



KeepArtHappening.org

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ARTS AND EDUCATION COUNCIL AWARDS \$115,000 IN ARTS AND HEALING INITIATIVE GRANTS

**ST. LOUIS – Oct. 7, 2020** – The Arts and Education Council announced today that 13 organizations have been awarded a total of \$115,000 in funding through the Arts and Healing Initiative, a new program aimed at increasing the capacity to heal through the arts. This new initiative, in partnership with Missouri Foundation for Health, aims to improve the quality of life for people throughout St. Louis City and County in its first year, and other Missouri counties in subsequent years.

The Arts and Education Council believes that healing is a transformative process of meaning, well-being or wholeness that reduces suffering or other factors that contribute to a low quality of life. Programs such as St. Louis Crisis Nursery's Healing Hearts which provides art and play interventions for children whose families are facing challenges and Saint Louis University's Justice Fleet, a mobile, social justice, pop up museum that fosters communal healing will increase the quality of life for people living in our community.

"We believe the arts have a critical role in improving an individual's health and social well-being," said Cynthia A. Prost, Arts and Education Council president and CEO. "Nearly one-half of the nation's healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families and staffs; of which 80 percent deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients. This initiative was needed in our community even before the spread of COVID-19, but now more than ever people will look for ways to heal, emotionally and physically. As our arts community continues to find innovative ways to lift our community during the pandemic, we know that they will find innovative ways to heal through the arts. I'm thankful for the support of Missouri Foundation for Health, who made this initiative possible and for the additional support from Crawford Taylor Foundation, Missouri Arts Council, Marillac Mission Fund, Graybar and Church on the Rock."

The organizations and programs that have been awarded 2020-2021 Arts and Healing Initiative grants are, in alphabetical order:

- **The Angel Band Project** *Telehealth Music Therapy for Survivors*: Board-certified music therapists with experience in trauma will conduct music therapy programs with survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence.
- **Arts as Healing Foundation** *Creative Outreach Program* will provide virtual and in-person art classes customized for two organizations in the St. Louis area: Pink Ribbon Girls, working with breast and gynecologic cancer patients, and the City of Ferguson, focusing on community residents with chronic illnesses.
- **A Call to Conscience** *Celebration of Survival Project* will use the arts, including theater, visual art and narrative storytelling, to provide info, resources, opportunity and access to restorative health.
- **Fathers and Families Support Center** *Youth Leadership and Development Program* provides integrated services and activities that reduce high-risk behaviors and increased self-sufficiency of youth, specifically between the ages of 14-24 with assistance and guidance from mentors
- **Girls Inc.** *Girls and Images of Healing* will use girl-generated photography inspired by what they "see" as relevant and healing about their homes, families and community. Girls in grades 8-12 will receive disposable cameras, learn photography techniques and be supported by experienced photographers.
- **Good Journey Development Foundation** *Xpress U Thru Art* will allow young people to explore trauma, oppression, emotions, resiliency, the ability to develop self-care, to develop community care, and ability to positively project internally and externally through the creation of art.

- **Jazz St. Louis** *Beat NF: A Jazz Music Motor Therapy Program for Toddlers with Special Needs*: Washington University Neurofibromatosis (NF) Center has developed a one-of-a-kind jazz music motor therapy program that specifically focuses on frequently delayed skills in young children with NF1, in partnership with Jazz St. Louis educational staff and St. Louis Children's Hospital Therapy Services practitioners.
- **MindsEye** *Pandemic Long-Distance Audio Description Network (PLAN): Ensuring Arts Access for Patrons with Visual Disability* will build on the success of the Audio Description Program and the Arts and Culture Accessibility Cooperative in improving quality of life and community connection of people in our region with a visual disability. This initiative will translate aspects of these programs into in-home access to ensure that patrons with a visual disability have access to the power of the arts, even amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Saint Louis University** *Radical Forgiveness and Radical Imagination with the Justice Fleet*, a mobile, social justice, pop up museum that fosters communal healing through art, dialogue, and play, expanding safe access to the arts and healing through interactive exhibits.
- **SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children's Foundation** *Dance Therapy* will help patients improve self-esteem and body image, develop effective communication skills and relationships, expand their movement, gain insights into patterns of behavior and create new options for coping with problems.
- **St. Louis ArtWorks** *Art Therapy* will be provided to participants in individual art therapy sessions at St. Louis Art Works. Their art therapist will meet with each participant at the start of every program to identify and address barriers and to engage with participants throughout the program to address issues identified by apprentices.
- **St. Louis Crisis Nursery** *Healing Hearts* provides critical art and expressive play interventions for children between the ages of 3-12 years whose families are facing challenges such as homelessness/transiency, domestic violence, extreme poverty, parental substance abuse, and significant parental health issues. Each participating child will receive their own art supply kit, delivered to their home or shelter and will be led through art and expressive play activities virtually.
- **Prison Performing Arts** *The Healing Power of Telling Your Story* allows individuals completing their sentences at the Transition Center of St. Louis, a community reentry facility in North City operated by the Missouri Department of Corrections, opportunities for self-paced, hands-on learning in their pursuit of self-awareness and healing

Applications were evaluated by the Arts and Healing Initiative Advisory Panel comprised of leaders in the arts, healthcare and research fields. The panel includes: Briana Belfiore, Sense Corp; Rebecca Bennett, InPower Institute; Jeffrey Carter, M.D., Arts and Education Council board member and Missouri Baptist Medical Center; Marty Casey, Show Me Arts Academy; Aaron Chamberlain, M.D., Washington University; Debbie Depew, D.O., St. Luke's Medical Group; Vicki Friedman, Arts as Healing Foundation; Deidre Griffith, SSM Health; David Gutmann, M.D., Ph.D., Washington University Neurofibromatosis Center; Ken Haller, M.D., Arts and Education Council board member and Saint Louis University; Terry Harris, Ed.D., Rockwood School District; Shawn Hayden, MO Southwest Initiative to Change Health; Lisa Higgins, MO Folk Arts; Kisha Lee, CareSTL; Melinda Novik, Ph.D., Missouri State University; Rev. Aaron Rogers, health equity consultant and Sheila Suderwalla, Artists First.

The Arts and Healing Initiative is supported with lead funding from Missouri Foundation for Health and additional funding from the Crawford Taylor Foundation, Missouri Arts Council, Marillac Mission Fund, Graybar and Church on the Rock.

For more information about the Arts and Education Council and the Arts and Healing Initiative, visit [KeepArtHappening.org](https://www.KeepArtHappening.org).

[Download photos and logos.](#)

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**About the Arts and Education Council: *Keep Art Happening*.** – The Arts and Education Council ensures the 16-county, bi-state region is rich with arts and cultural experiences for all through programs and services that support more than 70 organizations each year, including: general operating grants; arts incubation at the Centene Center for the Arts; PNC Program Grants; the Creative Impact Fund, with lead support from Bayer Fund; Bayer Fund Rural Community Arts Program grants; Arts and Healing Initiative, with lead funding from Missouri Foundation for Health and additional funding from the Crawford Taylor Foundation; the Art Education Fund, underwritten by Wells Fargo Advisors; the Catalyst Innovation Lab; the Katherine Dunham Fellowship; the stARTup Creative

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Competition; Leadership Roundtables; Arts Marketers; the St. Louis Suburban Music Educators Association; the Keep Art Happening Scholarship; and the St. Louis Arts Awards.

The Arts and Education Council is entirely funded by individual donors, corporations and foundations in the St. Louis region. Since its inception in 1963 as the region's only privately-supported united arts fund, the Arts and Education Council has raised and distributed more than \$100 million in private funding for the arts – a significant contribution that directly impacts the quality of life in our region. The Arts and Education Council meets all 20 Better Business Bureau Charity Standards and has earned the Wise Giving Seal of Approval, a three-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Guidestar Exchange Gold Participant rating.

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