

New Urban Arts



July 2024 – June 2025 Year-End Program Report

NEW URBAN ARTS
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OVERVIEW

The 2024-25 program year was a period of beginnings and relationship building. The summer started with our brand new Executive Director, Jannelle Codianni, as well as a transition into a new role as Development Director for Yajaira Reyes. Both of these leadership positions are partially outwardly focused, and Yajaira and Jannelle spent much of the year meeting long-term community members and friends of New Urban Arts, as well as fostering new relationships in order to strengthen our bonds as community partners and build resilience under an increasingly difficult period for the non-profit sector.

Over the last few years, our focus in programs has been to grow our audience, which was cut by 90% after closing for half a year and then reopening for virtual programs the year after. Once in-person, attempts to recapture our former record-breaking numbers bore only incremental progress until 2023-24, when our Youth Mentorship in the Arts program nearly doubled the number of enrolled students. For 2024-25, both at NUA Knights and in the Westminster Street Studio, we focused on capacity and quality of engagement by lengthening our program year, recruiting more volunteer mentors, fielding more programs, and strengthening and building partnerships with other organizations across Providence. As a result, we saw new records in student engagement at NUA Knights and new records in family and community engagement at NUA public events.

Partnerships

This year, we continued our efforts to build stronger partnerships and deeper collaborations with other creative and youth-focused organizations. We worked with our community partners to expand opportunities for Providence youth and create new pathways for mutual support. NUA was proud to participate in PVDfest for the first time this year, reflecting our strong commitment to amplifying youth voices in public, creative spaces. In September, we hosted a student art gallery at Burnside Park, showcasing work created through our NUA Knights and Studiofront summer programs, and offered a platform for students and recent alumni to perform live on the Burnside stage.

Our partnership with the MET continued through fall and winter of 2024, providing meaningful, arts-based learning experiences outside the traditional classroom. Over 15-week semesters, 14 student interns worked with fundamental visual arts mediums while learning through experimentation, conversation, and care. Led by RAM Sherly Torres, with support from RAM Ian Cozzens in a screen-printing unit, the semester concluded with a student exhibition showcasing growth across multiple artistic disciplines. Another ongoing collaboration was with Classical High School's Visual Arts teacher Emily Burke. For a second year, we supported Classical's photography course in accessing NUA's black-and-white darkroom, introducing students to photography as both an art form and a design medium, with an emphasis on digital photography.

In response to increasing ICE activity and policing in everyday spaces like schools and churches, many students started to fear for their safety. In reaction, two of our student leaders and STAB (Student Team Advisory Board) members, Nashla and Emi, stepped up with clarity and compassion. Collaborating with the Providence Student Union (PSU), they helped organize the Know Your Rights Conference this past April, an event rooted in care, education, and action. Workshops led by ARISE, the Center for Justice, and OurSchoolsPVD provided practical tools for navigating systems of power and safeguarding one's rights. NUA participated with a hands-on printmaking workshop led by Resident Artist Mentor Ian Cozzens, where students learned about screenprinting's role in resistance history and created prints to express themselves.

Our new partnership with The Avenue Concept (TAC) gave students another way to express themselves in their community. The Ripples Project, a citywide public art initiative created by TAC in collaboration with the City of Providence, the Mayor's Office, and the Department of Art, Culture + Tourism, inspired students to transform everyday infrastructure into vibrant works of art by painting 50 utility boxes and murals throughout Providence. NUA was excited to participate because one of public art's most powerful aspects is its ability to foster dialogue, interaction, and inspiration across generations. Fifteen NUA students, from both the NUA Studiofront's Mural Team and the NUA Knights spring break program, designed and painted utility boxes. In March, students visited TAC's headquarters for a Can Jam event to learn basic mural techniques from professional artists before executing their designs in April and May. The NUA Mural Team's six boxes focused on themes of celebrating local identity and community spaces, honoring everyday life and the people who live it, and exploring the connection between culture, community, and environment. Each box drew inspiration from familiar landmarks, culture, regional symbols, and imagery meaningful to the students as Providence residents. NUA Knights youth painted two utility boxes as self-identified first-time public artists, bringing a sense of exploration and experimentation to the project.

We shared this opportunity with four other youth-serving organizations: Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, Youth Pride Inc., Providence Student Union, and DownCity Design, expanding access and participation to an additional 45 young people. Participating in this partnership allowed students to explore what it means to contribute to the visual landscape of their city, claim space through creative expression, and take on roles as public artists. You can see NUA-painted boxes at the corners of Atwells & Valley and Friendship & Franklin, along with others scattered throughout Providence.

Of course, one of our longest-standing partnerships is with the Providence Public School District, and in June we had the exciting chance to participate in Providence's inaugural GRID Summit, held at Brown University. Originating in California, GRID is a one-day creativity conference that introduces young people to new ways of thinking about art, problem-solving, and career pathways while emphasizing student voice, community, and creative exploration. The event brought together students and creative professionals through workshops, talks, and interactive activities designed to inspire and connect. NUA's Resident Artist Mentor Filipa Estrela led a lively, hands-on workshop titled "Let's Make a Silly Lil' Guy! A Crash Course in Original Character Creation." In this playful session, participants explored developing original characters through drawing games, idea prompts, and quick sketching exercises. Students of all art experience levels embraced spontaneity, learned how to overcome creative blocks, and practiced bringing imaginative characters to life. We were proud to be part of a day that focused on youth creativity and collaboration - an extension of the values we uphold every day in the studio.

Finally, with support from Nicole Simpson, Director of Fine and Performing Arts at PPSD, we welcomed over 80 eighth graders from Roger Williams and Esek Hopkins Middle Schools to the studio. These field trips introduced rising ninth graders to NUA, giving them a chance to meet staff, explore the space, and get hands-on with art-making. The City of Providence's Department of Art, Culture + Tourism (ACT) graciously provided transportation from the schools to our studio. Students rotated through stations featuring drawing and button-making, sampling the kinds of creative access points they'll find at NUA. By engaging students early, we aim to build familiarity with our programs and offer a welcoming entry point into our community. This effort is part of our intentional strategy to support student and family engagement, ensuring proactive introductions grow into strong roots in high school, grounded in creativity and connection.

This year saw many changes at NUA and in community spaces across Providence. We are eager to build on the energy from new leaders, partners, and even the challenges that bring fresh ideas and opportunities to the ways we meet our mission. In 2025-2026, we look forward to applying what we've learned and strengthening our collective impact by collaborating with aligned organizations, artists, and city partners.

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THE PROGRAMS AT NEW URBAN ARTS' STOREFRONT STUDIO

Summer Art Internships

Over the 2024 summer, students collaborated with Artist Mentors and visiting artists on a range of projects, from one-time group activities to long-term, highly conceptual independent works. The programs' themes were explored through dialogue, art-making, research, writing, reflective activities, and field trips outside the studio.

A total of 28 students attended the three distinct, in-person program offerings—Art Inquiry: Art In Nature, Studio Team Advisory Board (STAB), and College Explorations—receiving a stipend for their participation upon successful completion.

The summer concluded with an end-of-summer art celebration organized by students. At this event, students, staff, and family members celebrated the summer's accomplishments, discussed each program's work, enjoyed refreshments, and played with the programs' many interactive art pieces. Thanks to ongoing communications efforts, this exhibition saw increased parent and caretaker engagement.

Art Inquiry: Art In Nature

Under the guidance of artist mentors Sherly Torres and Sissy Rossó, eleven students embarked on a creative journey exploring environmental art. This program combined classroom learning, independent study, interactive sessions with visiting artists, and immersive field trips. Highlights included visits to the Floating Wetlands installation at Roger Williams Park and a day-long excursion to the Butterfly Vivarium exhibition at the American Museum of Natural History in NYC. Throughout the summer, students engaged in a series of smaller projects that deepened their understanding of environmental art. They applied their knowledge in a collaborative final project, to be installed in the pollinator garden at All Saints' Memorial Church, located across the street from New Urban Arts.

College Explorations

Eight students took part in the College Explorations program, guided by A Life After School Manager Teresa Conchas and College Explorations Program Assistant and NUA alum Karla Rodriguez Bogaert. Designed for rising juniors and seniors, the program introduced students to the college application process while encouraging them to explore their future dreams and goals. Participants explored various aspects of college life, from applications to developing personal stories and interests through art. The students visited several institutions, including RISD and the RISD Museum, RIC, Emerson College, Boston University, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the ICA, and The Steel Yard. They also connected with current college students, gaining insights into the realities of college life. Open to students interested in all majors and careers, not just the arts, this program provided a holistic introduction to college while fostering creativity and self-expression.

Studio Team Advisory Board (STAB)

This summer, nine members of New Urban Arts' youth leadership board, guided by mentors Addy Schuetz and Jules Sharpe, delved into the history of NUA and explored the vital role of youth leaders and artists in our community. Through a combination of hands-on projects, classroom discussions, and community engagement, STAB members examined themes such as relationships, identity, stereotypes, gender, and body image. In addition to their creative work, the students had the opportunity to meet with local artists Jazz Lee-Johnson and Jordan Seaberry, and connected with RISD SJP Student Organizers. They also experienced the power of self-expression by printing their own newspaper at Binch Press/Queer Archive Work. These activities, coupled with dialogues with community art activists, exposed STAB to the ways art can be harnessed to raise consciousness and challenge inequities surrounding language, privilege, and power.

ALAS – Crafting the Future

NUA is proud to continue its partnership with Crafting the Future (CTF) for the fourth consecutive year. CTF works to diversify the fields of art, craft, and design by connecting BIPOC artists with opportunities to thrive. Through CTF, NUA provided two programs for students and alumni: the Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists' Residency and the Teen Takeover.

Teen Takeover

The Teen Takeover, a collaboration between CTF and the Appalachian Center for Craft at Tennessee Tech University, was held from July 7 to July 12. Four NUA students and one staff member attended this week-long arts camp in Tennessee, joining peers from other high school art education organizations across the country. Students had the opportunity to study jewelry, textiles, woodworking, and glassblowing, creating art in a vibrant community of BIPOC students and teaching artists.

Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists' Residency

This summer, two BIPOC alumni received full scholarships to attend a two-week residential workshop at Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists' Residency in Saugatuck, MI. The scholarships, provided through CTF, covered all expenses, including tuition, travel, housing, food, and materials. Participants chose a workshop that aligned with their interests and engaged in intensive study, complemented by time for personal work and leisure. They lived on campus, connected with fellow artists, and explored their creative practices in a nurturing environment.

Youth Mentorship in the Arts

Youth Mentorship in the Arts is New Urban Arts' core afterschool program. This year, programs commenced earlier, at the end of September, and ran through the end of May. The long-term goal of the program is for students to make a permanent place for creativity and imagination in their lives. Our interim goals are that students:

- Develop close, positive relationships with non-parental adult mentors and peers.
- Acquire skills and knowledge in the arts.
- Begin to develop their unique artistic voice.
- Graduate high school on a path towards postsecondary success.

The primary educators in the program are typically a mix of resident artist mentors (RAMs) and volunteer artist mentors. We employ four RAMs, part-time, permanent artist mentors in the most high-demand areas of our studio: painting/drawing, screen-printing, music, and fashion/sewing. As professional artists in their respective media, RAMs offer high-quality instruction, serve as a consistent presence from year to year, help maintain the studio and facilities, and—through our investment in their professional development—continuously improve the quality of our programs.

This year, NUA welcomed 11 Volunteer Artist Mentors and a Studio Advocate (an LMHC candidate with focus in Art Therapy) into the studio to collaborate with our students. All YMA staff participated in a comprehensive Mentor Orientation at the start of the year, followed by ongoing Mentor Training sessions throughout the school year, which focused on NUA Core Practices and effective mentoring procedures for working with young people. In September, under the leadership of our new Studio Director Jeannie Castillo-Lapierre, alongside Dana Heng (Manager of Artist Mentors), we kicked off the school year with both new and returning Resident Artist Mentors.

A Life After School (ALAS): College and Career Readiness

For many students, New Urban Arts (NUA) is the defining experience of their high school years, offering invaluable support from our dedicated staff and volunteers. In response to students' needs, we launched the ALAS program in 2014 to formalize our post-secondary advising and support. The ALAS Manager helps high school students develop their post-secondary plans and partners with The College Planning Center of Rhode Island to offer services such as group presentations and workshops on financial aid and scholarships.

This year, ALAS continued serving higher than average numbers, reaching 90 students, including 49 seniors, the largest number of seniors since the program began. Additionally, ALAS engaged 14 alumni through various forms of communication, including email, individual meetings, alumni scholarships, and panels, and many more through surveys and newsletters.

Our ALAS Manager, Teresa Conchas, has been instrumental in preparing seniors for their next steps. Over the fall, they coor-

minated visits from Massachusetts College of Art and Design, RISD, Bryn Mawr, Oberlin, University of Rochester, and School of the Museum of Fine Arts. She also organized several College Kickoff workshops covering topics such as researching colleges, navigating the Common Application, time management, organizational strategies, and the Common Application essay, as well as working individually with students on the admissions and financial aid processes.

Seniors collectively achieved acceptances to over 45 colleges and universities, including: Community College of Rhode Island, Salve Regina University, Rhode Island College, Roger Williams University, Providence College, Johnson and Wales University, Bryant University, Champlain College, Maine College of Art and Design, Pennsylvania College of Art and Design, Lesley University, Montserrat College of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Massachusetts College of Art, Maryland Institute College of Art, Pratt Institute, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, University of Massachusetts Boston, University of Massachusetts Amherst, University of New Haven, Hartford University, Seton Hall University, College of the Atlantic, University of Rochester, Smith College, Bryn Mawr College, Boston College, Fordham University, Villanova University, University of Washington, Stetson University, Northern Arizona University, University of Colorado Boulder, University of Denver, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts, University of Toronto, University of Michigan, Tufts University, University of Maryland, Wesleyan University, Middlebury College, University of Vermont, Reed College, Lewis & Clark College, John Carroll University, Purdue University, Hofstra University.

In addition to post-secondary advising, ALAS individually supports students in identifying and attaining enrichment opportunities that align with students' artistic, educational, and personal goals. Students across all grade levels applied and were accepted to various other summer programs including Brown Pre-College, Generation Teach, PrepareRI Internships, Steel Yard art camps, RISD Project Open Door, Providence youth summer jobs, as well as other employment and enrichment opportunities. One student was selected as the Teen Creative Youth Fellow, a distinguished year-long opportunity for a local young artist to create artwork based upon, utilizing, or inspired by Special Collections materials and culminating in a public exhibition, with funding and individualized mentorship through the Providence Public Library.

The Not College Fair, hosted at Central High School for the third year, saw strong participation. This free, public event brought together nearly 30 organizations and 200 students, families, and counselors to explore career pathways and job training programs that don't require a college degree. Students from over 20 different high schools across Rhode Island attended, with 85% being new to NUA programs.

Our partnership with Crafting the Future continues to flourish, offering two distinct programs for BIPOC students and alumni:

1. Full scholarships for two NUA BIPOC alumni to attend a two-week art residency at Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists' Residency in Saugatuck, Michigan.
2. The third annual Teen Takeover program at the Appalachian Center for Craft in Tennessee, where four NUA students and one NUA staff member spent a week studying glass, wood, jewelry, and textiles in a community of BIPOC students and teaching artists.

The Studio Team Advisory Board (STAB)

STAB is a group of students who cultivate NUA as a youth driven studio. STAB participants advise NUA's staff and board, represent the organization publicly, assist in student recruitment and orientation, as well as organize studio-wide events. STAB participates in all hiring decisions, including the selection of artist mentors.

Throughout the year, STAB members engaged in regular bi-weekly meetings where they onboarded new staff, organized community events, and advocated for student needs and interests. This year, STAB had a total of 10 youth participants, most of whom are longstanding community members in the studio, representing five different Providence high schools. Their efforts led to the successful coordination and execution of several community-building events, most notably, the Know Your Rights Conference in collaboration with Providence Student Union. The conference featured roundtable discussions, where student attendees could voice their concerns and make connections, workshops from ARISE, the Center for Justice, and OurschoolsPVD, and offered brunch, early dinner, and gift certificates for the first 50 attendees to show up. The portion presented by NUA students discussed the role of screenprinting in the history of organizing, followed by a hands-on workshop.

The MET Art Academy

This year, the NUA Studio continued its impactful collaboration with The MET School through the Studio Art Academy, providing MET interns with an enriching exploration of drawing, painting, and printmaking. Led by NUA Painting & Drawing Resident Artist Mentor (RAM) Sherly Torres, the program engaged 14 MET student interns in immersive classes held on Tuesdays and Thursdays across the fall, totaling 15 weeks of artistic development. Ian Cozzens, NUA RAM, facilitated engaging screen-printing workshops at the NUA Studio, enhancing the students' learning experience. Throughout the program, students explored various techniques, including charcoal drawing, acrylic painting, rubylith and block printing, and styrofoam printmaking.

The program concluded with a vibrant exhibition showcasing the students' progress and creativity, not only celebrating the students' achievements but also highlighting their growth in artistic skills and understanding of art history. Their work remained on display and was included in the NUA studio show, Mid-Year Makings.

Gallery Exhibitions and Other Events

Staff and Mentor Show: "Tell Me More"

New Urban Arts studio proudly hosted "Tell Me More," our second staff and mentor art show since 2019, and a continuation of last year's show "Sharing is Embarrassing." The show's title was inspired by a question often heard from mentors around the studio. Usually taking the role of the listeners and collaborators, this show was their excuse to tell us more about their own art practices. The studio was brimming with a diverse array of art forms, including paintings, drawings, ceramics, photographs, sculptures, and more. Attendees were also treated to live musical performances.

Mid-Year Makings Exhibit

On February 28th, the studio proudly presented the Mid-Year Makings exhibit. Studio students showcased over fifty pieces of artwork to family, friends, and community members. This show, the first student show of the year for those who did not participate in summer programs, is an opportunity for youth to celebrate completed works and move onto more projects, or display their works in process for pieces that may take longer to take shape.

Gallery Nights

In spring, when better weather conditions made being outside a little more appealing, mentors began taking students out of the studio for Gallery Nights: field trips on foot downtown to see gallery exhibitions and Providence's art scene. For many of our students, these trips were their first time seeing professional work as a part of a curated gallery experience. One Gallery Night was led by screenprinting RAM, Ian Cozzens to see a group show at the Angell Street Galleries that included his own work. This was an exciting opportunity for our students to be able to ask questions of the artist next to his work and learn more about the exhibition process.

Know Your Rights Conference

As news traveled about increased deportations in community spaces like schools and churches, students started to worry for their safety. In response, two of our student leaders and STAB members, Nashla and Emi, decided to help arm our community with knowledge and solidarity. They partnered with Providence Student Union to host the Know Your Rights Conference at NUA. The conference featured roundtable discussions, where student attendees could voice their concerns and make connections, workshops from ARISE, the Center for Justice, and OurSchoolsPVD, and offered brunch, early dinner, and \$50 gift certificates for the first 50 attendees to show up. Of course, no event hosted at NUA is complete without a touch of printmaking, and conference attendees learned about the role of screenprinting in the history of organizing and got a hands-on chance to try it themselves. NUA's best plans usually come from our students, and we're grateful to Nashla, Emi, and PSU for bringing us all together to build a stronger community and keep each other safe.

Glass Half Full: Year-End Celebration and FL!P Release Party

The final event of the year, the Artay Party Art Party in May, was a grand celebration of all the artwork created by students throughout the year. More than 70 community members joined us in honoring the incredible talents of our young artists and

their dedicated mentors. It also served as the release party for our annual student art zine, FL!P. Since the pandemic, FL!P had been relegated to a physical edition of the end of the year art show, but this year, students started meeting with mentors in February to call for submissions and plan special themes and content specific to a zine format. They also polled students in the studio with various surveys and interactive activities, such as Mentor Madness, an NCAA-style bracket pitting luchador versions of mentors in the studios against each other for popular vote. The result was the largest edition of FL!P yet, printed for the first time in house and in full-color. Digital copies of this year’s FL!P and many past years are available online, at newurbanarts.org/publications.

School Vacation Week Programs and Other Special Initiatives

During the school vacation weeks in February and April, we hosted week-long, themed mini-programs, similar in some ways to our summer programs.

February Break Week Program

February Break Week provided a week long program for students to participate in. In “Chasing the Bag,” this year’s February Break Week Program, RAM Filipa Estrela and ALAS Manager Teresa Conchas led 12 students in a hands-on project where they designed and personalized their own bags. The group visited the RISD Museum for inspiration, and then got to work experimenting with stitching, embellishments, and design techniques.

April Break Week Program

The theme of our April Break Week was “Sonic Quilt.” Students joined musician and RAM, Jessica Kion and Manager of Artist Mentors, Dana Heng in a week-long intensive combining storytelling and sound recording. At the end of the session, they produced several collaborative audio pieces, available to sample here: <https://samplify.app/player/wey3ZQFMFYFTJJ6FCr84c>

The Ripples Project

This curriculum-based design workshop, launched in January and continuing through May, was a highlight of the year born out of a partnership with The Avenue Concept. The project focuses on collaboration, creative problem-solving, and public artmaking. During February break, 8 students began developing concepts for artwork that to be displayed on utility boxes throughout the city. By the conclusion of programs in May, NUA students designed and painted seven utility box murals. NUA also extended mentorship to our partner organizations, supporting seven more designs executed by students from other programs around Providence, totaling 14 youth-created public art pieces.

Student Enrollment and Attendance

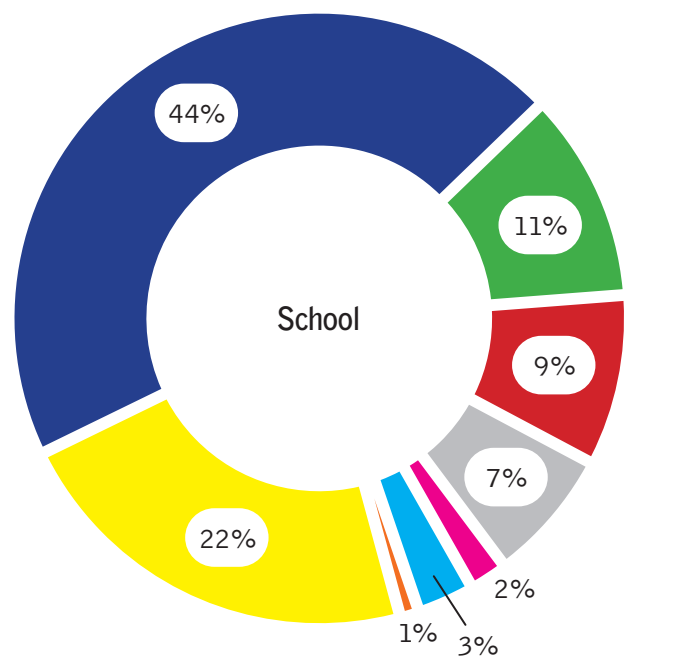
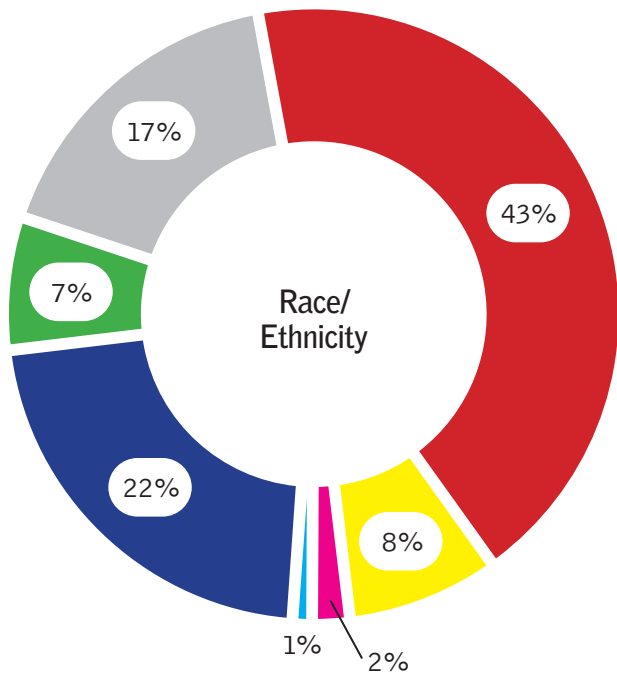
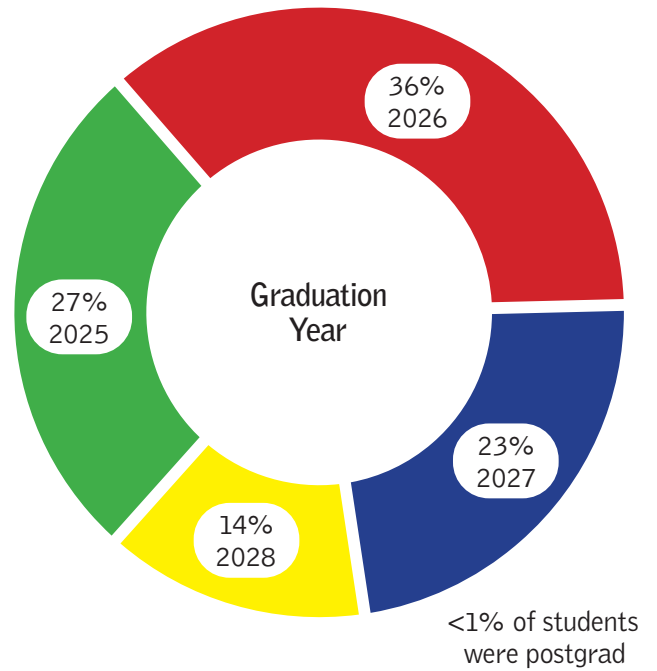
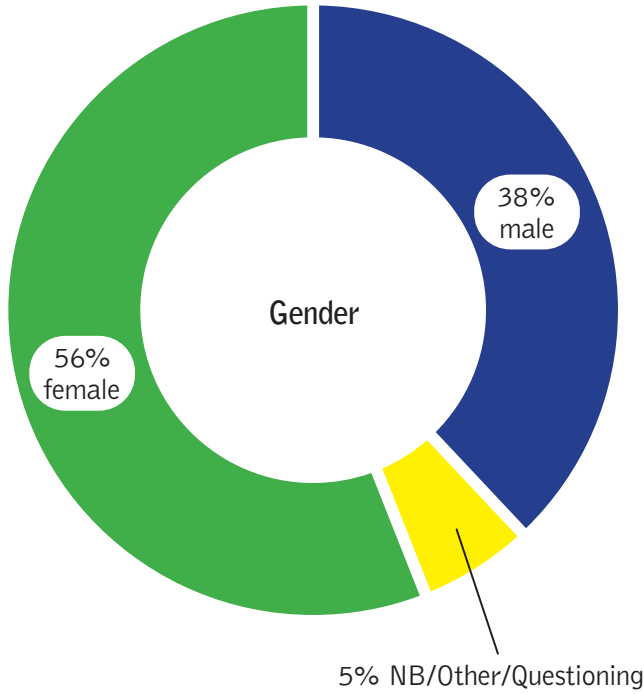
Studio programs maintained similar enrollment and attendance to last year.

Annual	FY24-25	FY23-24	FY22-23	FY21-22 ¹	FY20-21 ²	FY19-20 ³
Total Registered Students	475	519	290	235	72	847
Students Attending Weekly	75	102	93	75	8	162
Students Attending 15+ Hours*	158	180	122	-	-	-
Students Attending 30+ Days / 45+ Hours*	81	100	68	51	9	95
CLC Students Attending 15+ Hours*	132	138	94	-	-	-
CLC Students Attending 30+ Days / 45+ Hours*	66	74	56	41	3	62
Average Daily Attendance (Sept.-May)	33	35	30	23	4	73
Total Visits (Including Summer)	5,139	5,209	3,966	4,476	802	9,181

*Beginning in 2022-23, federal reporting requirements shifted, setting new benchmarks based on hours, rather than days.

Student Demographics

We enrolled 475 students in New Urban Arts' studio programs this year, with the following demographics:



- African American
- Asian American
- White
- Latino/Hispanic
- Multi-Racial/Multi-Ethnic
- Other
- Native American

- Classical
- Central
- The MET
- PCTA (Providence Career and Technical Academy)
- TAPA (Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts)
- Hope
- Mount Pleasant
- Other (Achievement First, Paul Cuffee, JM Walsh primarily)

- 91% qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. Of students who attended, on average, once or more per week, 96% qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. (For a family of four, an annual household income under \$57,720 per year qualifies the children for subsidized lunch.)
- 74% lived in census tracts in 02909, 02908, 02907, and 02905, where the poverty rate for families with children is 22.65%, nearing twice the US average.
- 39% of students spoke a language other than English at home.
- 51% of our students identified as LGBTQ. Of students who participated for 45+ hours this year, 52% identified as LGBTQ (LGBTQ students typically comprise only 4-10% of a high school’s population).
- For 62% of students, this was their first year at New Urban Arts.

End of Year Student Survey Results

Our year-end survey is administered through Survey Monkey. The survey was emailed to students in the last month of programming, and a computer with the survey was set up in the studio.

Student Survey Responses	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Number of students completing the survey (percentage of enrolled students)	62 (13%)	68 (13%)	50 (17%)	50 (21%)	17 (24%)	22 (2%)

Percentage of students who reported agreeing or strongly agreeing with the following statements:

I am more open to trying new things.	95%	100%	96%	92%	88%	100%
I have developed more confidence.	93%	94%	94%	90%	88%	95%
I have developed a way of creating that expresses who I am.	87%	96%	94%	90%	94%	95%
I have built strong, trusting relationships with my peers and adults.	90%	97%	94%	90%	94%	95%
I have improved as an artist.	85%	93%	86%	86%	76%	91%
I have developed a better idea of what I want to do in the future.	82%	93%	84%	72%	76%	90%
At New Urban Arts, I feel safe [and supported].*	98%	97%	100%	96%	100%	98%
At New Urban Arts, I feel supported.*	97%	-	-	-	-	-
Overall, I rate New Urban Arts’ programs outstanding.	79%	78%	76%	84%	76%	86%
I would recommend New Urban Arts to a friend.	100%	97%	94%	98%	94%	100%

*In the 2024-25 survey, the question asking if students felt “safe and supported” was separated into two different questions.

The following are open-ended responses to the question, “Do you like working with an artist mentor? Why?”

- Yes. It makes everything you do more engaging and this silly thing you want to try is really taken seriously by someone and so it makes you want to take it seriously and create.
- They’re very helpful and mindful of the students, always helping around even if it doesn’t have to do with their area of expertise.
- I do, because of how friendly they are. It feels more like a fun conversation than directions.
- Yes!!! The mentors are always very helpful, never pushy, and always help me figure things out!
- Yes, they provide guidance, great to try new things you are not sure how to do— takes off part of the fear. It also helps me channel my ideas into possible step by step goals.
- Yes!!! Very fun + helps you get on the right track or gives insight on awesome things like music genres and the basics of playing an instrument.
- Yes!! Its nice having someone to just talk about stuff with and someone who is interested in the thing I’m working on.

- New Urban Arts is a place to express yourself, to some it may just be the building with the orange sign. But to me and I bet so many others, it's a place to be yourself, and to find yourself via art making and having a good time. This is truly a beautiful space that I don't think I will ever forget about...
- A supportive place where I'm listened to and can also try to create what I envision
- A lot. The amount of support that I've received here throughout my high school experience is insane. Little by little I was able to dabble into different fields and experiences to explore new things and even things that I've been wanting to try, which I was definitely able to accomplish.
- It feels like place to relax and have fun. It's also a place where I can reflect on my future and what can I do about it. Overall it means a lot to me because it's a fun learning environment.
- New Urban Arts is a place that allowed me to step out of my comfort zone, and pursue my hobbies and interests in ways I would have never thought about if not for NUA.
- My cousin used to go here when he was in high school, and I'm glad that it's a creative outlet around for me to take advantage as well. If it weren't for NUA, I wouldn't have had the courage to perform again.

THE PROGRAMS AT NUA KNIGHTS

In 2017, New Urban Arts and Central High School teamed up to expand after school options for Central students. NUA Knights is a comprehensive after school program that strives to create a greater sense of community and personalization for students, focusing on academics, art, intramural sports, leadership, and social/emotional learning. NUA Knights expansion program is funded by a five year 21st Century Community Learning Center grant from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE).

NUA Knights Summer Programs

Over the summer of 2024, 20 students participated in four in-person programs.

Floating Wetlands

8 students met with local artists to explore and learn more about the natural world. Each week this tri-lingual group (English, Spanish and Haitian Creole) led by NUA mentors Vic Xu and Jules Sharpe explored the natural world surrounding Central High School. On Wednesdays they all traveled by public bus to Roger Williams Park to collaborate with artists Max Fertik and Holly Ewald who are part of the Below and Above Collective that had launched a Floating Wetland in the lake in June. The students' journals and Pond Life books traveled with them. The culminating project being an informational zine created by the youth about Floating Wetlands.

Photography

Mentors Vic Xu, Hayley Canal and 8 students explored not only how to use a variety of types of cameras but also photographing in different lighting, backdrops, outside, each other, and more. This was many students' first time using digital cameras and all students' first time using film cameras and the developing process. Each week was spent on photo walks, in the dark room at NUA studio, and around tables sharing photos taken.

Introduction to Fiber Arts

Run by MET program Instructor and NUA Knights Fashion and Design club teacher, Alexis Gordon, each week had a different focus: Week 1 - knitting and crochet; Week 2 - Natural dyeing and block printing; Week 3 - soft sculpture; and Week 4 - intro to sewing machines.

Music Production

Combining two of our music programs, Guitar Club and Music Production, youth in this program built on their guitar (acoustic, electric, ukulele, and bass) skills while also learning all about music production and making beats from scratch with the goal of creating their own songs from start to finish. This program was led by NUA alum and mentor Isaiah Fayerweather.

Academic Year Programs

During the school year, NUA Knights fielded 22 different programs led by NUA staff, Central staff, and community members and volunteers, including ALAS at NUA Knights, Book Club, Book Making, Boxing Club, Cheerleading, Comic Book Club, Cooking Club, Culture Club, DORCAS Youth Group, Dungeons & Dragons Club, Fashion & Design Club, February Break - College Visits, Global Health Care Club, Music Production, Photography/Videography, Student Community Engagement, TAC Ripple Utility Box - Spring Break, Tennis Club, Video Game Club / Game Design, Weight Room and Fitness, Write On, as well as Hanging with NUA Knights run by Kelly Harlow and Roanny Rodriguez. 11 of these programs were new, with 10 Central teachers, 10 community partners, 3 Volunteer Artist Mentors, and one NUA staff member. Including summer programs, this marks an increase of 13 programs over the previous year, exactly twice as many. This extra courseload was possible in part because the Volunteer Artist Mentor program was expanded to NUA Knights, bringing in four volunteer mentors to both support and lead different programs.

ALAS at NUA Knights

After many years of planning on how to provide A Life After School postsecondary guidance services to more students at Central High School, this is the first year we formalized a partnership to bring the ALAS Manager, Teresa, to NUA Knights. Teresa worked closely with guidance counselors and met weekly with a dedicated group of students to provide guidance during college and financial aid application season. This program strengthened connections between NUA's 705 Westminster Street studio and Central High School, as well as provided extra mental health support for seniors as they navigated the many high and low emotions of the applications processes.

Weightroom

This year, Weightroom was attended by 52 students, with around 20 participating on any given day. Leda Valladares at Central High runs this program single-handedly and to great demand—it's our most highly requested program.

February Break—College Explorations

Jimps Jean-Louis, one of the Guidance Counselors at Central who works with Teresa in the ALAS program at Central, led 12 youth in College Explorations over February Break. They spent three days talking about finding the right colleges, the application process, and the barriers young people face throughout. Then they visited RIC and CCRI, where they were able to take placement tests and talk about potential next steps.

Write On

In the winter we started chatting with Marcia Ranglin-Vassell, former member of the RI House of Representatives, author of *Transforming Schools: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Teaching, Learning and Healing* and Central High teacher, to launch a program focused on journaling, building relationships and community as pathways to healing. The program, Write On, became an important staple for 12 dedicated youth who showed up consistently throughout the spring.

April Break—The Ripple Project

Over April Break we worked on our utility boxes with The Avenue Concept! Bringing on Volunteer Artist Mentor, Yasmine Hassan, she led youth through the understanding of what public art is and can be, and the design process of spray painting a utility box. We had a great time learning how to spray paint, brainstorming designs and implementing them. Check both of our utility boxes out on Broad Street around Central.

Cooking Club and FL!P

Volunteer Artist Mentor Xiao Guo joined the Central High Cooking Club this year in the All Saints' Memorial Church kitchen and helped them make illustrated recipes for all the dishes they created this year. When it came time for students at the Storefront Studio to begin assembling FL!P, Xiao collaborated with other mentors to get these colorful recipes included. Don't forget to take a look at the digital version of FL!P at newurbanarts.org/publications

End of Year Events

Wrapping up this year was bittersweet! NUA Knights had an incredibly successful year and we said goodbye to seniors who were

consistently a part of our days both during and after school. At the beginning of May we hosted the second annual Arts and Culture Knight in partnership with our incredibly popular Culture Club. Youth in Culture Club spent months planning, organizing and practicing to celebrate the wide variety of cultures represented by Central students and staff.

We wrapped up another spectacular year with Cooking Club by having students participate in our version of a “Chopped Challenge” — other than some fresh veggies, youth were challenged to make a 3 course meal with only the ingredients we had left in the fridge and pantry. They had to use what they learned throughout the year without recipes and work together to come up with dishes that would feed the whole group. To no one’s surprise they completely exceeded our expectations!

Student Enrollment and Attendance

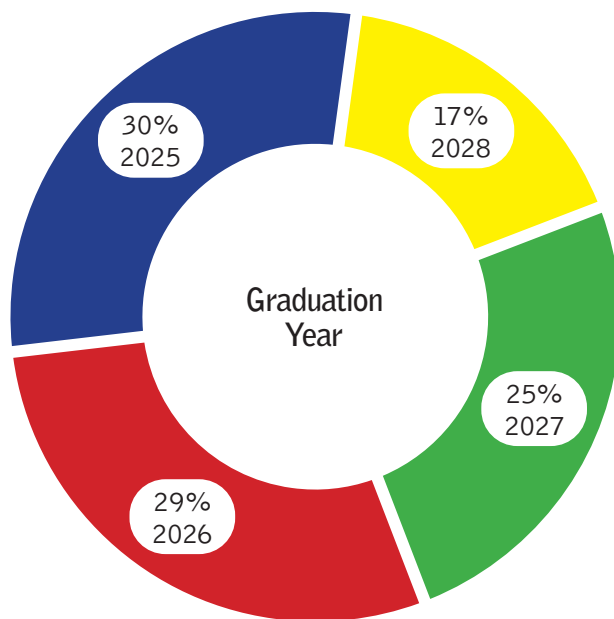
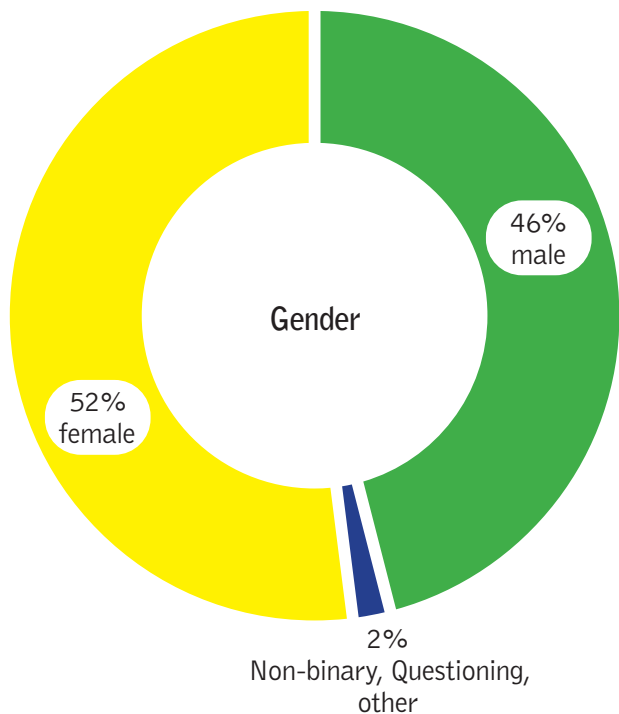
In 2022-23, NUA Knights moved to a new data metric, per our 21st CCLC grant, of students attending 15+ and 45+ hours to track consistent engagement (formerly 30+ and 60+ days). This year, we focused on offering more programs and increasing how much attending students were engaged, drastically increased the number of students hitting these benchmarks of meaningful impact.

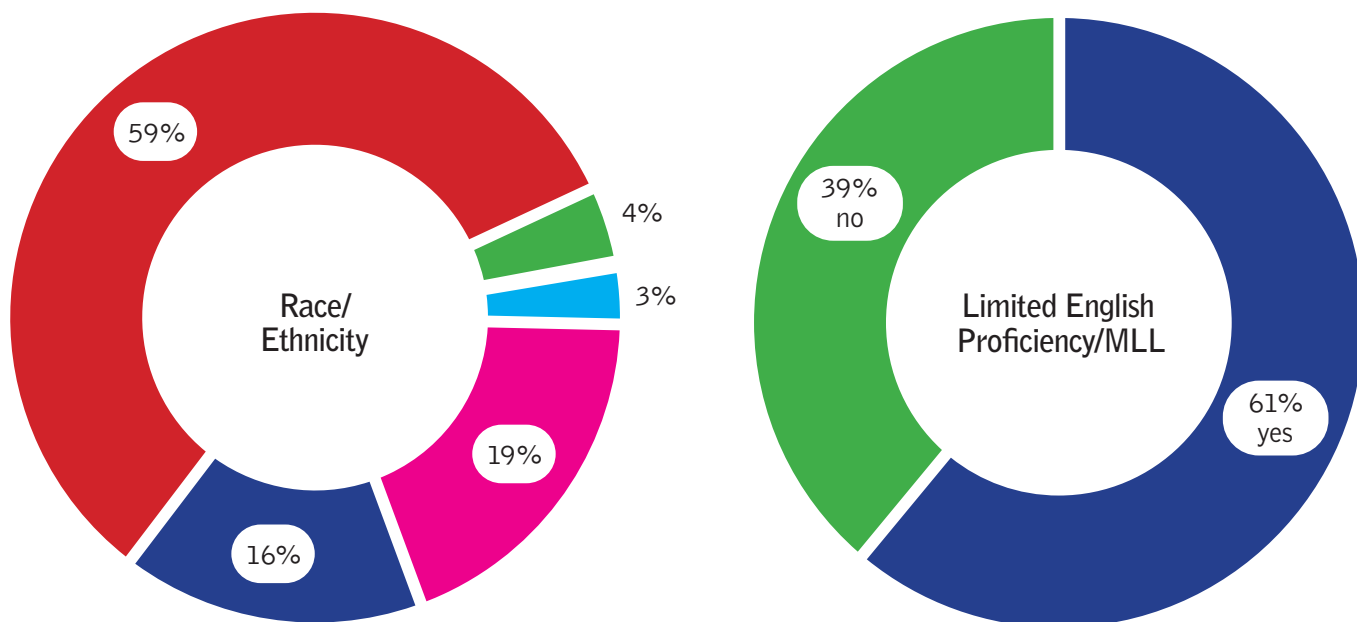
Annual	FY24-25	FY23-24	FY22-23	FY21-22	FY20-21	FY19-20
Total enrollment	305	307	300	250	237	466
Students attending 15+ hours (formerly 30+ days)	213	129	40	29	23	92
Students attending 45+ hours (formerly 60+ days)	116	53	17	6	2	38
New students registered	14	20	41	213	147	1
Students attending weekly	146	126	106	n/a	n/a	n/a

covid precautions in place covid precautions in place pandemic cuts year short

Student Demographics

NUA Knights enrolled 305 students, 95% of whom receive free or reduced price lunch, with the following demographics:





- <1% American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black/African American
- Two or More Races
- Hispanic/Latino
- White

End of Year Student Survey Results

NUA Knights administered the same survey to our students as in previous years. The Survey was on a Google Form and distributed via email, linked on social media, and available for students to take in the NUA Knights office in English and Spanish.

Student Survey Responses	2025	2024	2023	2022*	2019
Number of students who completed the survey (percentage of enrolled students)	34 (11%)	42 (14%)	18 (6%)	18 (7%)	39 (6%)

Percentage of students who selected "Always" or "Agree/Strongly Agree" as their responses to the following prompts:

At NUA Knights, I feel safe.	85%	90%	91%	83%	79%
At NUA Knights, I feel supported.	79%	90%	81%	72%	74%
At NUA Knights, I feel inspired.	82%	88%	86%	72%	64%
At NUA Knights, I feel valued.	85%	88%	91%	72%	72%
At NUA Knights, I feel cared for.	85%	90%	91%	89%	74%
At NUA Knights, I have fun.	88%	88%	91%	72%	74%
At NUA Knights, I have more confidence.	82%	83%	91%	96%	-
At NUA Knights, I have built strong, trusting relationships with my peers & adults.	94%	85%	86%	-	-
I would recommend NUA Knights to a friend.	97%	100%	100%	-	-

*Due to pandemic-related challenges, the survey was not conducted in 2020 and 2021.

The following are open-ended responses to the question, "What stands out to you about your experience at NUA Knights this year?"

- My experience at NUA was amazing because I got to meet amazing people and met Kelly and Roanny.
- It's very fun and a good experience.
- I've made a lot of connections, met the great mentors they have, and have developed skills through the process like: self confidence, my English speaking, and determination.
- What stood out to me was getting to do 3D modeling during eSports—it was creative, fun, and something new I really enjoyed.
- They're really nice people who care about helping others express themselves.
- It was a good place to come and have my lunch with my friends.
- NUA always had food for me and I enjoyed the programs.
- Cheerleading was so fun.
- I had a great experience in cheerleading this year.
- Kind people and good times.
- Book club and Write On were fun I really liked the new program because it was something that thought me how to express myself through writing.
- I was able to discover new passions and skills.
- Built strong relationships with my peers and teachers.

In the following graphic, the larger the word, the more frequently students used it in responding to the prompt, "What does NUA Knights mean to you?"



The following are responses to the question, "What does NUA Knights mean to you?"

- Love.
- It means so much to me, I'm going to miss it when I graduate.
- NUA Knights means to me New Urban Arts, a program where we all work as a team and have fun together.
- A fun experience.
- A safe place where I can be as creative as I want, learn how to do new things, do networking, and develop new skills.
- Family
- A place where I could have fun.
- Cool things to try
- New Urban Arts... and new experiences
- A place to express myself and learn more about myself.
- I like how easy it was to connect with Roanny and Kelly they welcomed me from the first day I came into the office
- Fun afterschool programs
- It's about having fun with good people and knowing that you can rely on them for some riptiks, I always had a way to make it home.
- Meaningful quality time spent after school