



July 2025 – June 2026 Year-End Program Report

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OVERVIEW

The 2025-26 school year was marked by truly flourishing programs, contrasted against difficult financial and structural problems on the administrative side. This year saw our highest student enrollment in Youth Mentorship in the Arts and most consistent student engagement at NUA Knights since before closing for the pandemic. Our student leaders in the STAB program organized the first ever NUA Prom and were deeply involved in helping create our next 5-year strategic plan with the board, staff, community, and outside consultant. We also saw increased engagement from our alumni and our youth's parents, both of which showed up more for public events. Recently graduated alumni were invited to our first alumni sleepover to reconnect with each other and the space and foster more longterm relationships. Our two sites were more successful in collaborating with each other this year, bringing NUA Knights students to the studio to make use of our darkroom and sewing machines, and our ALAS Manager Teresa to NUA Knights one day per week to help Central High students with college applications and career planning. Externally, we began a new collaboration with the Steel Yard to enroll some NUA students in an eight week course in ceramics and jewelry making. All of this new activity and increased connection was felt in the studio; our programs hummed with more excitement and there was a palpable surge in energy in our public events throughout the year. When we asked students what New Urban Arts means to them, they came back with words like safe, creative, friends, and home. One student said, "NUA is like every positive magic tree house adventure book out there, it's refreshing, you get to learn different things express yourself no matter your opinion and meet other with similar and different perspectives," and another simply wrote, "A space where I am accepted and cherished."

All of this happened alongside significant challenges on the administrative and financial side of the organization. At the end of last summer, our largest single source of funding, the five-year 21st Century Community Learning Center grant, which is administered by the local RI Department of Education but funded by the federal government, was frozen by the executive branch mere weeks before the start of the school year. This grant nearly funds the entirety of our NUA Knights program at Central High School, including summer programs, as well as part of other programs at the Westminster Street studio. After many meetings with RIDE and lots of internal planning, we came up with a strategy for how to reallocate some funding and run our programs to the same high standards as usual for the first few months while we waited for clarifying information. Fortunately, right before the start of programs, federal courts unfroze the congressionally directed money and we were able to access our award and proceed with our program year as planned, albeit administratively behind because of the hours spent working out contingencies.

While this particular incident concluded without significant material loss to the organization, it's a representative example of the kind of scrambling and challenges to our capacity resulting from many sudden decisions at the federal level throughout the year. Some decisions actually have resulted in immediate financial problems, like the reorientation of priorities at the National Endowment for the Arts, leading to our first terminated grant application since we began seeking funding there over 15 years ago. However, one of the larger goals of so much of this disruption is to dispirit people and foment fear and anxiety. In response, our community has only gotten stronger and more joyful, thanks to the flexibility and dedication of our program staff and the passion of Providence's youth.

Live Events

This was a big year for performances and live events at New Urban Arts. Even within the studio there was an increased interest in creative writing, and the ever-popular music room, with an accompanying demand for more opportunities for live shows. Our music students get the opportunity to play short sets at our gallery exhibitions throughout the year, but this year there was enough demand that we are looking for avenues to have extended student performances where individual acts can put together entire sets. In the mean time, one student took over MCing the entire Art Party event and supported transitions between other live acts. On the other side, it has been some time since there was a strong studio culture around spoken word performance, but this year we saw the continuation of a dedicated student writing group that grew in popularity. These trends can be attributed in part to returning artist mentors; our Volunteer Artist Mentors Jack and Ben have been involved in the music studio for two and three years respectively, helping our youth develop skills in music performance and production and introducing them to their peers for new combinations of sounds, perspectives, and bands. Led by our incredible Resident Artist Mentor in music, Jess, this was the first year our annual student art zine, FL!P, came with a mix CD. Fortunately, our music students did get one additional outlet for live shows through the NUA booth downtown at PVDfest.

For students at Central High School, Culture Night, put on by NUA Knights, has become an annual highlight. With the added support of the new club, the African Student Alliance, Culture Club puts on this yearly event showcasing the diversity of the students that make up our programs. There are live performances by students with singing and dancing, students wearing clothing inspired by traditional outfits, special food and snacks provided by Cooking Club, and finally, a parade of all the different cultures represented, each with their own flag. This event has grown enormously over the years and fills the Central High gymnasium with parents and community members.

Our student visual artists enjoyed a year of expanded live events as well. For the second year, we took regular walking field trips across town to various public art exhibits for Gallery Nights. These are opportunities for our students to see curated artworks in a professional setting, places they might not be aware they are allowed to enter and participate in. This year, our Gallery Nights got two exciting boosts, one of which is a new art gallery that opened just down the street, called Ritual Spaces. Students were able to visit Ritual Spaces to see an art show at the beginning of the year that featured several different NUA mentors, and at the conclusion of the year, the same space held an exhibition for Classical High School's AP Art students, many of whom also attend New Urban Arts. It is hard to overstate the impact on our students of seeing their own work in a professional gallery space outside of where they are accustomed to having afterschool programs.

This effect was significantly amplified when the Providence Department of Art, Culture + Tourism invited NUA students to put on an art show at the gallery at City Hall. On January 15th, our students took a special Gallery Night walking field trip downtown for the opening of "Holding Space: works by current New Urban Arts students." Students mingled with public gallery-goers to take a look at their own work hanging in the heart of their city. Many students dressed up and posed proudly alongside their art for photos and celebrated their friends' hard work. Rarely has our studio been completely empty on a Thursday afternoon, and rarely has it filled up so quickly (upon their return) with so much energy and pride. This show remained on display for all to see through March 16th. One of our goals at NUA is to inspire our students to build a creative practice that will help sustain them throughout their lives. The public art show at City Hall gave our students and especially inspiring and celebratory occasion at a time when they needed it most.

Finally, though the event itself won't take place during the period covered by this report, twenty students representing the Studio, NUA Knights, Providence Student Union, Young Voices, and other schools and organizations collaborated to design, plan, and produce a meaningful event for their city and peers. With support from adult leaders at New Urban Arts, Project Open Door, Providence Student Union, Young Voices, DownCity Design, and local artists and business owners, students planned the event's theme and vibe, performances, activities, safety plan, and food. Through this seven-month program, they developed broad skills in leadership, community organizing, collaboration, and communication, as well as specific learning in budget management, event planning and production, fundraising, project management, audiovisual technology, creative writing, and graphic design. Supported by a coalition of local youth-serving organizations, this event was planned and produced by Providence teens to showcase youth talent, creativity, and cultural traditions.

This project was initially born out of the chaos and disruption faced by programs serving young people, as funding reductions and rising costs plague the nonprofit sector. Seeking a joyful response to these challenges, this project aimed to deepen relationships among high school youth-serving organizations in Providence and strengthen our sector's resilience through capacity-building collaborations. What developed was Summer Celebrations, a free, family-friendly event that fostered social networks and increased community engagement by celebrating high school students, elevating shared public spaces, and connecting families to the programs and supports that help young people thrive.

This collaboration included over 30 youth-serving nonprofits in Providence that have participated in some way, from planning meetings and program support to helping spread the word to students and supporters. Local organizations that provided substantial commitment include: DownCity Design, New Urban Arts, Movement Education Outdoors, Project Open Door, Providence Student Union, RIOT!, Southside Community Land Trust, The Steel Yard, and Young Voices.



THE PROGRAMS AT NEW URBAN ARTS' STOREFRONT STUDIO

Summer Art Internships

Over the 2025 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. Students in our Summer Art Internships are given a stipend upon completion and full participation to introduce workforce readiness and help eliminate the choice between enrichment and employment that many of our students face during school vacations.

A total of 20 students attended two distinct, in-person program offerings—Art Inquiry: All Access 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 sang karaoke.

Art Inquiry: All Access

Under the guidance of artist mentors Yasmine Hassan and Kery Rodriguez, twelve students embarked on a creative journey exploring public and private spaces. This program combined classroom learning, independent study, interactive sessions with visiting artists, and immersive field trips. Highlights included visits to the Public Street Waterfront, the Resource Recovery Center, gallery walks downtown, and a special pop-up zine presentation on Providence's lost Chinatown stewarded by former Art Inquiry instructor and frequent collaborator, Jeffrey Yoo Warren. Throughout the summer, students engaged in a series of smaller projects that deepened their understanding of the politics of physical space. They applied their knowledge in a collaborative final project, specially designed planters with perennial flowers to be enjoyed by all.

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 Katrina Waldmanwerth. 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, Brown, RIC, URI, and Boston University, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. 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.

ALAS – Crafting the Future

NUA is proud to continue its partnership with Crafting the Future (CTF) for the fifth consecutive year. CTF works to diversify the fields of art, craft, and design by connecting BIPOC artists with opportunities to thrive. Due to organizational changes at Crafting the Future, the annual Teen Takeover will now run every other year, resuming in summer 2026.

Elliott School of Fine and Applied Arts

An alternative Teen Takeover program, in its fourth year, was hosted at the Elliott School of Fine and Applied Arts in Boston, during which 5 NUA students and 1 NUA staff spent a week studying wood pyrography and inlay in a community of Boston and Providence-based BIPOC students and teaching artists.

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 (a Social Work student at Rhode Island College) 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 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 youth in record-breaking numbers, reaching 83 students, including 55 seniors, the largest number of seniors since the program began. Additionally, ALAS engaged 26 alumni through various forms of communication, including email, individual meetings, alumni scholarships, and panels, and many more through our alumni listserv.

Our ALAS Manager, Teresa Conchas, has been instrumental in preparing seniors for their next steps. Over the fall, they coordinated visits from Bryn Mawr College, University of Rochester, Rhode Island College, University of Rhode Island, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, and School of the Museum of the Arts at Tufts University. She also organized several College Kickoff

workshops covering topics such as application timeline and organization strategies, introduction to college, finding and researching colleges, the Common App essay, essay-writing and feedback sessions (3), and financial aid, as well as working individually with students on the admissions and financial aid processes.

Seniors collectively achieved acceptances to over 50 colleges and universities, including: American International College, Boston University, Brandeis University, Bridgewater State University, Brown University, Bryant University, Bryn Mawr College, Clark University, College of the Holy Cross, Community College of Rhode Island, Connecticut College, Cornell University, Drexel University, Emerson College, Hampshire College, Haverford College, Johnson and Wales University, Lesley University, Massachusetts College of Art, Maryland Institute College of Art, Montserrat College of Art, Moore College of Art and Design, Oberlin College, Otis College of Art and Design, Pratt University, Providence College, Reed College, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rhode Island College, Rider University, Roger Williams University, Rochester Institute of Technology, Sarah Lawrence College, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Salve Regina University, Simmons University, The New School, Tufts University, University of Connecticut, University of Hartford, University of Maine, University of Massachusetts - Amherst, University of Massachusetts - Boston, University of Massachusetts - Lowell, University of Vermont, University of Rhode Island, University of Rochester, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Western New England University, Wheaton College, Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

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, Bryn Mawr Lantern Scholars, City of Providence Eat Play Learn, MIT Introduction to Technology, Engineering, and Science (MITES), PrepareRI Internships, Steel Yard Camps Metalhead and Mudhead, RISD Project Open Door, as well as other employment and extracurricular opportunities.

The Not College Fair, hosted at Central High School for the fourth year, saw strong participation. This free, public event brought together 25 organizations and 200 students, families, and counselors to explore career pathways and job training programs that don't require a college degree. An estimated 90% of students in attendance had not previously attended NUA programs.

We continued another successful year of our partnership with Crafting the Future, which ran in a diminished capacity due to organizational changes on their end—the "Teen Takeover" program, which had been run annually, will now take place every other year, returning next summer. This year, 5 NUA students and one staff member spent a week studying wood pyrography and inlay in a community of Boston and Providence-based BIPOC students and teaching artists at the Elliott School of Fine and Applied Arts.

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. This cohort was heavily involved in working with an outside consultant to help inform our next 5-year strategic plan. They also created and organized our first ever NUA Prom, more details about which are printed below.

Gallery Exhibitions and Other Events

Staff and Mentor Show: "Falling Together"

New Urban Arts studio hosted our annual staff and mentor show, "Falling Together," named to highlight the conflicting feelings of uncertainty that comes along with the creative process and the comfort of support that comes from making art together in

community. 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.

Artsgiving

Our students once again participated in a classic annual NUA tradition: Artsgiving. Scheduled right before Thanksgiving break, Artsgiving is a special day in the studio where everyone participates in a timed challenge. Each studio member (both mentors and students) are assigned another studio member to make a gift for in secret. Everyone has “one hour” (it’s a long hour) to make their piece and put it in the paper bag corresponding to their assigned studio mate. When it’s over, we all gather in a circle to open our gifts and try to guess who made them. It’s a fun, low-stakes way to head into vacation time, and an enduring NUA holiday.

Mid-Year Makings Exhibit

On March 6th, 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.

“Holding Space: works by current New Urban Arts students” at City Hall

This year we were invited by Providence’s Department of Art, Culture + Tourism to put on a student art show in The Gallery at City Hall. On January 15th, our staff offered the option of going on a walking field trip downtown for the opening reception of “Holding Space: works by current New Urban Arts students.” Rarely has our studio been completely empty on a Thursday afternoon, and rarely has it filled up so quickly (upon their return) with so much energy and pride. The show remained on display at the gallery at City Hall on Dorrance street through March 16th.

Alumni Sleepover

Once upon a time, NUA used to host the lock-in, an evening where students stayed up overnight in the studio to play games and hang out. While we retired this event long ago, we decided to bring it back for alumni, giving recently graduated students an opportunity to come back to the place they spent so much of their high school lives. Former students from the last few years came through to reconnect, share snacks and pizza, play games, and hang out with mentors—a diehard few even spent the night.

Gallery Nights

We continued a new practice started last year in the spring called 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 of the most exciting Gallery Nights of this year was a trip to City Hall, mentioned above.

First NUA Prom

For the first time ever, our STAB students proposed hosting a NUA Prom. With support from staff, they took the lead and organized a full-fledged dance party in the studio, with a live student music performance and DJing by Volunteer Artist Mentor, Summer Art Instructor, and NUA alum, Kery Rodriguez. The event also featured a photobooth and photo wall, organized by Volunteer Artist Mentor MJ Sanqui, and over 30 students came in costume to hang out and dance—many different dance styles were represented, like salsa, merengue, and the ever-popular Macarena.

Year-End Art Party and FL!P Release

The final public event of the year, the Art Party in May, was a grand celebration of all the artwork created by students throughout the year. Community members came together to party, see great artwork, and enjoy an unusual number of live student performances—this was a huge year for the music studio and our poetry writers. It also served as the release party for our annual student art zine, FL!P, which has continued to get more wild and ambitious: this year featured a burned mix CD in the back called the FL!P Tape, featuring students’ original songs, covers, and karaoke performances. Digital copies of this year’s FL!P and many past years are available online, at newurbanarts.org/publications, and you can check out the FL!P Tape at <https://soundcloud.com/new-urban-arts>.

Surprise Movement & Puppetry Workshop

Through a chance encounter at our favorite coffee shop, White Electric, Nick LaMedica, a performer stopping by Providence on tour with the Lion King, got a chance to learn about New Urban Arts and our students and worked with staff to through together an incredible pop-up workshop exploring movement, storytelling, collaboration, and object puppetry. Using paper, ensemble exercises, and physical improvisation, participants created expressive short-form performance work together while experimenting with attention, rhythm, breath, and visual storytelling. No puppetry or performance experience was required. This workshop, facilitated with local support from mentors Filipa Estrela, Sherly Torres, and Ricky Katowicz, was especially great for students interested in theater, visual art, dance, movement, music, devised performance, filmmaking, animation, or collaborative creation of any kind. These kinds of magical opportunities wouldn't be possible without our tightknit community of Providence artists.

School Vacation Week Programs

During the school vacation week in April, we hosted a week-long, themed mini-program, similar in some ways to our summer programs. Historically, we have run these workshops over both February and April breaks, but this year we scaled back to accommodate capacity issues. Like our summer programs, students in our break week programs are given a small stipend upon completion and full participation to introduce workforce readiness and help eliminate the choice between enrichment and employment that many of our students face during school vacations.

April Break Week Program

16 students joined us this April for "Ready Set Play," a week-long exploration of board game design. Students went to The Crypt, a local game shop in the Jewelry District, to investigate board games and see how they create a community space for people to play together. They then worked in small groups to design their own board games and spent the final afternoon of the workshop learning and playing each other's games in a round robin.

Student Enrollment and Attendance

Studio programs increased enrollment and attendance compared to last year.

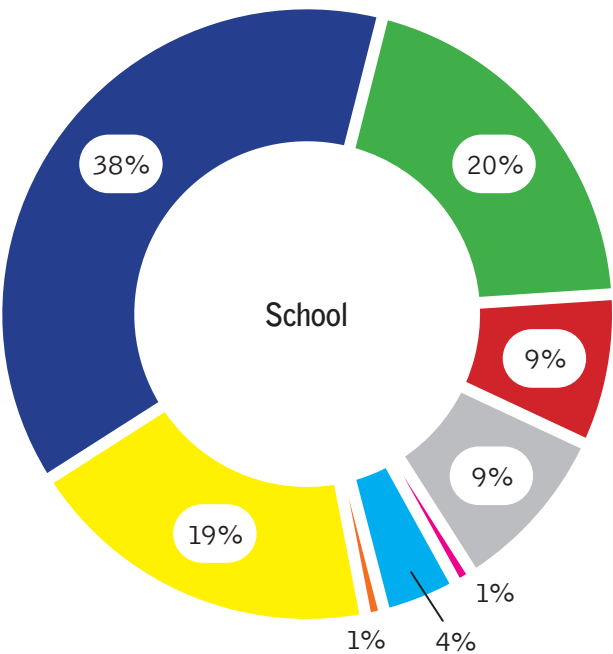
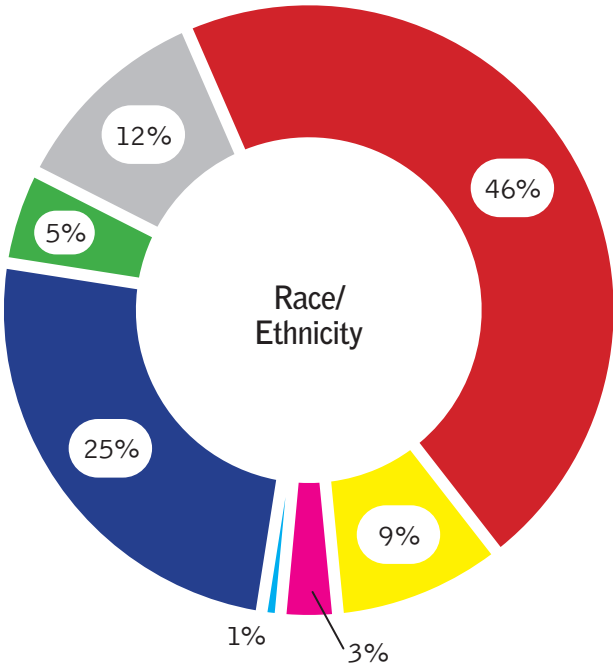
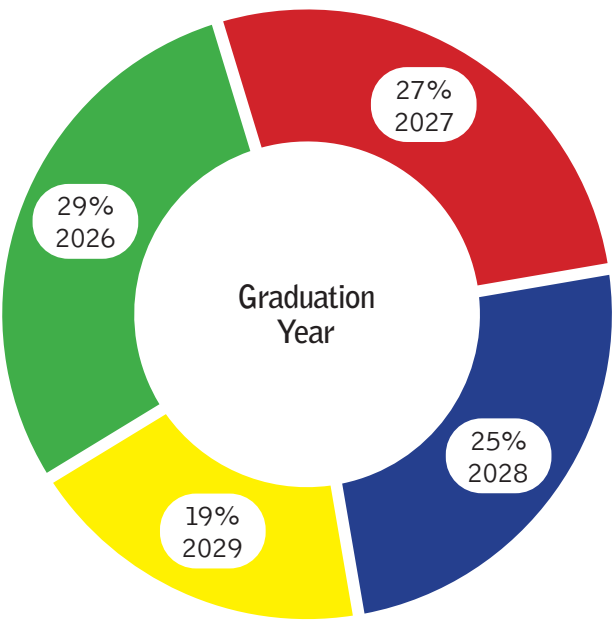
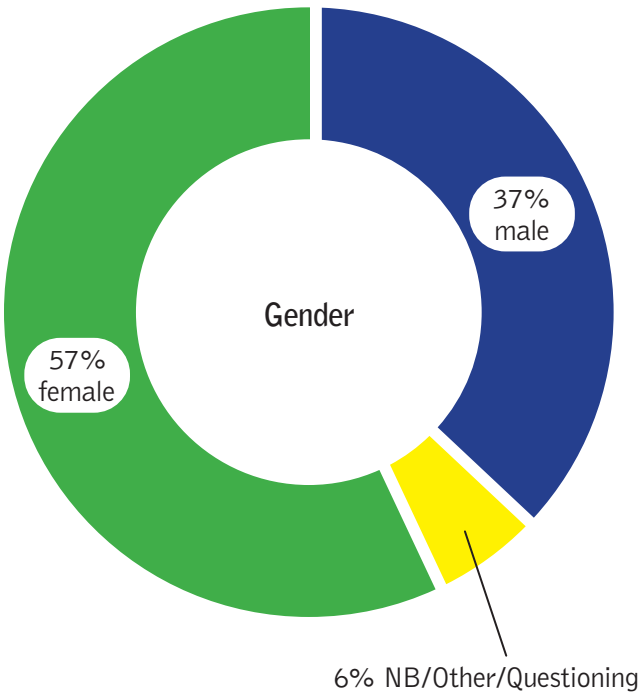
Annual	FY25-26	FY24-25	FY23-24	FY22-23	FY21-22 ¹	FY20-21 ²
Total Registered Students	585	475	519	290	235	72
Students Attending Weekly	127	75	102	93	75	8
Students Attending 15+ Hours*	187	158	180	122	-	-
Students Attending 30+ Days / 45+ Hours*	101	81	100	68	51	9
CLC Students Attending 15+ Hours*	160	132	138	94	-	-
CLC Students Attending 30+ Days / 45+ Hours*	87	66	74	56	41	3
Average Daily Attendance (Sept.-May)	45	33	35	30	23	4
Total Visits (Including Summer)	6,555	5,139	5,209	3,966	4,476	802

covid precautions in place virtual programs

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

Student Demographics

We enrolled 585 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)

- 94% qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. Of students who attended, on average, once or more per week, 98% qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. (For a family of four, an annual household income under \$59,478 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. For students participating 45+ hours this year, 81% lived in those census tracts.
- 38% of students spoke a language other than English at home.
- 49% of our students identified as LGBTQ. Of students who participated for 45+ hours this year, 57% identified as LGBTQ (LGBTQ students typically comprise only ~10% of a high school's population).
- For 66% 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	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Number of students completing the survey (percentage of enrolled students)	100 (17%)	62 (13%)	68 (13%)	50 (17%)	50 (21%)	17 (24%)
Percentage of students who reported agreeing or strongly agreeing with the following statements:						
I am more open to trying new things.	96%	95%	100%	96%	92%	88%
I have developed more confidence.	96%	93%	94%	94%	90%	88%
I have developed a way of creating that expresses who I am.	91%	87%	96%	94%	90%	94%
I have built strong, trusting relationships with my peers and adults.	94%	90%	97%	94%	90%	94%
I have improved as an artist.	95%	85%	93%	86%	86%	76%
I have developed a better idea of what I want to do in the future.	81%	82%	93%	84%	72%	76%
At New Urban Arts, I feel safe [and supported].*	95%	98%	97%	100%	96%	100%
At New Urban Arts, I feel supported.*	93%	97%	-	-	-	-
Overall, I rate New Urban Arts' programs outstanding.	75%	79%	78%	76%	84%	76%
I would recommend New Urban Arts to a friend.	100%	100%	97%	94%	98%	94%

*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?"

- I do! I love working with the music mentors because they assist me so so much in my craft. I'm still finding myself and my voice but they have been such a helpful influence.
- I like working with artist mentors because they can help me whenever I get stuck or need help with equipment. They help me learn something new and help me achieve my visions.
- I like working with an artist mentor because I gain ideas on what to create and feedback when I am seeking for it, it also provides new activities I can participate in that I possibly haven't heard of.
- Yes, because it allowed me to more easily access mediums I don't already have a good understanding of. I could learn with someone that wanted to help me, and knew a lot about the subject.
- I do because they helped me to feel more confident and understood my struggles as a singer.
- Yes, they are always working on either a project or just having fun, and seeing them in action

makes it easier for me to strike up conversations and exchange new ideas.

- YESSS I love all of the mentors they are so sweet and mean so much to me
- I do because i feel like they have different perspectives that i wouldn't have thought of to improve my music and they also just have skills that i haven't learned yet that are fun to try.
- Yes, because they teach me new things, help me improve my skills, and make learning fun.
- Yes, they inspire me and motivate me to be creative and I really enjoy it!

In the following graphic, the larger the word, the more frequently students used it in responding to the question, "What does New Urban Arts mean to you?"



The following are responses to the question, "What does New Urban Arts mean to you?"

- New Urban Arts is a safe place for me. It's a place where I could calmly do my homework, talk to friends and mentors, and be able to do whatever I want here. New Urban Arts gives structure to my schedule and is a perfect place I could go to in order to balance my academic life and my life outside of school.
- It means a lot it's a hangout place and a place I feel open and safe
- It means a lot to me actually, it helps me feel understood.
- Art development. Focus.
- It means a lot to me given this past year. As I stated before, I've been able to be myself, come out to being a part of the LGBTQIA+ community, and come out with a preferred name that I was scared to register as
- A second home!!
- What new urban arts means to me is a safe space for all different types of youth to be heard and understood
- It represents the space I always wanted to see my school, many options to chose and anything that happens is fun and full of artistic growth

- It was the gateway to me buying myself an electric guitar, it means a lot to me it helped me see what I liked I never tried a bass or electric guitar and after I started coming to NUA I grew a passion for them so I thank them a lot for helping me find something I like so much now
- It can mean a lot to me because it's like a safe haven in a way? Whenever my household gets too tense or I simply don't want to go home. Coming here is always a great alternative
- A space where I'm accepted and cherished
- It is a fun place to be after school where I can unwind and do what I love
- A place where I can come and express myself creatively.
- NUA means a creative outlet and good vibes to me! NUA 4 EVER!!!
- It means a big chunk of my life
- New Urban Arts helped me socialize more with people I don't know and that helped me with my social anxiety, I loved NUA.
- What NUA means to me is a place that I know I'm welcome to and can go and create art or play games without a worry
- It's really important that I am able to create art and it means a lot to me that I am able to have a space for that.
- It means a lot because I know where I am is safe and it's somewhere I can be myself



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 2025, 12 students participated in three in-person programs. Students were able to join multiple programs, and some students participated in all three, for a combined total of 239 summer programming hours.

Make Zines, Touch Grass!

Led by community partner, Jules Zuckerberg, this cohort met over the course of four weeks to observe, interact, and draw together, focusing on the ecosystems surrounding us in Providence. They practiced iterating on ideas in mini zine form, gathering inspiration from experiences out in nature, drawing both from imagination and observation, and then printing editions of the final projects at Binch Press X Queer.Archive.Work. Over the course of the sessions, everyone took along their nature notebook and drew on location, including a lot on Westminster Street where many wild plants were growing, Dexter Park where they studied and drew many tree species, and then the Roger Williams Park Museum of Natural History.

Photography

Mentors MJ Sanqui, Hayley Canal, and NUA Knights 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 more 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.

Fashion & Design

Run for the second year in a row by NUA Knights Fashion and Design club teacher, Alexis Gordon, youth continued to build on their fashion and design skills they had begun throughout the previous year, creating capsule pieces, full wardrobes, and collections. Students explored a variety of ways to create and design clothes/accessories including; sewing, crocheting and knitting, embroidery and clothes dyeing while exploring how fashion intersects with our everyday lives. One student even made a pair of jeans from start to finish!

Academic Year Programs

During the school year, NUA Knights fielded 14 different programs led by NUA staff, Central staff, and community members and volunteers, including ALAS at NUA Knights, African Student Alliance, Book Club, Cheerleading, Cooking Club, Culture Club, DORCAS, eSports/Video Game Club, Fashion and Textiles, Music Club, Photography, Weightlifting and Fitness, as well as Hanging with NUA Knights run by Kelly Harlow and Roanny Rodriguez. Two of these programs were new, with 7 Central teachers, 7 community partners, 3 Volunteer Artist Mentors, and one NUA staff member. While this represents a decrease in total programs offered compared to last year's record breaking numbers, the greater focus on fewer offerings resulted in more consistent engagement across the programs offered.

ALAS at NUA Knights and NUA Knights in the Studio

After a wildly successful first year, ALAS Manager Teresa Conchas again split their time to spend one programming day each week over at NUA Knights, working closely with guidance counselors and meeting weekly with a dedicated group of students to provide guidance during college and financial aid application season. Teresa led a field trip to Johnson & Wales University with a mixed cohort of Youth Mentorship in the Arts and NUA Knights students. Strengthening the connection between the two sites even further, NUA Knights programs made more use of the 705 Westminster Street studio; Hayley and Vic brought photography students to the NUA darkroom on a weekly basis, and Alexis took trips over to the studio with students who were interested in using the more robust fashion and sewing materials, including our industrial sewing machine capable of working with leather.

African Student Alliance

This year, Central High teacher Nicolsas Jimenez led the first year of the African Student Alliance. The ASA builds community by celebrating African cultures, organizing the Arts and Culture Knight with Culture Club, showcasing and highlighting all cultures represented at Central, and providing a supportive space for students of African descent. They create a safe space for students to talk about their experiences, help new students adjust, and offer peer support. The youth in ASA lead discussions, film screenings, and presentations to teach their peers about African history, geography, and current events.

April Break—Photography

Photo Club got to spend April Break honing their skills—6 youth who regularly participate in after school spent time working in the dark room at the studio, exploring the Botanical Garden at Roger Williams Park, and spent a final day at Oakland beach. Regular photo students were thrilled to have more time to dedicated to finding new locations and setting up their shots. Students submitted their final prints in the studio's year-end Art Party exhibition.

Arts & Culture Night

Now a staple of NUA Knights' school year, Culture Club put on a fantastic Arts & Culture Night in the Central High gym at the conclusion of the year. Students represented their cultures through dance performances, dramatic skits about coming to America, sharing food, and a parade of all the cultures represented at NUA Knights, some with flags and dances to match. Over 130 parents were in attendance, marking a strong year for parent involvement; many parents also checked in on programs upon picking their kids up, particularly those with younger students in the freshmen class. It has been an ongoing goal to have better

parent communication and participation in our public events, and this year was a major success.

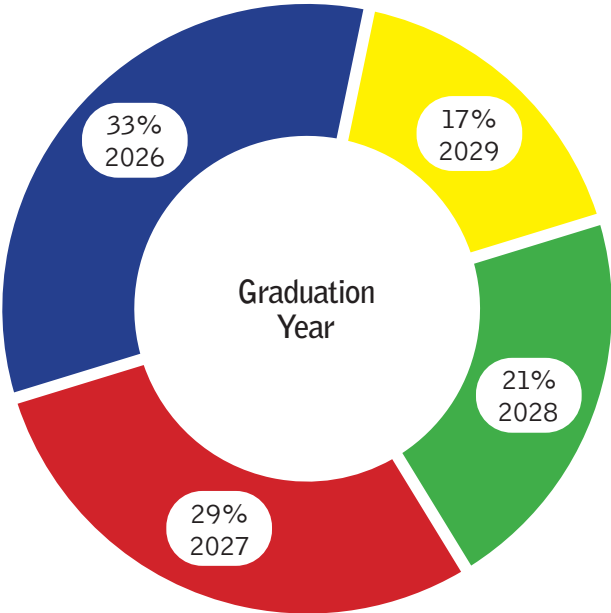
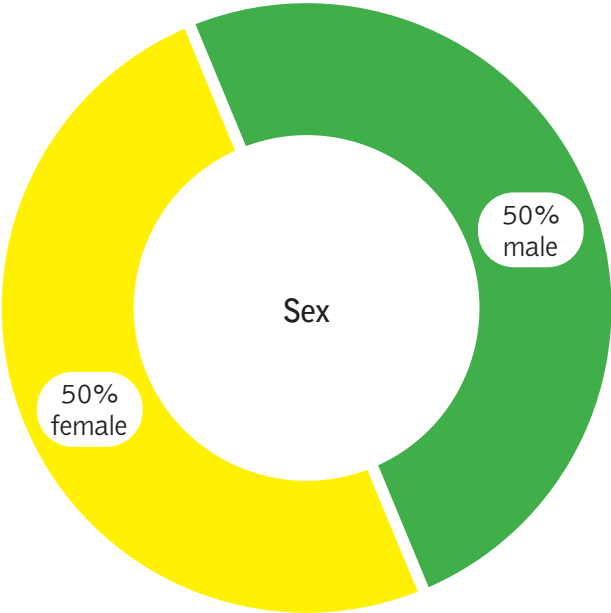
Student Enrollment and Attendance

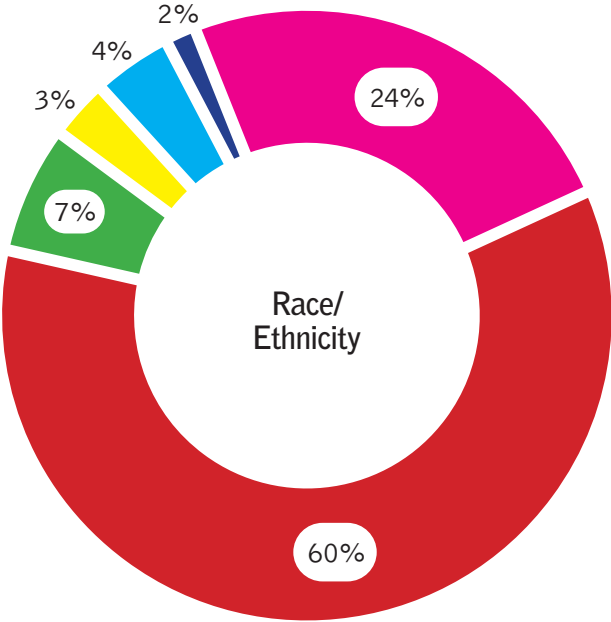
In 2022-23, NUA Knights moved to a new data metric, per our 21st CCLC grant, of students attending 15+ and 45+ hours to track consistent engagement (formerly 30+ and 60+ days). This year, we scaled back from an unprecedented number of programming offerings last year in order to focus on consistency and student engagement, drastically increasing the percentage of students hitting these benchmarks of meaningful impact.

Annual	FY25-26	FY24-25	FY23-24	FY22-23	FY21-22	FY20-21
Total enrollment	280	305	307	300	250	237
Students attending 15+ hours (formerly 30+ days)	202	213	129	40	29	23
Students attending 45+ hours (formerly 60+ days)	142	116	53	17	6	2
New students registered	45	14	20	41	213	147
Students attending weekly	n/a	146	126	106	n/a	n/a

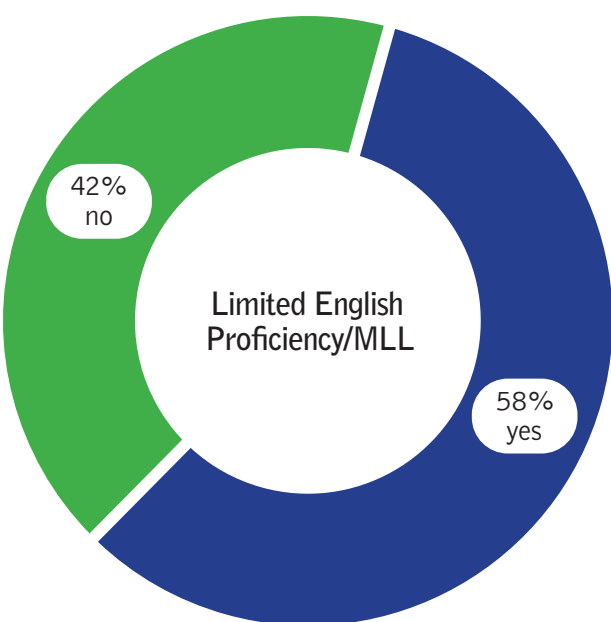
Student Demographics

NUA Knights enrolled 280 students, 93% of whom receive free or reduced price lunch, with the following demographics:





- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black/African American
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 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	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022
Number of students who completed the survey (percentage of enrolled students)	57 (20%)	34 (11%)	42 (14%)	18 (6%)	18 (7%)

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

At NUA Knights, I feel safe.	90%	85%	90%	91%	83%
At NUA Knights, I feel supported.	75%	79%	90%	81%	72%
At NUA Knights, I feel inspired.	89%	82%	88%	86%	72%
At NUA Knights, I feel valued.	81%	85%	88%	91%	72%
At NUA Knights, I feel cared for.	82%	85%	90%	91%	89%
At NUA Knights, I have fun.	89%	88%	88%	91%	72%
At NUA Knights, I have more confidence.	98%	82%	83%	91%	96%
At NUA Knights, I have built strong, trusting relationships with my peers & adults.	91%	94%	85%	86%	-
I would recommend NUA Knights to a friend.	96%	97%	100%	100%	-

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

- Hanging with NUA Knights is the most welcomed & accepted I've ever felt throughout my whole 4 years at Central
- A space to be yourself
- I love the inclusiveness because everyone is welcome
- How Kelly and Roanny are supportive and listens to you when you need them
- This is my first year here and I already have met so many new people who have made my experience at NUA truly special!
- The new people I meet everyday
- Fun, this is where I wanna be
- I feel I am ready for many things I can face in life.
- What stands out to me is how all the kids connect because of the program. They all help out each other.
- The love that's around
- The weight room is extremely fun and mind opening for gaining confidence.
- My experience at NUA as been eye opening. The mentors are intensely supportive and encouraging...
- I enjoyed the friends I made and I learned how to do so much it was really the reason why I wanted to play guitar and bought my own

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?"

- Have fun personal experiences with friends
- It's mean so much since I like doing photography and taking pictures
- NUA Knights is something that is here to encourage and inspire students
- It means everything to me because I think of it as a second home
- Learning
- A fun place to wind down after school.
- NUA Knights is place that lifts up people's spirits and helps them become their best selves.
- It way of success for a wonderful future.
- NUA Knights means being part of a supportive community where I can grow and learn new things
- My family
- It's a great opportunity to get out of your comfort zone and meet and experience new things.
- It means so much to me
- A home that welcomed everyone
- NUA is like every positive magic tree house adventure book out there, it's refreshing, you get to learn different things express yourself no matter your opinion and meet other with similar and different perspectives.
- It means a community of people, a no-judgement zone, where people can meet other people or just relax alone and enjoy their time.