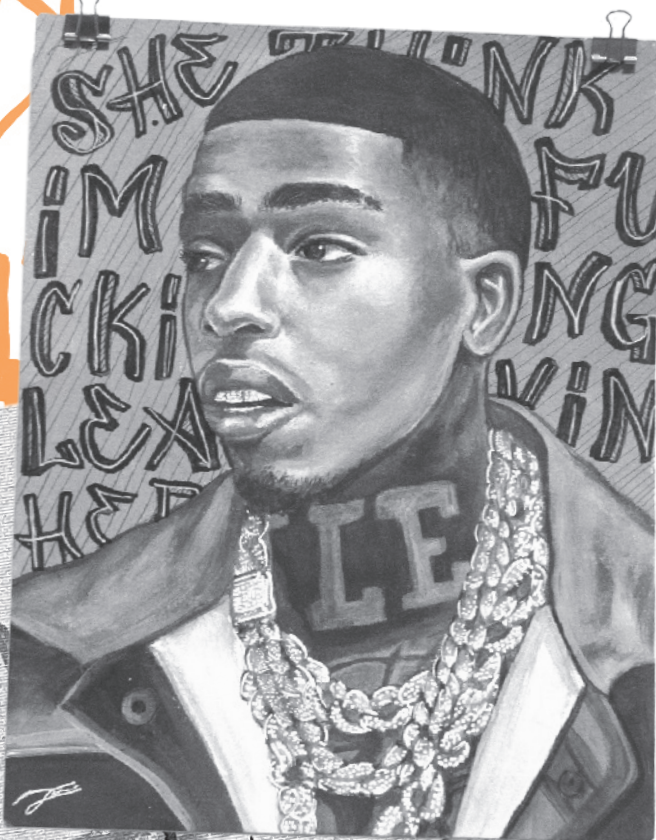


**NEW URBAN ARTS**  
705 Westminster Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
USA



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# NEW URBAN ARTS



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TOP to BOTTOM: background pattern by  
**Bellie K.**; portrait by **Jordan S.**; mixed media  
canvas by **Isa B.**; cartoon by NUA alum and  
Volunteer Mentor **Emely Barroso**; line drawing  
of camera by **Henry W.**

New Urban Arts is a welcoming community of high school students and adult mentors in Providence sharing space, skills, and resources to inspire creative expression.

“New Urban Arts is a creative home.”  
— NUA Student



NEW  
URBAIN  
ARTS



It's another XL edition of the "annual" newsletter!

Typically, this publication covers the period from July through June, equivalent to one session of summer programs plus the ensuing school year (which also constitutes New Urban Arts' fiscal year). Two years ago, we celebrated NUA's 25th anniversary for all of 2022 and extended the newsletter to cover that time, ending on December 31, 2022. Rather than put out a baby newsletter last summer, we waited another fiscal year to bring you this second extra long newsletter, covering January 1st, 2023 through June 30, 2024. Enjoy!



TOP TO BOTTOM: electrical box painted by NUA students outside Classical High School; **Michael L.** performing an original song; **Flor B.** holding a screenprint; community member checking out a zine at the opening of "Sharing is Embarrassing"; "Sexy Patrick" painting by **TJ P.**

# Hello NUA Community!

The first time I had the opportunity to tour the studio on Westminster Street, I was reminded of a formative experience at the Recycle Shop at the Boston Children’s Museum. It was just a room was filled with 55-gallon fiber drums overflowing with black plastic cylindrical containers with snappy gray lids, flat green squares that looked like miniature cities with tiny buildings, roads, and turbines, tins that revealed little metal wagon wheels, cones of thread, and rolls of paper, ribbon, plastic, and vinyl. I had a paper bag and the freedom to choose what to take home. I was probably six and didn’t know what these things were called or their usual purpose. What I did know was that these things were real. They came from the adult world—maybe even a factory—and I got to decide how to use it next. This was my first experience reimagining something’s possibilities and feeling empowered to choose. It was the first time I had explicit permission to create something without rules.

Years later, I had access to tools, equipment, and the space to produce shows and events. Without really knowing how it worked, my friends and I called bands we liked and invited them to perform under our DIY coffee can lights. And they said yes, even the ones who were real! When they showed up, they thanked us and asked for more vocals in the monitors because—incredibly—they thought we were real. Later, we created a spoken word show and thought we’d see what going on tour is like. We called real venues and booked real shows. When we arrived, they thanked us and asked if we needed more vocals in the monitors before we performed for real audiences.

I’ve seen what’s possible when someone says, “I don’t know how to do that either, but I bet we can. What will you need? How can I help?” I’ve been lucky to learn in community and work out what went wrong while wrapping cables or cutting apart the cardboard that never managed to stand up like you envisioned. I’ve wandered through the real-life Recycle Shop of attempts, failures, and unexpected outcomes and imagined how to use them next time. My experiences, from repurposing film canisters and motherboards to setting up lights for personal heroes, have given me an unshakable devotion to the power of trust.

So many spaces intended for young people operate without trust and curiosity at their core. Youth are treated like they’re not real yet, don’t deserve real things, and can’t make real things happen. The rare space that trusts and empowers young people’s vision and creative potential is how we—and everything we can imagine together—become real.

These values are clear at New Urban Arts, and I am honored and humbled to join this community as Executive Director. I am excited to work with and learn from NUA’s exceptional team, whose care and excitement are evident in everything they do. Finally, witnessing the community’s love and gratitude for Dan and his leadership has been inspiring. His impact is unmistakable, and I am grateful to join a community that has been thoughtfully stewarded and so well loved. I’m committed to continuing NUA’s legacy of empowering young people, building trustworthy relationships with peers and mentors, stewarding community care, and leading with curiosity.

In the spirit of curiosity, I want to know more about you! Please introduce yourself and tell me what drew you to New Urban Arts. I look forward to discovering what we will build together.

In creativity and community,



**Jannelle Codianni**  
August 2024



## Save the Date!

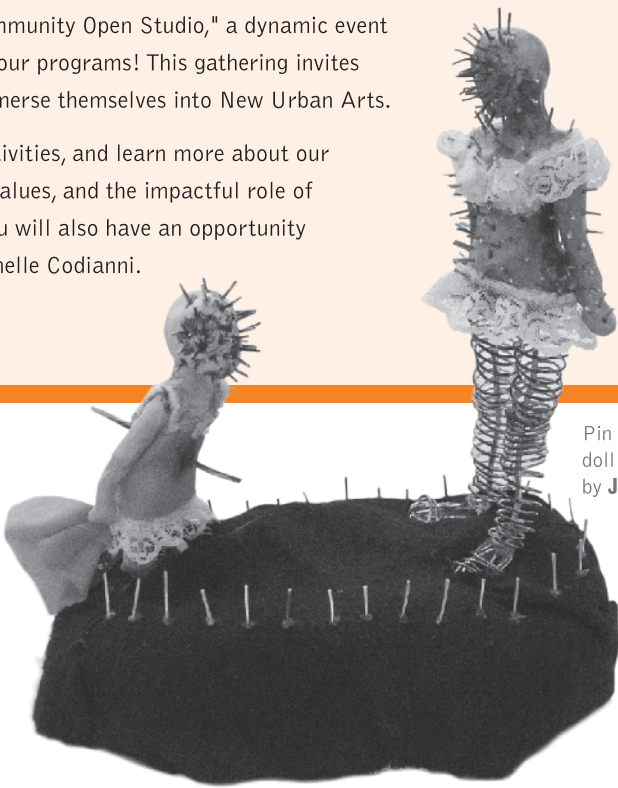
**Community Open Studio Kick-Off**  
**September 13, 2024 | 4-7PM**

Join New Urban Arts this September for "Community Open Studio," a dynamic event marking the start of the new school year and our programs! This gathering invites our community to celebrate creativity and immerse themselves into New Urban Arts.

Explore our space, engage in hands-on art activities, and learn more about our programs. This event introduces our mission, values, and the impactful role of art education and community engagement. You will also have an opportunity to hear from our new Executive Director, Jannelle Codianni.

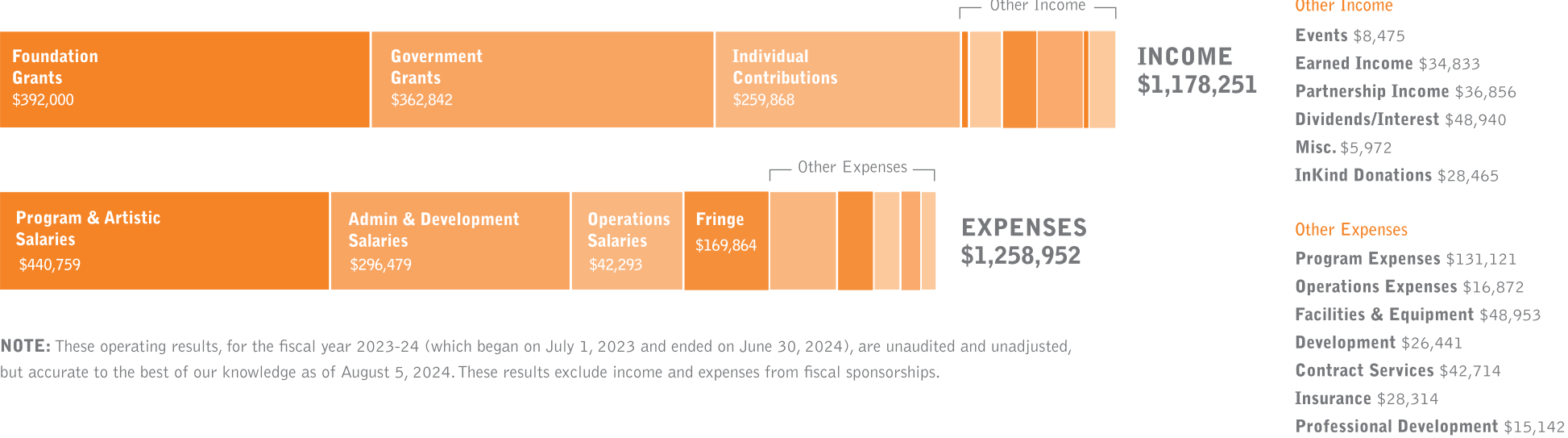
## Recognition

New Urban Arts has received both local and national recognition for our innovative approach to arts education. In our **27 years**, we’ve served over **7,000 high school students** and received national recognition from various institutions, including the president’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities through a Coming Up Taller Award (the nation’s highest honor for out-of-school arts programs).



Pin cushion  
doll sculpture  
by **Jordan S.**

## 2023-24 Financials



# 2023-24 Milestones

**JANUARY 2023** NUA and the MET partner to launch our newest collaborative program, **the MET Art Academy**, led by Resident Artist Mentor and alum, Sherly Torres and former Volunteer Artist Mentor Jori Ketten (and later, by Alexis Gordon). Read more about the program in an interview with Sherly and Alexis on page 8.

**MARCH 2023** **The Not College Fair** returns, newer and bigger, for the first time since the pandemic. Read more on page 9.

**APRIL 2023** ALAS Coordinator Addy Schuetz left NUA to teach, develop their creative practice, and organize around political and popular education.



**Teresa steps in!**  
**NUA's new ALAS Coordinator, Teresa Conchas, holds a BA from Brown University and has worked with youth at both Movement Education Outdoors and Sophia Academy.**

**MAY 2023** We celebrated the end of the year with **Crispy Water, a student exhibition** at the studio named after our famously refreshing water fountain, and **One Knight of Runway**, a fashion show at Central High School organized by NUA Knights.

Our students at the **MET Art Academy** also debuted their work in the studio before moving it to a show at Rochambeau Community Library on Hope Street.

Finally, **NUA Knights' esports teams** won championships in Rhode Island's Interscholastic League in both Rocket League and League of Legends—two more trophies for Central's mantle.

**JUNE 2023** Former student, volunteer, and Youth Programs Assistant, Jobanny Cabrera left NUA to pursue community service, music production, and design in New York, eventually enrolling in and completing Google's "D and AD Shift" program. Read a full interview with Jobanny about his experience on our website: [bit.ly/Jobanny](https://bit.ly/Jobanny)



**Welcome Roanny!**  
**NUA Knights new Program Coordinator, Roanny Rodriguez, hails from RI and has spent her life working with youth. She holds a BA from URI and a Master's in Youth Development from RIC.**

**JULY 2023** In addition to our regular summer programs, we were able to send BIPOC students and alumni to three different summer art programs through our partnership with **Crafting the Future**. Two NUA alumni attended a two-week residency at **Penland School for Craft** in North Carolina on full scholarship; four NUA students, accompanied by then Studio Director Joselina Fay, traveled to the **Appalachian Center for Craft** in Tennessee where they spent a week studying glass, wood, jewelry and textiles; and eight NUA alumni participated in an intensive jewelry and metal-working course locally at the **Steel Yard**.

**AUGUST 2023** Big changes on staff last summer: we said "see you soon" to Studio Director Joselina Fay and Music RAM Andrés Bonilla, and the program team said goodbye to Kevin Harper, who switched positions from being the Fashion & Sewing RAM to being our Operations Coordinator. Jeannie Castillo-Lapierre, our Business Manager, became our new Studio Director, and Dana Heng moved from being a part-time Drawing & Painting RAM to a full time MAM (Manager of Artist Mentors), helping Jeannie manage studio programs and organizing our volunteer mentors.

We welcomed Jessica Kion and Filipa Estrela as our new Music RAM and Fashion & Sewing RAM respectively. Jessica graduated from Berklee School of Music and has toured for 11 years with Bent Knee before going on to pursue her solo project, Justice Cow. Filipa is a multi-talented crafter, cartoonist, clown, costumer, printmaker, and educator fresh from an MFA in Cartooning from the Center for Cartoon Studies.

We also welcomed Sissy Rossó, a NUA alum, to the team in a new role called the Student Support Specialist.

Sissy returns to us having finished a Master's degree in Psychology from Rhode Island College.

Finally, Sherly Torres, alum and former NUA Knights Program Coordinator, came back to the 705 Westminster St. studio as our Drawing & Painting RAM and MET Art Academy Instructor, working on the latter in partnership with new hire Alexis Gordon, who received a BA and Master's in Public Humanities from Brown University and has taught in several youth art programs across Providence, including CityArts, Downcity Design, and more.



**Introducing Yajaira!**  
**Yajaira Reyes, who joined NUA as our Finance & Operations Director and later moved into the role of Development Director—is a Rhode Island native with several years experience at City Year Providence as Senior Development Manager.**

**SEPTEMBER 2023** We hosted **Soggy Cereal, our Summer Art Show**, displaying work from all three of our summer programs: Art Inquiry: Waterways, College Explorations, and STAB Leadership. Becky Fong Hughes joined our Board of Directors.

**OCTOBER 2023** We unveiled a **new look for NUA's storefront** windows at 705 Westminster. These partial coverings on the bottom half of the windows—made up of student designs, drawings, and artworks from NUA's archives—make sure our students can maintain a sense of privacy and feel safe.

**DECEMBER 2023** Students took a field trip to visit the Carrie Mae Weems exhibit at Brown University: "Carrie Mae Weems: Varying Shades of Brown." The exhibition was a campus-wide project featuring major installations and programming, and our students reflected on themes related to concepts in Weems' work through playful and sensory movement exercises. For many of our students, this was their first time on Brown's campus.

**JANUARY 2024** We welcomed a Volunteer Photography Mentor for the first time in four years, Tina Tryforos. Shout out to Dana and Tina for working hard to get NUA's darkroom back up and running! Dean Sudarsky transitioned from RAM to Communications Associate, supporting grant writing and communications needs.

**The NEA awarded NUA \$25,000** to support our RAMs. "The NEA is delighted to announce this grant to New Urban Arts, which is helping contribute to the strength and well-being of the arts sector and local community," said National Endowment for the Arts Chair Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD. "We are pleased to be able to support this community and help create an environment where all people have the opportunity to live artful lives." We're grateful to the NEA and their continued support of community arts programming for Providence youth.

**FEBRUARY 2024** We received funding to purchase all the equipment needed to build three **mobile-beat-making stations** for NUA Knights. With these stations, youth are able to create their own beats, record music from a live instrument or voice for their track and produce songs from start to finish. Thank you to Volunteer Mentor Benjamin Salinas for helping assemble these stations and mentoring Central High students on how to use them.





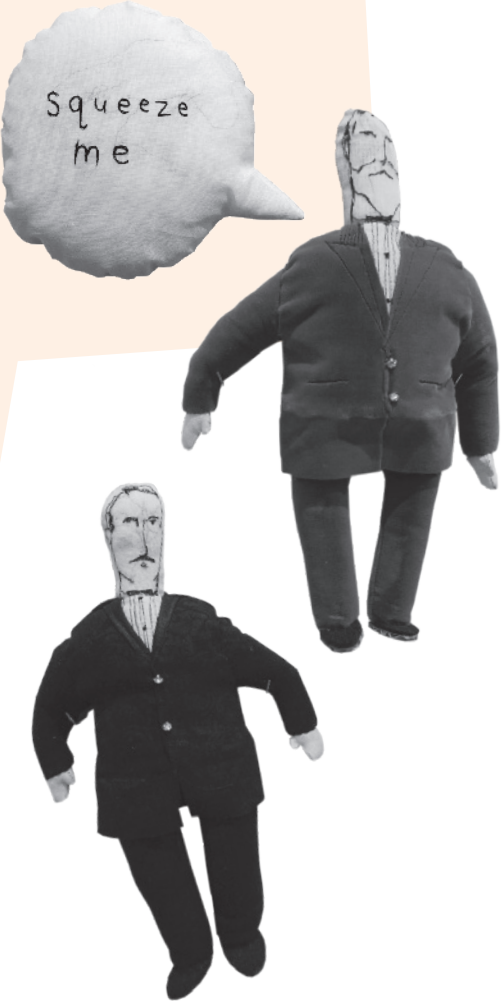
97%

of students say they have built strong trusting relationships with peers and adults at NUA

## Sharing is Embarrassing

The long-awaited return of the Mentor Show!

We hosted "Sharing is Embarrassing", our first in-person staff art exhibition since 2019! The mentor show is an important part of studio culture at NUA, serving two roles: 1) putting on a real gallery art show with professional works and public visitors in the students' own space inspires them to get excited for what they can do in their own upcoming art shows, and 2) shows the students what amazing works their mentors are capable of doing!



Executive Director Daniel Schleifer officially announced his departure from the organization. You can read more about Dan's reflections on his last day in his farewell on page 12.

**APRIL 2024** The printmaking conference SGC International came to PVD in April, and our own Printmaking Resident Artist Mentor, Ian Cozzens organized a pop-up gallery show in the studio titled, **New Urban Prints**, which gathered print-based work by NUA students, alumni, and current and former mentors & staff. NUA has maintained a silkscreen studio since 2004, and adult mentors and teenagers have worked together here on realizing young people's visions in exuberantly various screenprinted form since then.

We hosted our **27th annual Birthday Bash** and celebration for Dan and raised a record breaking \$28,800! Thank you to everyone who bought art and raffle tickets, donated artwork, and came out to celebrate with us!

This year for **401Gives**, NUA conducted its first ever livestream. We had live cameras on mentors making hand-puppets, soundtracks, scenery, and more, culminating in a live puppet show! Viewers could chat, make suggestions, and influence the course of the narrative as it was being written in real time.

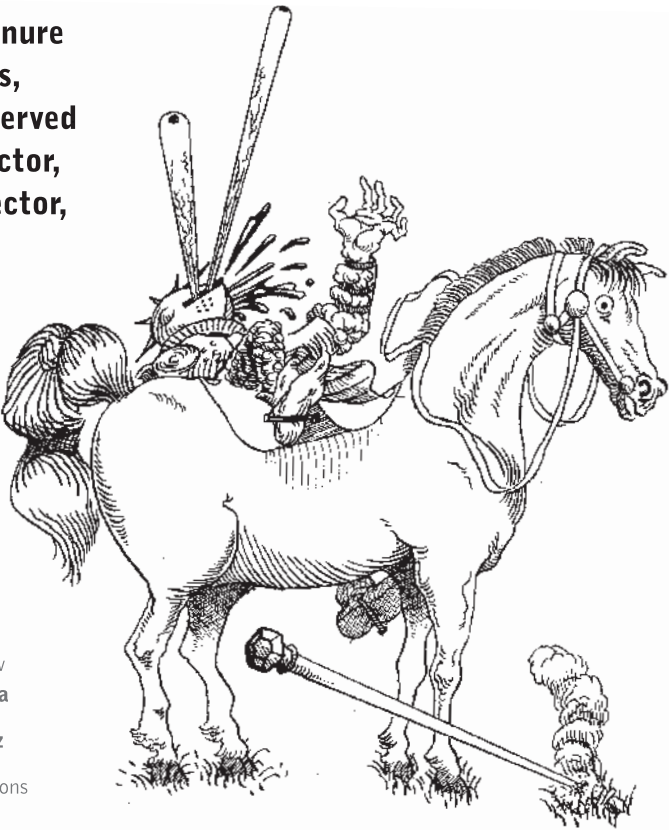
Lastly, Andy MacMannis joined our Board of Directors.

**MAY 2024** We hosted our year-end student exhibition, **Artay Partay**. Normally, the final student exhibition of the year marks the end of programs, but this is the first year we extended our programs through the end of May, so our Artay Partay could 100% focus on celebrating youth creations and performances. To celebrate the actual end of the year, we unveiled a new side-walk mural! Check it out on page 9.

**JUNE 2024** Another big month for staff changes: we said goodbye to Development Director, Tina Meetran, Development Associate, Rebecca Kerner, and of course, Executive Director Daniel Schleifer. Finance and Operations Director, Yajaira Reyes moved over to Development Director as we prepare the office to welcome Jannelle Codianni to the studio as our new ED.

## 17 Years!

Dan Schleifer's tenure at New Urban Arts, during which he served as Executive Director, Development Director, and our very first Study Buddy!



98%

of students say they have felt supported at NUA

OPPOSITE PAGE: alum, former volunteer, and Music Mentor at NUA Knights, **Isaiah Fayerweather**, showing a student how to use music software

THIS PAGE (top to bottom): Mentor Show with Fashion & Sewing RAM **Filipa Estrela**

Dolls by Volunteer Mentor **Ricky Katowicz**

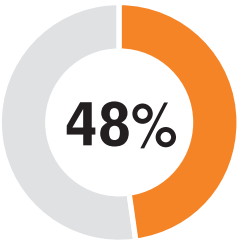
Pen and ink drawing by NUA Communications Associate, **Dean Sudarsky**

All New Urban Arts programs are free and open to high school students.

# Programs

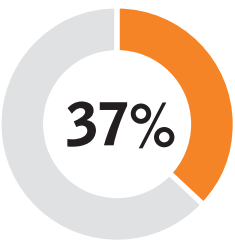
## 519 Students

were enrolled in programs at NUA's 705 Westminster studio in 2023-24 with the following demographics

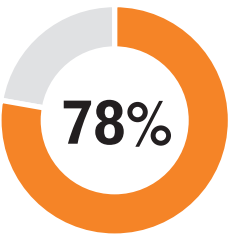


Identify as LGBTQ

LGBTQ students typically comprise only 4-10% of a high school's population.

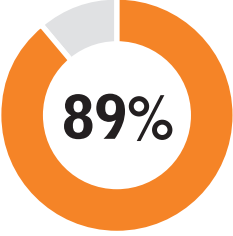


Speak a language other than English at home



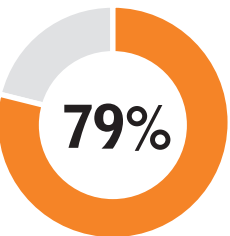
Live where the poverty rate is almost twice the national average

In census tracts in 02909, 02908, 02907, and 02905, the poverty rate for families with children is 22.65%.



Qualify for free and reduced lunch

For a family of four, an annual household income under \$55,500 per year qualifies the children for subsidized lunch.



Attended NUA for the first time in 2023-24



Gender



Race and Ethnicity



“ NUA is a place where everyone can be themselves and have opportunities to do what they love, and have fun with others.”

— NUA Student

## The Studio at 705 Westminster

**Youth Mentorships in the Arts** is New Urban Arts’ core afterschool program, taking place from October through May. The long-term goal of the program is for students to make a permanent place for creativity and imagination in their lives. The primary educators in the program are typically a mix of Resident Artist Mentors (RAMs) and Volunteer Artist Mentors. Mentors foster self-discovery, community-building, and creative art projects designed collaboratively with youth. Programs take place in our 6,000 square foot studio, which includes resources for photography, drawing, painting, sculpture, fashion-design, printmaking, screen printing, study support, poetry/spoken word, video, digital media, and music. This program also includes our one-week internships that take place during school vacations in February and April. These are themed workshops that include field trips and art-making for which students earn a stipend upon completion.

**The Studio Team Advisory Board (STAB)** is a group of students who cultivate New Urban Arts as a youth driven studio by advising staff, representing the organization publicly, assisting in student recruitment and orientation, and organizing events. STAB participates in all hiring decisions, including the selection of artist mentors.

This year, STAB played a critical role in helping us with hiring decisions for all our staff positions, especially in our Executive Director search. Two STAB members also ran an activity they created, musical easels, or “Measels,” for our community members and donors during our fall campaign kickoff event, the highlight of the evening!

**A Life After School (ALAS)** is our postsecondary advising program where students receive extensive one-on-one college and career readiness support from the program’s coordinator. One of ALAS’s best-attended events this year was our Career in the Arts panel, where four artists of color in the Providence community were invited to the studio to share their various career paths and experiences and answer our students’ questions about what it’s like to work in the arts. We also hosted visits from admissions officers from several colleges, and in the spring, students took trips to visit colleges around Rhode Island. ALAS also partners with Crafting the Future (CTF), an organization that works to make craft schools and arts residency programs more accessible to artists of color. CTF helps us provide students and alumni scholarships to attend renowned craft schools and pre-college programs around the country.

**Summer Art Internships** Last year our summer art internships were: **College Explorations**, a college program where students dove into the ins and outs of figuring out the who’s, what’s, and where’s of prospective colleges to apply to; **STAB Leadership Program**, a youth leadership development program for seven students to reflect and discover their own leadership styles, learn about New Urban Arts’ and STAB’s history, and make some artwork inspired by their moods and identities; and **Art Inquiry: Waterways**, a continuation of the previous year’s program where students explore local bodies of water and investigate how water intersects with our lives, communities and histories.

**MET Art Academy** In the spring of 2023, New Urban Arts launched the MET Art Academy, a partnership with the MET High School, a career and technical public school, to offer an artistic and productive internship to its 9th and 11th graders. In this program—which takes place in NUA’s 705 Westminster Studio and runs seven hours per week for two 15-week semesters—28 MET interns (14 per semester) immerse themselves in traditional visual arts education, craftsmanship, and career development, addressing their need for expanded knowledge, creative exploration, and exposure to new artistic career paths.

94% of students say they have developed more confidence





100%

of students say they are open to trying new things after participating in NUA's programs

97%

of students would recommend NUA to a friend

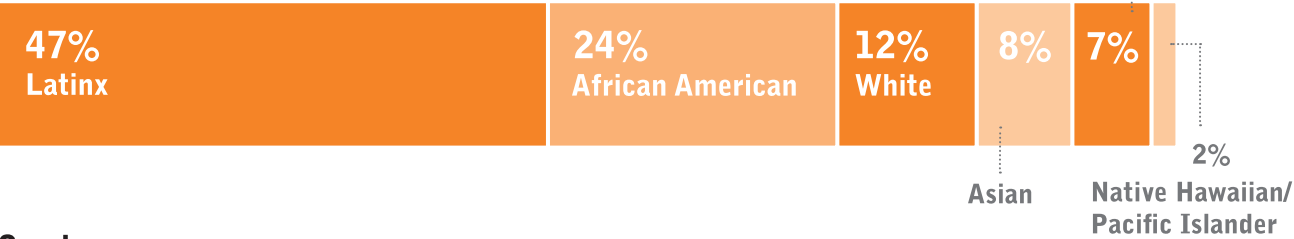
# NUA Knights

**NUA Knights** offers comprehensive after-school programming that strives to create a greater sense of community and personalization for students centering on Academics, Arts, Intramural Sports, Leadership and Social/Emotional Learning. NUA Knights is a direct collaboration of New Urban Arts (NUA) and Central High School (CHS).

We achieve our goals by working with a number of community partners, program providers, Central staff, New Urban Arts staff, family members and most importantly, our students.

This year, NUA Knights offered a staggering 16 different clubs and activities including eSports, Book Club, Weight Room/Training, Cooking Club, Chess Team, Screen Printing & T-shirt Design, Fashion & Design, DORCAS Youth Group, Music Production/Beat Making, Heroes of the Knights (student leadership group), Student Community Engagement, Art Club, Dance, Digital Media, Boxing, and of course, Hanging with NUA Knights.

## Race and Ethnicity



## Gender



**NOTE:** NUA Knights staff respects the identities of all Central High School students, but for tracking purposes, must use a Rhode Island Department of Education system which includes only two genders.

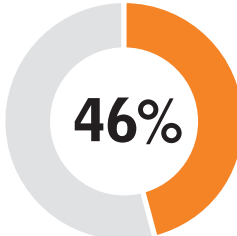
## 307 Students

were enrolled in our NUA Knights program at Central High School in 2023-24



Qualify for free and reduced lunch

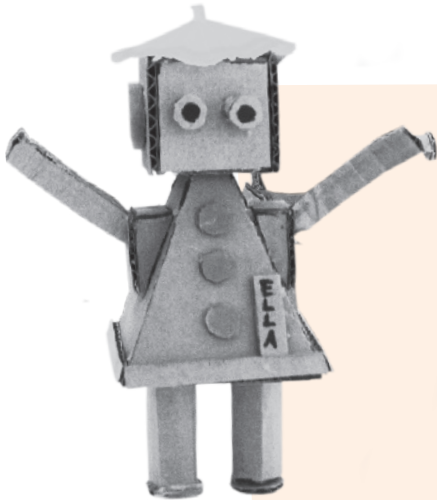
For a family of four, an annual household income under \$55,500 per year qualifies the children for subsidized lunch.



Have limited English proficiency

“ At New Urban Arts I get to be who I am, not hide who I really am.”

— NUA Student

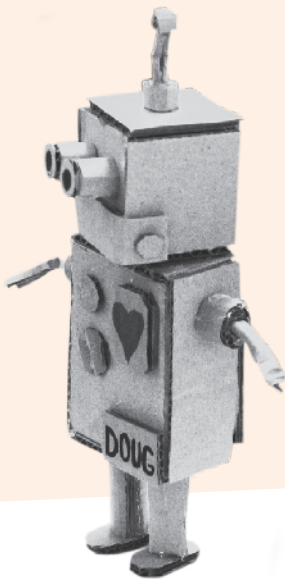


## Get Involved

**Enroll as a Student** any time throughout the year by visiting our website to complete an online enrollment form: [newurbanarts.org/enroll](https://newurbanarts.org/enroll)

**Follow us!** Keep track of all the latest developments by following us on social media at: [@newurbanarts](https://www.instagram.com/newurbanarts) [f](https://www.facebook.com/newurbanarts) [y](https://www.youtube.com/newurbanarts)

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



OPPOSITE PAGE: jacket by **Jenesis T.**; **Axel P.** on drums

THIS PAGE: students in the studio at 705 Westminster; robot sculptures by **Cullen G.**

# MET Highlight + Interview

Sherly Torres and Alexis Gordon talk about NUA's newest program



Last spring, New Urban Arts launched its newest program, a collaboration with the MET High School. In October of 2023, we talked to Sherly Torres, NUA’s Painting and Drawing Resident Artist Mentor and one of the creators of the program, and Alexis Gordon, our MET Art Academy Artist Mentor to get a sense of how it had been going.

What is the MET Art Academy?

**Sherly:** The MET Art Academy is a semester-long internship where MET High School students are welcome into the NUA studio/environment and work on drawing and painting skills in a structured environment. The program started last school year, January 2023 with me and Jori Ketten (former Artist Mentor). I worked with Emily Ustach (former Deputy Director) and Joselina Fay (former Studio Director) to develop the first semester of the program, and Jori and I updated the lesson plan as we went through it.

Another event that was impacted was the Not-College Fair, which used to be a two-hour event where we would 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 Explorations Month. It was a series of programs all focused on career exploration and paths that may or may not involve college, and we got fantastic engagement from students.

**Alexis:** We’re offering a foundational 2D art course with a focus on drawing, painting, and printmaking. The goal is everything from exposing students who have little experience with art-making and helping them develop a studio practice to helping students who are more experienced or have a more solidified idea of how art fits into their life develop their portfolios and have a dedicated practice.

The course is taught by the two of us, Ian Cozzens (Printmaking RAM) is helping with screenprinting. Studio Director Jeannie Castillo-Pierre and Kim Reall (the Real World Learning and Pathways Manager at the MET), help us organize everything and I’m so grateful to them for it.

It’s an internship as opposed to an arts course?

**Alexis:** It’s a little bit of both. MET students are required to have an internship, and we wanted this experience to qualify for that. Their definition is broad, sometimes it looks like learning a trade, cutting lumber on a mill, and sometimes it’s closer to a workshop, like they offer at other youth art programs across Providence.

**Sherly:** Their efforts will culminate in an exhibition at the NUA studio, so they are required to produce a lot of work. We also have agreements we’ve developed as a community that we are all expected to adhere to, and all of these things were up front as things they should expect—those are the internship requirements, but the main expectation as artists is that they have to try. They have to try new mediums and think about building a portfolio.

How do students get involved?

**Alexis:** We sent out a description of the class to MET students. 26 applied, and we had group interviews of the students to narrow it down to a group of 14, which is four more than last year. The original description of the program was both as a foundational elements course AND a portfolio development class, so we wanted to merge those two things. NUA has so many resources and the MET isn’t as integrated at NUA as Classical or Central, so it’s also a way to bring MET students into the fold and offer our resources at critical junctures for youth artists.

**Sherly:** We were looking for a balance of students who had some experience and no experience, and we wanted to see what they were looking for, what goals they had. We especially wanted to save spots for those who had no experience. I think the diverse class better reflects how exposure to the arts can be.

What does a typical day in the program look like?

**Sherly:** A typical day looks like students coming into the 705 Westminster studio at 9AM, going over our agenda for the day, reflecting on the day before and doing some energy-building activities [Alexis: a game or at least a stretch]. Before we start assignments or activities, we also do a demonstration to introduce a project. Then we have lunches provided and then maybe another demo or project or both. Hopefully there’s space for a reflection on the day or some sort of time together to close out.

What projects are you working on now and what do you have planned?

**Alexis:** Right now we’re working on still life work, line and shading. From here we want to start incorporating tone and color and eventually paint, and THEN printmaking.

**Sherly:** Last semester’s internship we noticed printmaking takes a lot more time management and setup. And in the fall there are a lot more school breaks and we want the printmaking sessions to feel continuous, so we scheduled it a little later in the semester. For the spring, we are hoping to extend this cohort’s session into the next semester. We’re waiting on the greenlight for that. But the main thing I look forward to is always the student exhibition. It’s exciting to see them organize their art and get ready for the show and feel proud. [NB: The session was extended with a more intensive dive into screenprinting with help from NUA’s screenprinting RAM, Ian Cozzens.]

**Alexis:** Yeah it’s great to see them develop a creative practice and bring their goals to fruition in a place where people can see what they’ve done.

What would you like to see in this program in the future?

**Sherly:** Cubbies. Vertical painting/paper storage. I think a lot about storage haha. But I’d like to dive into sculpture! I think there’s so much besides 2D painting and drawing. A lot of students come to NUA for music and photography, for example.

**Alexis:** Yes, I would love to see different offerings and internships. A foundational course, a more deliberate portfolio development course that can also focus on grants/residencies/school applications, etc. A whole dedicated space would be amazing, or something more integrated at the MET. Having in-school programming for schools that aren’t the MET—so many of the art programs in our public schools have been gutted.

**Sherly:** And I’d like to be able to accommodate travel for students outside of RI, I would love to take them to the ICA in Boston, or maybe Paris haha.

ABOVE: artwork from MET Art Academy students on display at an end-of-year show at New Urban Arts.

97% of students say they have felt inspired at NUA this year



# NUA News

## New Sidewalk Mural

We have some exciting news to share from our NUA family! Thanks to a generous grant from Providence’s Arts, Culture, and Tourism Department, we had an amazing opportunity to bring art to life right outside our studio. During April break, our talented Volunteer Mentor and alum, Elizabeth Jweinat (AKA Lizzy \$our), took the lead in guiding our students through the process of planning and executing a public artwork. With creativity and teamwork, they came together to design a vibrant mural for the sidewalk by the front entrance of our studio at 705 Westminster St.

One of our standout students, Robbie Sena, poured his heart and soul into this project. Over the following weeks, Robbie dedicated more than 60 hours to bringing the mural to life, transforming a collaborative sketch with student Briar into a reality.

The mural was officially unveiled on the last day of programs, May 31st, with a special celebration, ribbon cutting, and drone photographer! But don’t just look at the photos, stop by, say hi, and admire the mural in its full technicolor glory.

“ I like that the vibes are always positive and everyone is friendly and no matter how hard things are or seem they always encourage us to try new things!”

— NUA Student



93%  
of students say they  
have developed a  
better idea of what  
they want to do in  
the future

**Shout out!**  
Big thanks to the orgs that  
joined us for the Fair, covering  
fields from public service and  
healthcare, to arts, design,  
environmental science,  
and technology, including:

- American Safety Programs & Training
- RI Bankers Association
- Community College of Rhode Island
- DownCity Design
- Exeter Job Corps
- Planned Parenthood of  
Southern New England
- Providence Public Library
- The Steel Yard
- Youth Pride, Inc

## The New Not College Fair

In March of 2023, we were pleased to announce the return of the Not College Fair, an event where high school students can stop by tables to talk to professionals in careers that do NOT require a college degree, as well as sign up for internships, job training programs, summer opportunities, and more. Before the pandemic, NUA hosted the Not College Fair on the ground floor of our 705 Westminster St. studio with a dozen or so exhibitors and a slightly larger attendance than a normal day in the studio.

Last year, then ALAS Coordinator Addy Schuetz wanted to bring back the fair in a larger capacity. They partnered with Central High School to use the gymnasium to accommodate a larger event and promoted it far and

wide, hoping to reach students outside of the normal NUA community and extend these opportunities to more Rhode Island youth.

The result was incredible. With over 250 attendees for 32 different exhibitions, Central’s gym was packed with students from over 40 different high schools, 75% of which had never attended NUA programs before. The energy in the room was electric! This March, our new ALAS Coordinator Teresa Conchas again hosted the Not College Fair at Central High School to similar results, with even more attendees experiencing NUA programs for the first time.

To ensure everyone felt included and supported, we offered Spanish translation services, guided question sessions,

and showcased summer internship opportunities. We also highlighted organizations and programs that are friendly and welcoming to undocumented students, making sure that no one is left out.

This amazing event was made possible by the generous sponsorship of RISCA’s Build The Future Grant. We are deeply grateful for their support in helping us connect students with a world of opportunities. Whether you’re aiming for a career in public service, arts, technology, or any other field, our event showcased different pathways for our students. We were thrilled to have so many incredible organizations join us, offering insights into a wide range of job training programs and career pathways.

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Mary Lee Partington

Board Chair 2012-2020

Mary Lee Partington, who passed away on April 21, 2024 was a teacher and talented singer-songwriter, who deeply understood the power of art to transform young lives. She was a passionate advocate for NUA.

Her legacy in preserving Irish-American culture and founding the Blackstone River Theater will always inspire us.



Alan Tracy

Artist Mentor 2015-17

Alan Tracy, who passed away on June 1, 2024, was a remarkably kind soul whose presence seemed to instantly calm every room he walked into. Beyond his own artistic journey, he dedicated over two decades to nurturing talent at the Rhode Island School of Design, leaving an enduring legacy as an event coordinator, career advisor, and mentor. Alan's legacy reminds us to stay connected and keep creating.

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New Urban Arts 2024 Annual Campaign began on July 1, 2023 and concluded on June 30, 2024. If you find any errors or omissions, we apologize and ask that you please notify yajaira@newurbanarts.org.

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ABOVE RIGHT: flowers by Alanys T.

Thank you to our Funders!



Additional thanks to the following funders: Carter Charitable Trust Funds, Emma G. Harris Foundation, The Minerva Foundation, Providence Shelter for Colored Children, and The Rosenberg Ebin Family Foundation.



## Dear Friends,

I'm writing this on my final day as Executive Director at New Urban Arts. First off, I'm incredibly grateful for all the well wishes I've received over the past several weeks. If I haven't gotten back to you yet, I will eventually!

Appropriately, I spent the day going through our archives, packing up old publications, posters, promotional materials, photographs, and so much more. I was working with a few longtime members of the NUA community, Addy Schuetz and Susan Smulyan, to wrap up the process of selecting items for PPL's Community Archives.

As you'd imagine, I was full of emotions as I pored over these objects. Every item sparked an overwhelming number of memories from the past 17 years of different events, programs, and above all, so many people with whom I've had the pleasure to work, dream, and build. It's truly impossible to list everyone I want to thank, but broadly speaking, I'll say that I could not have done this without everyone that mentored me when I first started working here, believed in me as I stepped into the role of Executive Director, and helped me grow this community and the resources that it offers young people. You all know who you are.

I also want to shout out everyone who supported me during the final push of the past few years. As I shared back in April, our original vision was that I would step down in July 2021, but we hatched that plan in December of 2019, and you all know what happened next. It took a while for the right moment to present itself again, and I've had so much support in preparing for this transition. Thank you!

While going through the archives, the thought that so many of these items would no longer live in our studio was at once unnerving and strangely comforting. On the one hand, it's hard to imagine how they will make sense outside the context of NUA, with no one who helped create them present to interpret. On the other hand, it's time to make room for new things, and the library will be the safest place for them. They're in walking distance, and NUA's staff and community can always go and visit them.

It also occurred to me that we haven't even looked at many of these objects since we first tucked them away in drawers and banker boxes so many years ago, and we may actually spend more quality time with them now that we have to go out of our way to make a special appointment to do so.

Similarly, this transition doesn't mark my complete exit from NUA, but it will be a fundamental shift in my relationship to this community. I will dearly miss so much about spending every day in this remarkable environment, but I also know it's time to make room for new people to step up and lead. At the same time, I'll have to be much more intentional about connecting with all of the NUA people in my life, and I look forward to hanging out under new circumstances.

Finally, I want to ask everyone to join me in welcoming Janelle to the NUA community. As you'll soon learn, she's awesome! I hope and trust that you will all extend to her the same support, confidence, and welcome with which you've honored me.

Thanks again, and see you soon!

 **Daniel Schleifer**  
August 2024

## In case you missed it!

To celebrate Dan's 17-year tenure at NUA, we asked him to sit down with Jis Wilkins-Speaks—multi-disciplinary artist, Classical High School student ('25), STAB member, and frequent NUA attendee. That interview is available on our website.

[bit.ly/dan-interview](https://bit.ly/dan-interview)