are academic tutors who provide homework help and test preparation.
- The Gallery and Performance Program includes three annual exhibitions of student artwork.
- The Studio Advocate is a Rhode Island College School of Social Work MSW candidate placed at New Urban Arts as a resource to students.
- Vacation Week Workshops take place during the week-long April school break and are facilitated by our Resident Artist Mentors.
- A Life After School (ALAS) is our post-secondary advising program, including our summer College Explorations program.
- The Studio Team Advisory Board (STAB), akin to a student government, is a leadership development program serving about 15 students each year. Their duties include advising staff and board, representing the organization publicly, orienting new students, selecting artist mentors, and organizing events.

- The Summer Art Internships are a suite of summer enrichment programs that are designed to be accessible to low-income high school students. Students are offered a $400 stipend upon successful completion of the program, which combines best practices in art education, youth development, and summer learning. The two consistent offerings are: The Summer Art Inquiry, a thematic arts program in which students collectively explore a common theme through research, art-making, creative writing, personal inquiry, and art making; and The Untitlement Project, a program in which 10 high school students interrogate relationships, selfhood, identity, stereotypes, gender, and body image through creative writing, conversation, and art making.

- The NUA Knights Program is a comprehensive after-school and summer program located in Central High School. NUA Knights strives to create a greater sense of community and personalization for Central students by offering a variety of programs, many of which are run by Central staff and faculty.

- The Advanced Coursework Network (ACN), is an opportunity for students to earn high school credit for work completed in courses approved by the RI Department of Education. At New Urban Arts, we have offered ACN classes in Music Production and Portfolio Development.

New Urban Arts' free, year-round out-of-school programs promote and trained artist mentors who, together, engage in youth leadership,

Vision and Mission

We believe that all young people, no matter their place in society, should have the opportunity to become more creative and independent thinkers.

As a nationally recognized community arts studio, 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.

Recognition

New Urban Arts has received both local and national recognition for our innovative approach to arts education. In our 20 years, we’ve served over 3,500 high school students and 200 artists, received recognition from the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities through a Coming Up Taller Award (the nation’s highest honor for out-of-school arts programs), and moved 100 feet from our previous home to a newly renovated studio at 705 Westminster Street.

“At first I didn’t [like working with an artist mentor] because I was too nervous to talk to new people, but once you warm up to the new mentors, it’s really easy to talk to them.”

— Student Anna L.

Visit us sometime!

We are located at 705 Westminster Street in the West End of Providence, Rhode Island. Visit our website at www.newurbanarts.org or call 401-751-4556 to set up a visit!
sustained mentoring relationships between high school students collaborative artmaking, and self-directed learning.

“NUA to me means a community of people who all have their own struggles, but can feel comfortable in a place where there are no obligations, and far less stressors.”
—Student Raul B.
Spotlight on NUA Knights—A New After School Program at Central High School

As mentioned in our 2017–18 highlights, New Urban Arts recently received funding to launch a new comprehensive afterschool program at Central High School, working in close collaboration with Central’s administration and staff. The new program, NUA Knights, was an immediate hit with teachers and students, who flocked to the NUA Knights office—a permanent New Urban Arts presence at Central—from the first day of school.

Over the course of the school year, we offered 47 different programs to Central students, and 678 students, over half of Central’s student body, participated. The various programs were run by 28 Central High School staff members, 16 community organizations, and three community members.

One of NUA Knights’ most popular offerings was the Newcomers and Culture Club led by Hermina Collado, an English language learner (ELL) teacher at Central, where 38% of students are ELL. Ms. Collado recognized that students who have recently immigrated to the United States sometimes struggle to acclimate to school and to Providence. She knew that these students needed a space to come together and experience their new environment as a group.

Ms. Collado’s students represent Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East. In addition to being a space where they can share their struggles with peers in similar situations, the Newcomers and Culture Club has become a way for them to access other NUA Knights programs. In March, they participated in Central’s Multicultural Fest Open Mic Night, performing a dance that they choreographed themselves. In April, they went on a number of trips, starting with a bus ride to the RISD Museum. During vacation week, they hiked four miles through Purgatory Chasm and toured the Mystic Aquarium. In June, the seniors in the club graduated, and NUA Knights was there to see them off.

As of this writing, the NUA Knights team is launching its 2018–19 programs. We know from our year-end survey that 67% of students plan to participate in NUA Knights once again, and we look forward to expanding Central’s after school programs to serve them even better!

Impact Report:

Youth Mentorship in the Arts:

95% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they have built strong, trusting relationships with peers and adults.

100% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they feel safe and supported at New Urban Arts.

35 students participated in our A Life After School (ALAS) program. 26 of them were seniors, and 9 underclassmen. ALAS also supported 17 alumni students.

NUA Knights:

100% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they feel safe at NUA Knights.

About the Youth We Serve:

Between the two program sites, New Urban Arts served a total of 1,322 unduplicated students.

Youth Mentorship in the Arts

- 33% Hispanic/Latinx
- 26% African American/Black
- 19% Multiracial/Multiethnic
- 15% Caucasian/White
- 7% Asian American
- 81% qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch. *
- 34% identified as LGBTQ

NUA Knights

- 70% Hispanic/Latinx
- 19% African American/Black
- 7% Asian American
- 5% Multiracial/Multiethnic
- 100% qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch. *

* For a household of four with two children in Providence, this means an annual income of $43,700 or less.

2017–18 Financials

Salaries $400K

NUA Knights $120K

Operations & Salaries $110K

Benefits, Payroll Tax $86K

Program Expenses $65K

EXPENSES $850,267

Other Income

Fiscal Agent: Pushed Learning and Media $44K

Contract Services $15K

Development $19K

Unrealized Gain/Loss on Endowment $2K

INCOME $971,052

Other Income

Fiscal Agent: Pushed Learning and Media $44K

Capital Campaign $24K
**New Urban Arts means a lot to me as a young queer artist. It’s such an accessible and open place and I’m really grateful to have it, considering I never had this sort of resource in other places I have lived.”**

— Student Jesse P.

**“I can be with friends and not have to hide who I am.”**

— Student Renee G.

**“It is difficult to be progressive without aggression, NUA does that. NUA provides opportunities.”**

— Student Tania D.

**“New Urban Arts means a lot to me as a young queer artist. It’s such an accessible and open place and I’m really grateful to have it, considering I never had this sort of resource in other places I have lived.”**

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