2021 Annual Campaign


Current Staff, Board, Committee, or Volunteer Mentor
Former Student, Mentor, Staff, or Board
Monthly Sustaining Donor

Monetary Sustaining Donor

According to the amount of support and the number of contributors, a monetary sustainer may receive an invitation to an annual event, as well as special recognition in the annual report.

ANNNUAL PUBLICATION 2021 · ISSUE No. 16


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Dear Friends,

"See you in the studio!" For years, these five words were an unofficial slogan of New Urban Arts. Deceptively simple, they capture so much about the energy of our space. Of course New Urban Arts is an art studio, but it’s also a unique social space, one that’s vivaciously spontaneous and reliable, you can show up at any time, and no matter when you do, you’re guaranteed to see a friend.

Last year we were forced to contend with the question, "What is New Urban Arts without a studio where you see people?" Our 2020 summer programs, which were almost entirely virtual, had record enrollment and high attendance. As a result, we went into the 2021-2022 school year optimistic about the year ahead. Our studio team worked tirelessly to meet students in every possible virtual venue, using both drop-in and scheduled programming, always with home delivery of art supplies so that virtual programs had a hands-on component. However, despite these efforts, youth engagement was the lowest it had been in years.

Unable to engage as many young people as usual, we made the decision in attendance during the 2021-22 school year — a reflection of the devastating impacts of COVID-19 on students' lives. Remote learning was rife with problems including facility technology, low participation rates, and lack of human connection. Students experienced severe screen fatigue after spending school days online, they were far less interested in virtual programming.

Youth also had increased responsibilities at home that kept them from participating in after-school programs. They took on additional childcare and household chores while parents worked. School students, often the tech-savviest members of their households, sacrificed their own educational time to support younger siblings with virtual learning. Many also had to help family members navigating life under COVID, including the healthcare and unemployment systems.

Unable to engage as many young people as usual, we made other efforts to reach them on a scale more comparable to a typical year of New Urban Arts’ programming. Most notably, we distributed art supplies to about 1,500 students in and around Providence. You can read more about this initiative on page 7 of this newsletter.

So, what is New Urban Arts without a studio where you see people? Honestly, it still doesn’t really matter if there’s a good answer to this question, but I’m proud of all the hard work that our team did to find one. At the same time, we’re relieved that our team did to find one. At the same time, I’m relieved myself in awe of what young people and committed arts educators can achieve together.

In August and September, students and parents started getting in-person school days online, they were far less interested in virtual programs. They took on additional childcare and household chores while parents worked. High school students, often the tech-savviest members of their households, sacrificed their own educational time to support younger siblings with virtual learning. Many also had to help family members navigating life under COVID, including the healthcare and unemployment systems.

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SUMMER 2021
New Urban Arts embarked on a project to reflect on our mission and values as we approach our 25th anniversary. We are thrilled to partner with MJ Robinson as we reflect on our past impact and look to clarify our role for the next 25 years.

When our studio programs were completely virtual, NUA Knights, our satellite program at Central High School, offered a mix of virtual and in-person programs. Our afterschool educators at NUA Knights were at Central staff and faculty and programs took place within the school. As a result, we were able to offer in-person programs to students as an extension of the Providence Public School District’s Instructional model.

As you may know, PPS Middle and high schools used a hybrid model last year, each school divided students into two cohorts that alternated in-person and virtual school days, so school operated at half capacity. 1 person in programs at Central meant that we were able to engage more students through NUA Knights than in the studio, but attendance still lagged behind previous years.

New Urban Arts wasn’t alone in the challenges we encountered; afterschool programs across the country saw sharp declines in attendance during the 2020-21 school year — a reflection of the devastating impacts of COVID-19 on students’ lives. Remote learning was rife with problems including facility technology, low participation rates, and lack of human connection. Students experienced severe screen fatigue after spending school days online, they were far less interested in virtual programs.

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Summarized, a three-part Future Cafe Copi drawing by student Antigpia and artist mentor Zoe and Labix.

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So, what is New Urban Arts without a studio where you see people? Honestly, I still don’t really know if there’s a good answer to this question, but I’m proud of all the hard work that our teams did to find one. At the same time, I’m relieved and delighted to say that, in July of 2021, in-person programs resumed at the studio, just in time for summer programs. In August and September, students and parents started getting in touch to ask about after-school programs. I can’t remember a year when we’ve received so many inquiries before the school year even began. While we’re still operating at a reduced capacity (see next page), it’s been such a relief to be able to ring the bell; we’re open again!

Finally, I’d like to share some reflections from the studio. As you may know, since 2014, New Urban Arts has built a cadre of teaching artists – resident artist mentors (RAMs) – while seeking to reduce our reliance on volunteers. We made this investment for a number of reasons, including a commitment to equity and a desire to invest in the professional development of a stable group of teaching artists. We expected this to make a major impact on the quality of our programs. However, we couldn’t have predicted that a pandemic was coming that would make volunteer engagement almost impossible. Without RAMs, it’s hard to imagine how the studio could have offered any kind of meaningful programs during the height of the pandemic, virtual or otherwise. We are grateful to all of New Urban Arts’ supporters that understand the value of RAMs and have generously supported the program.

As this writing, we are still waiting to bring volunteer artist mentors back into the studio, so that we can maximize the access available to students. In the absence of volunteers, all of our administrative staff have been spending at least one day a week in the studio to add some extra capacity to our program teams. As a result, I’ve had the opportunity, for the first time in many years, to work directly with students and experience firsthand the power of New Urban Arts. As always, I find myself in awe of what young people and committed arts educators can achieve together.

Sincerely,

Dan Schloen, December 2021

MILESTONES

NEW URBAN ARTS 2020-21

JULY 2020 Alan and Pamela Fornes joined the team to assist with our summer art programs, and former mentor and studio advocate Shelly Nyman joined us to run a weekly drop-in discussion group.

SEPTEMBER 2020 Alan and former mentors Johannes Cabrera joined us as our Youth Programs Director: Debra Sedelmaier joined our Resident Artist Mentor in Literary Arts after former Literary Arts RAM Abdiy Sahoja transitioned to a new role as our A Life After School Program Coordinator.

OCTOBER 2020 New Urban Arts, along with our community partner organizations in the Providence Youth Arts Collaborative (PYAC), hosted focus groups on the future of arts teaching and learning in Providence as part of the City of Providence’s planning process for the new Creative Providence Cultural Plan.

A group of volunteers, headed Resident Artist Mentor, Dana Hong, launched ReFili-PVD, a free food refrigerator for community members facing food insecurity. ReFili-PVD was hosted by New Urban Arts until September 2021, when it moved to a new location up the street at Urban Green Co-op Market.

DECEMBER 2020 New Urban Arts embarked on a project to reflect on our mission and values as we approach our 20th anniversary. We are thrilled to partner with MJ Robinson as we reflect on our past impact and look to clarify our role for the next 20 years.

SUMMER 2021 New Urban Arts embarked on a project to reflect on our mission and values as we approach our 20th anniversary. We are thrilled to partner with MJ Robinson as we reflect on our past impact and look to clarify our role for the next 20 years.

2020-21

FUNDING

The atmosphere felt the same. The New Urban Arts mantra was still alive and well, even in the digital space.”  —2021 Student Survey

Take Care of Ourselves

Take Care of Each Other

Take Care of the Studio

PAGE 3

NEW URBAN ARTS ANNUAL PUBLICATION 2021 • ISSUE No. 14

INCOME $877,991

EXPENSES $825,332

Program & Artistic expenses $344,080

Administration & Development expenses $146,340

Other Income $0

Other Expenses $23,229

Development expenses $9,363

Facility Expenses $1,393

Contract Services $97,976

Other Income $0

Miscellaneous Income $6,981

Other Expenses $0

Revenue $877,991

NOTE: These operating results are unaudited and will likely be adjusted during the audit process. These results do not include income or expenses from Fiscal sponsorships or our capital campaign. (Unaudited)
Between our two program sites, our studio at 705 Westminster Street and the NUA Knights program at Central High School, we served 309 students.

NUA Knights | 237 students

- 48% Latinx
- 20% African American
- 19% Multiracial
- 4% White
- 6% Asian American
- 3% Other

The Studio at 705 Westminster | 72 students

- 45% Latinx
- 19% African American
- 13% Multiracial
- 14% White
- 9% Other

40 Students
15 seniors, 10 underclassmen, and 15 alumni participated in the A Life After School (ALAS) program during the year.

The Year Ahead

New Urban Arts resumed in-person programs in our studio at 705 Westminster in July of 2021. At the same time, we increased our capacity at Central High School, where, as mentioned, we never fully closed in-person programs. In total, we served about 40 summer students across both programs. In October 2021, we resumed in-person afterschool programs at the studio and relaunched NUA Knights as a fully in-person program. However, at the studio, we are still operating at a reduced capacity. As the year goes on, we will continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic, and we hope to return to our open door, drop-in model as soon as it is safely possible.

For the time being, all public programming will remain virtual so that we can prioritize students’ access to our studio. Meanwhile, New Urban Arts is excitedly preparing for our 25th Anniversary. Stay tuned for events and programming, to be announced in early 2022!
During the 2020-21 program year, New Urban Arts’ studio programs were virtual, supplemented by home delivery of art supplies. The NUA Knights program at Central High School offered a mixture of virtual and in-person programming.

The Studio at 705 Westminster
Youth Mentors in the Arts is our core program, partnering artist mentors with small groups of high school students who develop powerful mentoring relationships through free-yearlong after-school programs. Mentors foster self-discovery, community-building, and creative arts projects designed collaboratively with youth. Typically, students have three opportunities during the year to display their artwork, designed collaboratively with youth. Typically, students have these opportunities during the year to display their artwork, but gallery events were canceled last year.

The Studio Team Advisory Board (STAB) is our leadership development program. STAB’s duties include advising staff and board, orienting new students, selecting staff and volunteers, and organizing events.

A Life After School (ALAS) is a postsecondary advising program, including our summer College Explorations program. ALAS also supports students not planning to attend college in developing postsecondary plans.

The Summer Art Internships are a suite of summer enrichment programs 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. During the summer of 2020, our summer art internships were the Summer Art Inquiry, a thematic arts enrichment program for seniors. During April break, we launched a Physics Boot Camp, which was a four-day, hands-on, credit recovery program for seniors. During April break, NUA Knights partnered with the Providence Stormwater Innovation Center and the RI Audubon Society to teach students about the impacts of stormwater runoff on local communities and waterways. Participating students then painted murals to raise awareness. One mural is around the storm drain at Central High School and another is a temporary mural in Roger Williams Park.

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Looking to the year ahead, are you planning on keeping some of the tools you created for virtual programs or do you think you will go back to your pre-virtual-engagement strategies?

A. Most likely a combination of the two. My goal is to offer both virtual and in-person options for individual meetings and workshops. I hope to assume things are not going to get right back to normal and students will continue to need a variety of ways to engage. Certain other tools that we implemented last year have proven useful, like the digital newsletter related to college and career opportunities and structured workshops on easy writing or resume building, which had a comparatively high turnout for virtual programs.

Any personal insights or successes from last year you were particularly excited about?

A. It was nice to find new students as they submitted their college applications and received their decisions. Many students requested that I be with them on the computer when they opened their college letters, and I supported them if they didn’t get in and celebrated with them if they did. I got to be part of so many of these important and joyful moments.

And then there’s the successes we’ve always always enjoyed: three of our students received the Carter Roger Williams scholarship, which is Rhode Island’s biggest scholarship and funds up to $10,000 a year for all four years of college, and only five people are awarded that scholarship every year. For all of those students, this scholarship made the difference in whether or not they were able to attend their top choice college.

Lastly, we started this great partnership with Creating the Future, an organization that works to increase the diversity of artists in creative fields. They partner with youth organizations around the country to provide scholarships to Black, Indigenous youth, and youth of color to attend renowned arts schools and programs around the country. We’re really excited about this program because we want to encourage and make it possible for students who are interested to pursue careers in the arts, which is a difficult field for any young person to enter, and which Black and Indigenous students or students of color have even more obstacles trying to break into. Working with Creating the Future means that New Urban Arts is guaranteed four of these scholarships to give out to graduating students, which is pretty exciting.

Another event that was impactful was the Non-College Early College, which is to be a two-hour event where we invite representatives from non-college based post-secondary programs into the studio so they could talk about different career paths. Obviously, that wasn’t possible last year, so I turned it into a month long event called Career Exploration Month. It was a series of programs focusing on career exploration and paths that may or may not involve college, and we got fantastic engagement from students.

Since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic, New Urban Arts has made it a priority to get art supplies into the hands of students. In the spring of 2020 we partnered with Jerry’s Art U-Rbane and Dariel Victory Delivery to arrange for contactless delivery of around 250 art kits to Providence high school students. In the fall, Providence Public Schools reopened with a hybrid model for middle and high schools; each school donated students into two cohorts that alternated in-person and virtual school days, so schools could operate at half capacity. Teachers were in school every day, teaching simultaneously in-person and online.

In December, we began hearing from Providence art teachers about the challenges of teaching in these conditions. In person, our schools are short on art supplies, and teachers were concerned about whether it was safe to share equipment and materials. Furthermore, on any given day, half of a school’s students were attending virtually, limited to whatever art supplies they had at home. So, in January 2021, we worked with art teachers to distribute supplies to young people across the district. We pooled art teachers’ figures out which supplies were most needed, placed a large wholesale order, and packed them into kits, which we distributed to teachers to give to students. We were able to get kits to over 1,100 students—every Providence high school student that was enrolled in an art class, including those in the Virtual Learning Academy. Kits included graphite and color pencils, oil pastels, water color only, pencil sharpeners, erasers, erasers, and glue sticks. Students also received information on New Urban Arts, so they could learn how to get involved with our programs.

Our board of directors was instrumental in this effort, showing up over a weekend to pack kits and prepare them for distribution to teachers. Board member Aarav Sundaresh, who teaches art at Classical High School, was particularly important, serving as a liaison to PPSD art teachers. Between these two initiatives and the art supplies we distributed to students participating in our virtual programs, we delivered roughly 2,000 kits of art supplies to students in Providence and surrounding communities.

You can hear more about this program in a piece on the Public’s Radio at bit.ly/prn-nua

Get Involved

Email us as a Student: anyone throughout the year by visiting our website to complete an online enrollment form: newurbanarts.org/enroll

Become a Donor:tax-deductible art materials, equipment, or monetary gifts. To contribute to this important mission, please email donation@newurbanarts.org

Donate through PIpal at: bit.ly/nue很有

Follow us: Keep track of all the latest developments by following us on social media at: @newurbanarts

Share New Urban Arts with friends who will connect with our mission.

Our Mission

Our mission is to build a 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 art education. In our 24 years, we’ve served over 6,000 high school students and received national recognition from various institutions, including the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities through a Cumming Up Taller Award (the nation’s highest honor for after-school arts programs).
Another event that was impacted was the Not-College Fair, New Urban Arts moved many of our programs to virtual. It definitely impacted our program, but with ALAS it didn’t reduce student engagement. There are things about the virtual space that enabled ALAS to strengthen our support—representatives from non-college based post-secondary programs into the studio so they could talk about different schools and wouldn’t have the energy to do two more hours of virtual art programs with other students, but they still have a need to talk to someone and receive direct support. The flexibility of virtual appointments allowed me to provide that for them.

Another event that was impacted was the Not-College Fair, which was a half-hour event where we’d encourage representative from non-college based post-secondary programs into the studio so they could talk about different career paths. Obviously, that wasn’t possible last year, so I turned it into a month-long event called Career Exploration Month. It was a series of programs focused on career exploration and paths that may not involve college, and we got fantastic engagement from students.

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Lastly, we started this great partnership with the Culture, an organization that works to increase the diversity of artists in craft fields. They partner with youth organizations around the country to provide scholarships to Black youth, Indigenous youth, and other youth of color to attend renowned craft schools and programs around the country. We’re really excited about this program because we want to make it possible for students who are interested to pursue careers in the arts, which is a difficult field for any young person to enter, and which Black or Indigenous students or students of color face even more obstacles trying to break into. Working with the Culture, it means New Urban Arts is guaranteed four of those scholarships to give out to graduating students, which is pretty exciting.

Art Supplies in the Hands of the Youth

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Share New Urban Arts with friends who will connect with our mission.

New Urban Arts is like a fun little community of friends who all have a shared interest; it’s amazing.”

“1,500 Art Kits were delivered to students’ homes in Providence and surrounding communities. Operations Coordinator and Resident Artist Mentor in Fashion, Kevin Harper, helps pack art kits.

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