

Communities are Using Arts and Culture to Tackle Challenges Amid the Pandemic; and it's Working

Highlights of arts, culture and creative placemaking responses to COVID-19

DC, WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES, June 29, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, the [Center for Community Progress](#), America's leading resource on issues of vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated (VAD) properties, shared [The Saving Power of Community Creativity](#), a joint analysis with [Metris Art Consulting](#). This report highlights the efforts of creative leaders in response to the pandemic and racial injustice and seeks to inspire others trying to address acute needs through art, culture, and creative placemaking responses.

Shift from Response to Recovery:

Community Progress and Metris Arts Consulting spoke one-on-one with practitioners, most of whom work in communities that have high rates of property vacancy and abandonment, and learned that despite the challenges, creative community leaders have meaningfully engaged residents and strengthened partnerships to support collective crisis response. As communities begin shifting from COVID-19 immediate response efforts to long-term recovery, now is the time to recognize the true value that arts, culture, and creative placemaking organizations bring to community revitalization.

"The contributions of arts and cultural organizations in response to the pandemic and the most recent movement for racial justice has not only helped build community resiliency but potentially saved lives and livelihoods. It's never been clearer how much we stand to lose if we fail to give these organizations the attention they deserve." – Courtney Knox, Vice President and Director of Leadership and Education at Center for Community Progress.

□The Saving Power of Community Creativity, highlights arts and culture organizations from across the country, including:

ArtUp, a Memphis Tennessee accelerator program for creative entrepreneurs pivoted their business online due to the safety restrictions during the height of COVID-19 and implemented a new virtual entrepreneurship venture with financial support from the Memphis Mayor's Office, granting 40 homeless and housing insecure youth the opportunity to learn how to "dream up" their own businesses.

Pillsbury House + Theatre (PHT) in Minneapolis hosts community gatherings, art experiences, and needed human service resources. By engaging and responding to the community, PHT became a popular hub for community needs and resources. It now serves as a trusted space in the community, connecting neighborhood residents to the resources they need during the pandemic and beyond.

Bridge of Grace Compassionate Ministry Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana, worked with teens in its "Tired-a-Lot" studio in an effort to transform vacant lots into pocket parks. The organization guided the city through a community-engaged master planning process for the park. That effort was so successful, the city formalized the engagement process to replicate it in other neighborhoods.

"Having a resource that shows stories from other organizations that are successfully implementing place-keeping initiatives, validates the work that we do, and will spark our collective imagination to dream a better future." -Daniel Egusquiza, Founder and CEO at Barrio Alegriad Reading, Pennsylvania.

About the Report

The Saving Power of Community Creativity shares creative response to crisis recognizes the critical role of arts and culture in revitalization and shares the leader's perspectives from the field.

The Center for Community Progress and Metris Art Consulting collected data and interviewed many local leaders. This report is intended to be a reference for local leaders looking to implement creative placemaking initiatives.

To download the full report The Saving Power of Community Creativity, visit communityprogress.net/publications.

For media interviews and more information about the Center for Community Progress, email info@communityprogress.net or call (877) 542-4842 ext. 153.

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