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CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

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Partnering to bring art supplies to students

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NEW URBAN ARTS, a nationally recognized community arts studio for high school students and artists in Providence, has launched an initiative to safely distribute art supplies to students during the COVID-19 pandemic through a partnership with **Jerry's Artarama** and **Dash Bicycle**, which offers a Dash Delivery service, both in Providence.

Students can choose from one of three kits: drawing, mixed media, or watercolor painting. The creativity kits allow artist mentors from the nonprofit's program team to work remotely with students on creative projects they can complete at home. The kits are being packaged by Jerry's Artarama and will be delivered via Dash Bicycle. Donations to the initiative can be made at: bit.ly/3aXMYwc.

"The impacts of this pandemic will be deeply felt by our students, the vast majority of whom come from low-income families," said Daniel Schleifer, New Urban Arts executive director. "Their parents are more likely to be laid off, or to work jobs that can't be done remotely, putting

their families at greater risk for infection. They will be the hardest hit by the loss of education and other supports provided by school and after-school programs, such as food, transportation and social services. When they come back, they are likely to be eager to take advantage of every opportunity we can offer."

New Urban Arts has been expanding since its inception in 1997, affording students a chance to explore their artistic inclinations. The nonprofit boasts a 2,000-plus-square-foot facility in Providence offering a variety of programs that are free and taught by artist mentors, including photography, painting, silk screening and digital media.

The organization's mission is to



ART SUPPLIERS: New Urban Arts staff members converse at their studio in Providence. From left are Kevin Harper, operations coordinator; Daniel Schleifer, executive director; Addy Scheutz, resident arts mentor; Charmaine Porter, development associate; and Jeannie Castillo Lapierre, business manager.

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build a community that empowers young people as artists and leaders to develop a creative practice they can sustain throughout their lives. Founded by four college students and

10 high school students, the nonprofit has evolved from its humble beginnings of 10 students to a projected total of about 800 in 2020, fostering partnerships along the way. ■