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Executive Director Jeremy Johnson (l) with the 2017-2018 class of ArtStart Grantees. Photo Credit: Stafford Woods

Newark Arts Awards a Record 16 ArtStart Grants at Annual Meeting

Newark, NJ - June 14, 2017 - On Tuesday, June 13th, in front of a capacity crowd at Newark Arts' Annual Meeting, Executive Director, Jeremy Johnson announced the names of 16 recipients of ArtStart Grants for the 2017-2018 grant cycle. This was a 47% increase in granting by Newark Arts from last year, spurred by a 92% increase in applications.

Begun in 2001, the ArtStart program cultivates and encourages cultural activity throughout the city, especially programs involving youth and those that take place in Newark's neighborhoods. Since its inception, Newark Arts has made over 150 grant awards ranging from \$500 - \$3,000 and totaling over \$400,000.

Here is a rundown of the 2017-2018 ArtStart grantees and their programs:

- South Street School - providing students in grades five through seven with an after-school graphic design program.
- Thirteenth Avenue School - collaborating with the Newark School of the Arts to offer students tap dance instruction.

- Ironbound Community Corp - hosting a one-week intensive summer drum camp in July 2017 affiliated with the Keys 2 Success music program.
- Rafael Hernandez School of Performing Arts - partnering with the Metropolitan Opera Guild in a year-long opera program for over 120 5th grade students and teachers.
- Institute of Music for Children - aiming to develop students' comprehension and appreciation of the arts, technology, and music via The Newark Multimedia and Performing Arts (MPA) Residency Program.
- Sharron Miller's Academy for Performing Arts, Inc - continuing its successful in-school dance residency partnership at Newark's Quitman Street Community School, benefiting an estimated 370 K-8th grade students.
- Activism Through Arts - offering the program "Lower Broadway Creative Mondays", which is an opportunity for Newark residents to take free visual arts and dance classes at "The Painter's Palette NJ" in Newark.
- Dramatic Impact - bringing a Family Literacy event to four Newark schools: Louise A. Spencer/Miller, Belmont Runyon, BRICK Avon and Brick Peshine.
- Elizabeth Youth Theater Ensemble - coordinating "Granny Bombers Tiny Taggers", an intergenerational art and oral history project with senior citizens from Newark's Ironbound Senior Center and 5th graders from nearby Ann Street School.
- Forward Ever Sustainable Business Alliance - developing "The Power of Choice Exhibit" as a vehicle to explore localism in the broader contexts of its economic, social, and cultural impacts on the Newark community.
- Yendor Productions - partnering with the Girls Scouts to create a mural dedicated the Girl Scouts and its legacy as an organization.
- GlassRoots Summer Youth Leadership Corps - providing in-depth training on leadership/mentorship skills, while exposing youth to careers in art and preparing them to serve as mentors in a summer glass-experience program.
- Gallery Aferro - offering a second season of the "Aferro Mobile Portrait Studio", which travels throughout city neighborhoods creating free portraits for everyday Newarkers of all ages.
- Center for Court Innovation/Newark Community Solutions - displaying art in the main corridors of the Newark Municipal Court that reflects the strength, diversity, and history of the Newark community.
- ArtFront Galleries - creating a series of multi-week art galleries in the NHA Recreation Centers: Waterfront, Clubhouse, and TREC to bring rich cultural experiences to the under-served populations of Newark.
- Newark Mommies - hosting "Building On Books", a monthly story time with a coordinating art activity for children (under age 5) and their caregivers.

"We are truly gratified that Newark Arts can lend our support to such innovative and engaging programming, aimed at the most under-served populations in our city. The collective impact of these activities will be felt for years to come," said Susan Schear, Deputy Director of Newark Arts.



Capacity crowd at the Newark Arts Annual Meeting. Photo Credit: Stafford Woods

Held in the Lecture Room of the dynamic new “third space” for art in Downtown Newark, Express Newark, the Annual Meeting was not only packed with artists, community members and stakeholders, but also with exciting news from all sectors.

Willie Blalock of City National Bank, who sponsored the event, announced that the Newark-based financial institution will move its headquarters to the newly renovated Hahne’s Building, where Express Newark is housed. And Johnson reported out on exciting developments for the arts in the Newark, including preliminary plans for Newark Arts’ premier event, the Open Doors Citywide Arts Festival, which will take place this year from October 12th through 15th.

The ArtStart Grant Program is generously funded in party by Prudential, M&T Bank, Bank of America, Turrell Fund, New Jersey State Council on the Arts and The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

About Newark Arts (formerly Newark Arts Council): Newark Arts is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization created to advance and expand the artistic and cultural resources of the City of Newark, New Jersey. The Council’s mission is to bring the transformative power of the arts into the lives of those who live in, work in, and visit Newark. The Council is the umbrella for the Newark Arts Education Roundtable (NAER) and is a partner with the Mayor’s Office of Cultural Development, Arts, and Tourism. The Council awards neighborhood grants through its ArtStart program, produces the Open Doors Citywide Arts Festival every October, and will oversee Newark’s Community Cultural Plan in 2017-2018. For more information, visit www.newarkarts.org.

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