

FALL | 20
20

FC CREATES INITIATIVE REPORT



HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS REPORT

This document is split up into four sections. Each section can be read individual or together as a whole:

FC CREATES DEVELOPMENT REPORT:
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY




EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Page 3

Everything you need to know about what FC Creates has done and will do and why, in support of Foundation Communities residents, clients, staff, and organizational growth.

GROWTH:
ARTS & CULTURAL STRATEGIES AT
FOUNDATION COMMUNITIES



PART 1: GROWTH

Arts & Cultural Strategies at Foundation Communities

Page 12

An introduction to how FC Creates started, the mission and goals of the initiative, and the engagement and research process.

ADAPTATION:
MEETING THE COVID-19 MOMENT



PART 2: ADAPTATION

Meeting the COVID-19 Moment

Page 40

How FC Creates adapted their activities to meet the challenges of COVID-19 and showed flexibility and nimbleness to support FC residents and staff in a moment of crisis.

LOOKING FORWARD:
A RESILIENT ARTS & CULTURE INITIATIVE



PART 3: LOOKING FORWARD:

Resilient Creative Community Development at Foundation Communities

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An exploration of the operations and strategic considerations that need to be in place as FC Creates grows into a resilient, long-term initiative at Foundation Communities, helping to build community throughout the organization.

Appendices can be found beginning on page 70.

FC CREATES INITIATIVE REPORT: **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



INTRODUCTION: JUST WHAT IS FC CREATES?

FC Creates is an initiative at Foundation Communities to coordinate the use of arts and cultural strategies to support the larger goals of the organization and support, clients, residents, and staff.

Beginning in 2018, a small team has worked to develop the initiative. The FC Creates team engaged with residents, clients, staff, and community organizations, researched national best practices, and implemented pilot projects.

FC Creates uses **creative community development** (CCD) practices. Creative community development – or as it’s sometimes known, creative placemaking – is the practice of using arts and cultural strategies and activities in community development work. These practices could look like physical artworks, such as a mural. Or they could look like processes, activities, and programming, such as a cooking class or even a cross-departmental artist collaboration.

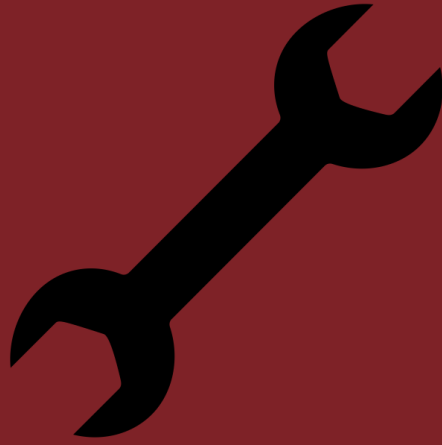
FC Creates harnesses the power of arts and culture to support FC residents, clients, and staff. The program is flexible and nimble, and supports the larger organization in a variety of areas, including programs, development, and organizational growth, to achieve many goals, such as growing resident self-efficacy, equitable organizational storytelling, public health communications, and many, many more.



At Foundation Communities, we're excited about working with residents and the arts community to find new ways to incorporate art and music into our community building work—something that is essential to creating a great place to call home.

WALTER MOREAU, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PREVIOUS PAGE PHOTO: A participant with the Daffodil Apartments Learning Center Garden mural. Photo Credit: Bianca Hernandez



ART IS THE **TOOL**, NOT THE GOAL

The purpose of creative community development at Foundation Communities is to build community for residents, clients, and staff. Art and culture are one way to build to the larger goals of supporting community through building relationships and networks; supporting organizational growth; contributing to physical and mental health; supporting pride and ownership of place; encouraging strong communications; supporting economic opportunity; and cultivating joy.

FC Creates is not “art for art’s sake.” It is using culture and art as tools to support the larger goals of community building throughout the entire Foundation Communities organization.

MISSION

FC Creates uses arts & culture to **BUILD COMMUNITY** with Foundation Communities' residents, clients, staff, volunteers, and partners.

PROGRAMS

- Enable, enhance, and support the ability of programs to use arts and cultural strategies to support program goals
- FC Creates has already been exploring opportunities with property site staff and Education and Health Initiatives



Family night at the Sierras.
Photo credit: Olivia Jimenez

AREAS OF WORK



Thunder Valley CDC.
Photo Credit: Paula Suchland

DEVELOPMENT

- Help the development team use the arts for equitable participatory design and development
- Implement arts-based placemaking, such as art installations at properties
- Explore strategies to integrate arts and cultural uses into new property development

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- Use creative problem solving as an adaptive strategy to facilitate meaningful dialogues and reflections
- Build healthy narratives about current challenges, e.g., equity, hearing resident voices, and sustainable growth
- Include residents and community partners in navigating organizational growth



Staff CCD Focus Group at Garden Terrace. Photo Credit: Ben Martin

GOALS



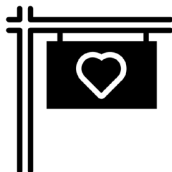
1) RELATIONSHIPS & NETWORKS: Support residents, clients, and staff to foster meaningful networks and relationships in order to build self-efficacy, social cohesion, trust, and opportunity.



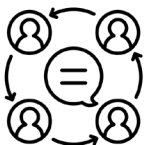
2) ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH: Contribute to equitable organizational growth at FC, through organizational storytelling, creative problem-solving, and dialogue.



3) HEALTH: Cultivate mental and physical well-being.



4) PLACE: Cultivate a shared sense of home, pride, ownership, and celebration of place at FC properties.



5) COMMUNICATION & STORYTELLING: Help identify and communicate about community successes and challenges. Amplify resident voices in organizational storytelling.



6) WORKFORCE SKILL-BUILDING: Provide professional development, skill-building, and entrepreneurial opportunities for residents, clients, and staff.

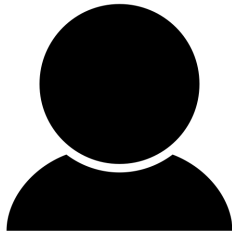


7) CELEBRATION: Cultivate a sense of community joy and belonging throughout FC for residents, clients, and staff. Support community hope and resilience.

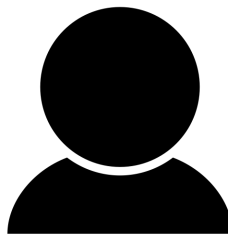
A NOTE ON EQUITY: Equity is not a separate and isolated goal. Rather, equity must be the lens through which all other initiative goals are viewed.

HOW WE ENGAGED

The development of FC Creates' mission, goals, objectives, and strategies were grounded by direct engagement with FC residents, clients, staff, and community partners. The desires, needs, and concerns of residents and clients, as well as the identification of current and potential opportunities by staff and community partners played a central, essential role in shaping the initiative.



83
residents
& clients
surveyed



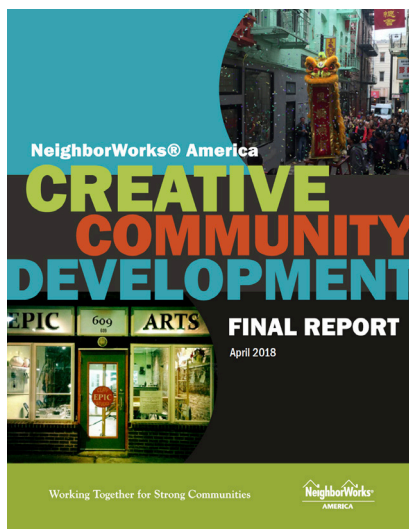
140+
staff
consulted



11
community
organizations
consulted

HOW WE RESEARCHED

In addition to centering resident and staff engagement, the FC Creates team gathered national best practices for creative community development. The team reviewed resources and interviewed national peer organizations who have operationalized this work to learn how they have found success using arts-based practice to support their residents and clients.



ABOVE (left to right): PUSH Buffalo: Performers at Ujima Theatre. Source: buffalonews.com; NeighborWorks America Creative Community Development report; The Haven: A client with Housing2Home artwork. Source: Haven Vimeo.

COVID-19 ADAPTATION

Beginning in spring 2020, the COVID-19 health and economic crisis upended business as usual at FC and in the world. The FC Creates team adapted quickly to support FC residents, clients and staff, exhibiting flexibility and nimbleness during a time of great need. These are just a few of the many projects that FC Creates has collaborated on as the organization responds to the crisis.



SUPPORTING COMMUNITY HEALTH: ARTISTS VS. COVID-19 POSTER SERIES

FC Creates teamed up with FC's Health Initiatives Team to provide a paid opportunity for residents to produce artworks featuring messaging about safety and sanitation practices during the COVID-19 outbreak.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY NETWORKS & SELF-EFFICACY: INTERGENERATIONAL PEN PAL PROJECT

FC Creates is collaborating with Austin Bat Cave and Letterpress Play on a pen pal project that pairs youth participants with elder residents at FC.



ENCOURAGING PRIDE AND OWNERSHIP OF PLACE: THE JORDAN AT MUELLER PILOT... TURNED VIRTUAL

After plans for an in-person pilot project at the new FC property were cancelled, the team collaborated with residents, site staff, and community partners to develop a series of virtual projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR FOSTERING A SUCCESSFUL FC CREATES INITIATIVE

FC Creates may take many forms depending on the needs of residents, clients, and the organization as a whole. Whatever form FC Creates takes, the following recommendations will help the initiative to be successful.

- Be nimble and flexible
- Follow the mission and goals
- Center equity
- Act as a “hub” for arts and culture activity, not the sole provider
- Reach wide throughout the organization
- Follow the energy
- Form an advisory network
- Leverage partnerships
- Pursue diverse funding
- Identify funding for at least one full-time staff member
- Address barriers to participation
- Share out stories and celebrate successes

HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH FC CREATES

FC Creates is a small, scrappy initiative. That means that we need your help to leverage arts and cultural practices to support Foundation Communities!

- Do you have an idea for a great project?
- Are you a resident or staff member who is a secret or not-so-secret artist yourself?
- Are you a community artist who wants to share your talents and contribute to your community?
- Are you passionate about the arts and how they can support Foundation Communities?

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Together, we can bring this work to life within the organization to build community, and help everyone at Foundation Communities thrive.

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<https://www.instagram.com/fccreates/>



ABOVE: Residents at Staff at Bluebonnet Studios after a Flow Painting class.
Photo: Paula Suchland

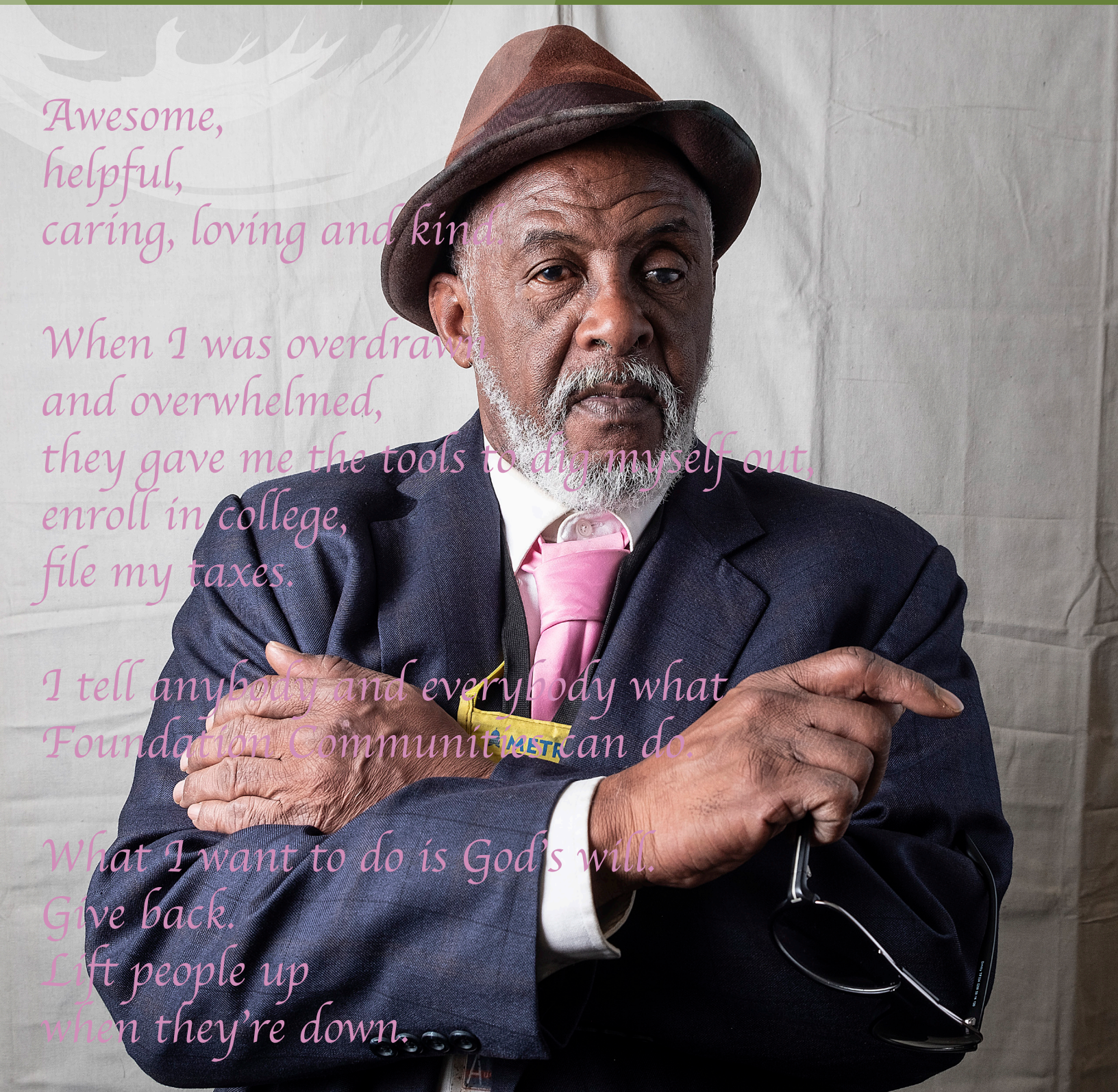
GROWTH: ARTS & CULTURAL STRATEGIES AT FOUNDATION COMMUNITIES

*Awesome,
helpful,
caring, loving and kind.*

*When I was overdrawn
and overwhelmed,
they gave me the tools to dig myself out,
enroll in college,
file my taxes.*

*I tell anybody and everybody what
Foundation Communities can do.*

*What I want to do is God's will.
Give back.
Lift people up
when they're down.*





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Pilot Projects

PREVIOUS PAGE: Resident portrait from FC South Prosper Center creative placemaking pilot.
Photo credit: Alberto Martinez. Poem by: Kathy Walsh

LEFT & DIVIDER PAGES: Staff Roadshow. Photo credit: Julie Ann Candoli

INTRODUCTION

“FC Creates” was launched in 2018-2019 to explore and expand opportunities to use arts and culture to build community and support residents, clients, and staff at Foundation Communities. Staff leaders – with the help of an Enterprise Rose Artist Fellow and arts planning consultants Civic Arts – explored cultural strategies, such as targeted arts-based programming, to support specific larger organizational outcomes. This document tells the story of how the team engaged residents, staff, and community partners, and national peers to chart a course for the arts at Foundation Communities. What we learned from residents, staff, and peers points to the important role the arts and culture can play in building community broadly throughout the organization.

This section of the report is a snapshot of the strategic development process managed by the FC Creates core team. It explores the planning activities that we facilitated and how they shaped the themes, lessons, and takeaways that ground the program. These conversations and activities reveal that FC residents and staff understand that the arts don’t have to be an end in themselves, but rather can serve as an organizational strategy to support a variety of goals, such as community resilience; contributing to organizational growth; playing a role in public health and communications; equitably amplifying resident voices; and in many other areas. Simply put, embracing the arts and culture as a tool throughout the organization contributes to better outcomes.



FC Creates and the creative placemaking process bring three words to mind: DISCOVERY, COURAGE, and JOY.

DISCOVERY: When we embarked on this opportunity, we had no idea what adventures would unfold. The chance to truly connect with members of our community—and what is important to them—has been invaluable. At FC, we look for ways to break down barriers so others feel at home. That’s the jewel in this work, and part of creating housing where families succeed.

COURAGE: To take a barely-drawn path and try something completely new is both exciting and relevatory. We have the continuing opportunity to try new things, and just as important, to fail and learn from that—for the benefit of those we serve. Without support from executive leadership, we would not have been able to undertake any of this.

JOY: My personal saying is: you can live without art, but why would you want to? We do amazing work at FC and are an extremely creative organization in how we build housing and deliver services. However, sometimes we don’t stop to celebrate what we’ve done. Through this arts and culture work, I’ve come to realize that embracing the joy does not stop your forward momentum, but rather brings others into the fold, your project, and the act of celebration. It is networking of the very best kind and a continuation of the FC community, creating relationships between staff, residents, clients, supporters, and arts organizations that will carry us forward as we continue to grow.

In retrospect, we were fortunate to have these opportunities; looking forward, it’s exciting to be able to tap additional skills and resources as they are needed. This is part of our journey as an organization and I’m proud to be a small piece of it. Thank you for joining us on this odyssey.

JULIE ANN CANDOLI, DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL GIVING

MISSION, GOALS, & VALUES



MISSION

FC Creates uses arts & culture to **BUILD COMMUNITY** with Foundation Communities' residents, clients, staff, volunteers, and partners.

EQUITY STATEMENT

Equity is not a separate and isolated goal for FC Creates. Rather, equity must be the lens through which all other initiative goals are viewed.

FC Creates proceeds from an understanding that arts-based practices can play a powerful role in helping Foundation Communities continue to work toward an organizational culture that aims for equity. Arts-based practices can help reduce barriers to participation in important organizational conversations and contribute to powerful new ways of telling the story of the impact that FC has. Creative strategies can be a tool for staff, residents, clients, and community partners working together to facilitate conversation and action around racial justice, equity, and inclusion. FC Creates understands that meaningful equity work takes time and space. The arts can be used to encourage an environment and culture of safety and inclusion that is representative of and culturally relevant to FC's diverse residents, clients, and staff. As part of FC Creates' commitment to equity, the initiative will work in collaboration with the Foundation Communities Equity Committee to support equitable growth, opportunity, and conversations, throughout all FC systems and activities.

AREAS OF WORK

FC Creates has a role to play throughout Foundation Communities' organizational structure and scope of service.

PROGRAMS

- Enable, enhance, and uplift the use of arts and cultural strategies to support program goals
- Employ and showcase artists who are FC residents
- Continue exploring opportunities with property site staff, Education and Health Initiatives



*Family night at the Sierras.
Photo credit: Olivia Jimenez*

DEVELOPMENT

- Help the development team use the arts for equitable participatory design and development
- Implement arts-based placemaking, such as art at properties
- Explore strategies to integrate arts and cultural uses into new property development



*Thunder Valley CDC.
Photo Credit: Paula Suchland*

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- Use the arts as an adaptive strategy to facilitate meaningful dialogues and reflections
- Use creative problem solving to build healthy narratives about current challenges, e.g. equity, hearing resident voices, and sustainable growth
- Include residents and community partners in navigation organizational growth



Staff CCD Focus Group at Garden Terrace. Photo Credit: Ben Martin

GOALS

RELATIONSHIPS & NETWORKS	Use the arts to bridge differences and break down barriers between communities. Develop long-term collaborations with partner organizations to support this work. Support the ability of residents, clients, and staff to develop meaningful networks and relationships within property and departmental communities and with the wider communities they are embedded in, in order to cultivate self-efficacy, social cohesion, trust, and opportunity.
ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH	Contribute to successful organizational growth at Foundation Communities, through facilitation of storytelling, experimentation, and dialogue. Create opportunity for residents to contribute to organizational storytelling and growth conversations. Use the arts and culture as a tool for creative organizational problem-solving. Use the arts and culture to attract interest and attention from funders and other supporters.
HEALTH	Collaborate with FC Health Initiatives to cultivate mental and physical well-being. Combat social isolation. Help residents and staff process trauma, express themselves, heal from loss, and build resilience.
PLACE	Cultivate a sense of home, pride, ownership, and celebration of place at FC properties. Animate shared and private spaces. Use arts-based practice to support equitable participatory design and development practices.
COMMUNICATION & STORYTELLING	Amplify resident voices. Use the arts for culturally appropriate and relevant communication about important information. Help to identify and communicate about community challenges. Contribute to how stories are told and presented in a way that empowers residents and furthers equity.
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & SKILL BUILDING	Provide professional development, skill building, and entrepreneurial opportunities for residents, clients, and staff.
CELEBRATION	Cultivate a culture of joy and belonging throughout Foundation Communities for residents, clients, and staff. Support community hope and resilience.

A group of approximately ten people are seated around a long, light-colored wooden table in a modern meeting room. They are engaged in a collaborative discussion, with some looking at papers or laptops. The room features large windows on the left side, letting in natural light. A decorative wall hanging with geometric patterns is visible in the background. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

ENGAGEMENT, RESEARCH, & EXPERIMENTATION

THE ORIGIN OF CREATIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AT FC

AN INVITATION TO EXPLORE

Foundation Communities (FC) entered into the Creative Community Development conversation in 2017, when NeighborWorks America, in collaboration with ArtPlace America, invited strategic members of the NW network to participate in an exploration of the intersection of arts and housing at two NeighborWorks Training Institutes. FC's Paula Suchland and Julie Candoli attended some of these sessions and began exploring the idea of creative community development (sometimes known as creative placemaking) at FC. This initial exploration included a peer visit to Thunder Valley CDC at the Lakota reservation in South Dakota in 2018, and connecting with Civic Arts, recognized national leaders and consultants on creative placemaking based in Austin.

SUPPORT TO DEVELOP

With an initial grant of \$60,000 from the Still Water Foundation, a FC supporter that is deeply connected to the arts and arts education, FC staff was able to retain Civic Arts to help guide this cutting-edge exploration into how to activate FC's arts and cultural resources toward better and more equitable housing, health, and educational outcomes for FC clients and residents. This grant outlined three FC arts and culture pilot projects. FC staff also applied for an Enterprise Rose Fellow to increase capacity for this work. While Rose Fellows have traditionally been architects (architect Michael Gatto was hosted by FC 20 years ago), FC was one of three housing groups nationally chosen to receive an inaugural Rose Artist Fellow.



ABOVE: Thunder Valley CDC. Photo credit: Julie Ann Candoli

EXCITEMENT FROM THE GROUND UP

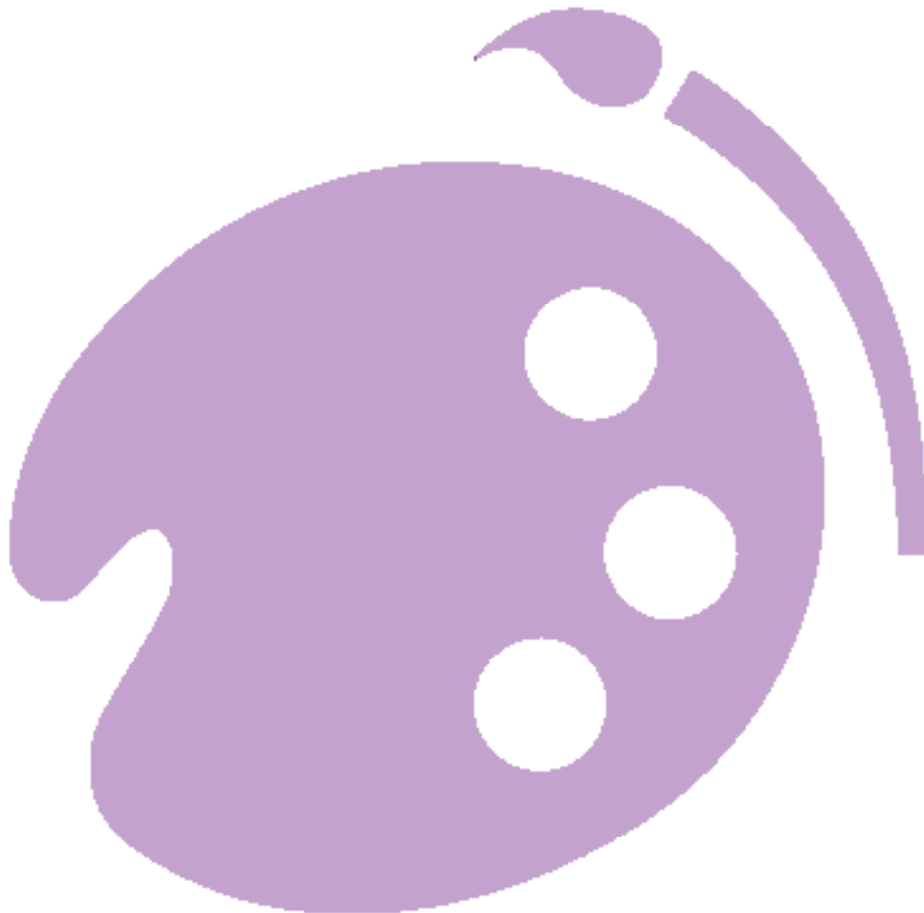
The early phases of the FC Creates process were characterized by exploration: the team simply needed to investigate the capacities, interests, and points of view toward arts and culture that were already present within FC. From there, the team spent the majority of 2019 centered on network building and outreach to staff, residents, clients, and stakeholders. This outreach leveraged their passions, interests, and ideas to help shape the opportunity. FC is a large organization, and the FC Creates team prioritized taking time to build trust, explore the unique personalities of each property, and build up a resilient initiative that is connected and operational at an organization-wide scale but also responsive to the needs of individual properties. Understanding the arts and culture work already being done in FC's properties and programs, the resources the organization already has, and the artists who live and work in our communities was critical to the growth of FC Creates.

ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

The FC Creates team facilitated engagement and outreach with staff, residents, clients, and community from March 2019 to March 2020. Given the scale and complexity of Foundation Communities' operations, it was important for the team to provide opportunities for these different groups of stakeholders' voices to all have an opportunity to contribute their ideas, ambitions, and values to the initiative planning and goal-setting process.

The following pages narrate how we:

- Reached out and listed to **residents and clients**
- Dialogued with and learned from **staff**
- Envisioned collaborations with **community partners**



LISTENING TO RESIDENTS & CLIENTS

November 2019-January 2020

The FC Creates team distributed a client and resident survey to learn directly from clients and residents about what kind of arts and culture-based activities they wish to see at Foundation Communities, and what challenges they may face in participating.

Through this survey, FC residents and clients contributed to the development of programming in their own voices, indicating their levels of interest in different activities and potential barriers. Listening to the emerging needs and wishes of clients and residents themselves is the most fundamental way that FC Creates can develop equitable and inclusive programming. The findings of the client and resident survey have been and continue to be a foundational touchstone for FC Creates programming decisions.

The Rose Fellow and FC Creates participant staff continue to learn from residents through direct relationships, resident “art ambassadors,” property staff, and the FC Board’s Resident Advisory Committee.

KEY THEMES FROM ENGAGEMENT

- **Top activities that residents are interested in include:** cooking, music, crafts, dance, and writing activities. When developing new activities and offerings, these resident priorities should be prioritized and taken into consideration.
- **Residents and clients prefer a mix of activity types:** classes and events; opportunities to participation but also to watch or listen; family and individual activities; and art at properties. About half of residents responded favorably to classes. This suggests that activity types

RESIDENT/CLIENT PARTICIPATION	
# of residents/clients surveyed	83
# of properties represented	12
RESPONDENTS BY AGE	
19 and under	4%
20-34	20%
35-44	13%
44-59	36%
60+	28%
RESPONDENTS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY	
African American or Black	11%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2%
Asian	2%
Hispanic/Latina/Latino	33%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	4%
White	39%
Multi-racial or mixed race	6%
Other response	2%

should be tailored and targeted to the wants and needs of specific properties and service communities.

- **Common barriers to participation reported by residents and clients include:** transportation, health or physical condition, childcare, and lack of time. These barriers should be considered and addressed when planning activities and opportunities.

Detailed results of the client survey are included in the appendix to this report.

SHARING & LEARNING WITH STAFF

March 2019 – March 2020

Staff guidance, participation, and enthusiasm were critical to the FC Creates initiative development process. Staff conversations drove many of the ideas and values that now form the core of FC Creates.

ROADSHOW PRESENTATIONS

May-August 2019

In summer 2019, the FC Creates team introduced FC staff to creative placemaking and the new initiative through a series of “roadshows,” where they facilitated brief presentations and conversations with departments as guests at regularly scheduled departmental staff meetings. These roadshows had three primary goals:

- 1) to provide basic information about the benefits of arts and culture for Foundation Communities and how these activities are being explored at a national level by other CDCs and funders,
- 2) to identify enthusiastic and interested staff members to become part of the FC Creates “staff advocates” network to help support and grow this work, and
- 3) to brainstorm with all staff about what arts and culture activities already occur within FC, ideas about what they would like to see, and challenges they anticipate.

HEALTH & SUSTAINABILITY INTERVIEWS

June-August 2019, & March 2020

The FC Creates team conducted a series of interviews with past and current leadership in Foundation Communities’ Health Initiatives and Sustainability programs. Interviewees reflected on lessons learned in launching and ramping up new programs at Foundation Communities, and how the FC Creates team might look to these examples as they roll out arts and culture-based service offerings.



ABOVE: Staff advocates focus group discussion. Photo credit: Ben Martin

FC CREATES IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ELEVATE THE WORK BEING DONE ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION. I THINK OF ALL THE WAYS CREATIVE PLACEMAKING ELEVATES WHAT THE SUSTAINABILITY TEAM HAS DONE IN THE PAST AND REALLY LOOK TO WHAT IS POSSIBLE IN THE FUTURE.

KATELYNN ESSIG - SUSTAINABILITY DIRECTOR

STAFF ADVOCATE FOCUS GROUPS

November 2019

Foundation Communities “staff advocates,” who were identified during the roadshows, joined the FC Creates team for focus groups to dive deeper into specific ways that they see arts and culture helping to serve FC goals, challenges that might hinder the success of this work, and potential solutions.

STAFF ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT	
ROADSHOWS	
Departments reached	13
Staff attended	138
PROGRAM LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW	
Interviewees	5
STAFF FOCUS GROUP	
Participants	18
Participating departments/properties	11

KEY THEMES & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFF ENGAGEMENT

GOALS & OUTCOMES

Staff identified numerous goals and outcomes that the arts could play a key role in pursuing at Foundation Communities. Major outcome suggestions include:

- **Equity:** Use cultural and arts-based expression to advance equity, self-determination, and sense of self for residents and clients. Uses arts-based strategies to engage more residents and clients, including through non-verbal communication. Coordinate with other equity efforts within the organization.

- **Processing Trauma:** Use cultural arts to help residents process trauma, express themselves, and heal from loss.
- **Ownership of Space:** Use cultural arts to encourage pride and ownership of space. Expand opportunity for residents and staff to activate space through art & cultural activities, to cultivate a sense of pride, ownership, and celebration of place and space throughout FC properties.
- **Culture of Safety:** Use cultural arts to foster an environment and culture of safety and inclusion that is representative of and culturally relevant to FC’s diverse residents, clients, and staff.



ABOVE: Participant with Daffodil Apartments Learning Center Garden mural. Photo Credit: Bianca Hernandez

- **Well-Being:** Cultivate mental and physical well-being and build resilience among residents & staff.
- **Professional development:** Use the arts to provide professional development, skill building, and entrepreneurial opportunities for residents and clients.
- **Community Joy:** Grow and support a culture of joy and belonging throughout Foundation Communities for residents, clients, and staff.

STAFF INNOVATION & COLLABORATION

Staff see FC Creates as an opportunity to innovate and collaborate with each other more deeply. They point out that arts and culture work already occurs in parts of the FC system, and FC Creates is an opportunity to celebrate, support, and advance that work. Staff desires to use the arts to build and strengthen FC internal relationships, resources, and capacity, fostering collaboration and creative thinking in and between departments and properties.

ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Staff are realistic about their bandwidth and ability to take on more. They recommend wherever possible to foster community partnerships and tap into national support for this work.

INITIATIVE PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

Staff shared incredible wisdom about program planning and management. In particular, staff in Health and Sustainability Initiatives were able to offer advice about how to flourish within the larger FC operation. Some of the strategies they suggest include:

- **Be Patient and Strategic:** Be patient. Build community and relationships slowly as part of the process. Build from modest “low hanging fruit” to more ambitious scope. “Failures” and lessons learned are a part of the process. Ask what we can do that doesn’t cost anything, or costs very little, but has a big impact.
- **Follow the energy:** Leverage events, activities, and programs that already occur at FC. Be mindful about staff bandwidth. Recruit arts-oriented volunteers. Work with enthusiastic residents. Build networks at the property level. Learn from and repeat successful events and activities. Give the

people what they want!

- **Address barriers to participation:** Provide tangible incentives for residents such as food or raffles. Be aware that residents have real and valid barriers to participation, such as lack of time, childcare needs, language barriers, and the absence of meaningful cultural connection.



ABOVE: Property Manager Anna Olivarez assists a Bluebonnet Studios resident during a flow painting class. Photo: Paula Suchland

- **Spread the love:** Make space for residents, staff, and partners who want to “own” or “hold” a piece of the initiative to do so. Consider mini-grants to property staff and residents with small dollar amounts and very simple reporting requirements (e.g., a photo). Use tactics like these to encourage participation, spread the impact, promote equity, and allow more staff and residents to “hold” the program.
- **Share stories:** Capture and share out success stories and outcomes. Measurable outcomes lead to more funding.

Detailed results of the staff engagement are included in the appendices of this report.

COLLABORATIVE IMAGINING WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

September 2019

The FC Creates team convened local arts nonprofit and public sector stakeholders for a focus group exploring potential partnerships and collaborations between Foundation Communities and service-oriented arts organizations. Participants brainstormed ideas for potential collaborations; explored potential shared goals and outcomes; and considered what makes for successful organizational partnerships. This focus group served as an initial jumping-off point for further organizational relationships building and ongoing discussions about collaborative programming.

COMMUNITY ARTS FOCUS GROUP SNAPSHOT	
# of participants	14
# of organizations represented	11
ORGANIZATIONS	
Art from the Streets	
Asian American Cultural Center	
Asian American Resource Center	
Austin Bat Cave	
Creative Action	
Dougherty Arts Center	
Austin School of Film	
Texas Folklife	
The Contemporary Austin	
The Thinkery	
The Umlauf	

KEY THEMES & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMUNITY ARTS FOCUS GROUP

ARTS ORGS ARE EXCITED TO WORK WITH FC

Community arts partners want to work with FC because of FC's reputation as a trusted community partner. They appreciate that FC is uniquely positioned in Central Texas and beyond to achieve broad spatial and social impact. They see a great opportunity to work with youth to process issues of identity and community change; with residents of all ages who are artists; and on physical site opportunities. They observe that when serving lower-income communities, transportation can be a barrier. Thus, they see partnerships with properties as offering mutual benefit by reducing those transportation-related barriers to delivering services.

IF THERE IS CREATIVE PLACEMAKING GOING ON, PEOPLE GET EXCITED ABOUT THAT. IT HELPS THE ORGANIZATION IN TERMS OF ALIGNING WITH WHAT PEOPLE IN AUSTIN CARE ABOUT.

KRISTEN "KG" GRABEN - EVENTS MANAGER, INDIVIDUAL GIVING

HOW TO BUILD GREAT ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Community arts participants say that successful organizations partnerships share values and goals; communicate clearly and transparently; surface assumptions; and move from a place of shared excitement and passion. FC should

approach community arts organizational partnerships with empathy, consistency, and transparency about resources and capacity.

HOW TO BE A GOOD ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATOR

Community arts partners offered many suggestions for how FC can be a good organizational collaborator: Center equity and diversity. Find areas of mission alignment between organizations. Be clear and direct about how the arts fit into the FC's mission when approaching community partners. Start with modest partnership activities and scale up gradually.

Detailed results of the community arts focus group are included in the appendices of this report.

RESEARCH

Throughout 2018-2020, the FC Creates team scanned the field for best practice and even generated three original case studies of peer organizations excelling at integrating creative placemaking into community development.

The following pages summarize:

- **Case studies** from national community development peers who are successfully putting creative community development into practice
- National **best practices** for operationalizing creative community development from leaders in the field



SUCCESS IN PRACTICE: CASE STUDIES OF PEER CDCS

In fall 2019, the FC Creates team produced three case studies of affordable housing and community development organizations that have found success using arts-based strategies to achieve their missions and serve their communities. As the intersection of community development and creative placemaking continues to grow more robust, it is important to see where other housing and community development organizations have found success. These case studies provide an up-to-date, organizationally grounded snapshot that details program origins, funding, successes, and lessons learned.

This section is a summary snapshot of the case studies. The full case studies are included in the appendices of this report.

BROADWAY HOUSING COMMUNITIES

New York, NY

Broadway Housing Communities (BHC) uses art to break down barriers between residents and neighbors, to build community connections, to grow a sense of home and ownership at their properties, and as a platform for youth expression and growth. The supportive housing provider has integrated art galleries into three of their properties. Their Sugar Hill Project in Harlem was developed and opened in parallel with the Sugar Hill Children's Museum, an expansion from BHC's galleries, which occupies the building's first floor.



ABOVE: Sugar Hill Children's Museum. Source: Shelterforce Magazine

Lessons from Broadway Housing Communities:

- **Follow the energy** of enthusiastic staff, residents, and community partners. They will be the leaders of a successful arts program.
- **Use the arts to break down barriers between communities.** Pursue opportunities in the arts that serve the needs of your service community and the larger local community mutually and simultaneously.
- Amplify the voices of children through art. Use art to **help process trauma**.

THE HAVEN

Charlottesville, VA

The Haven's Housing2Homes program helps residents navigate the transition to permanent supportive housing by using art and decor to create a sense of home and ownership in their new residence. The organization also uses arts and culinary activities to break down barriers between clients and the larger Charlottesville community, encouraging both to see themselves as part of a whole.



ABOVE: Haven client with Housing2Home artwork. Source: Haven Vimeo

Lessons from the Haven:

- **Encourage volunteerism among artists.** It takes time to build up trust and relationships between artists and your service community.
- **Give residents agency to use the arts to create their own sense of home,** place, and ownership of space.
- Understand that this might look different from other arts activities you are used to. In housing, **arts-based programs may be very personal, and not always visible to the public.**
- Leverage the arts to provide **opportunities for your service community and the larger community to “see each other”** and build relationships.

PUSH BUFFALO

Buffalo, NY

CDC PUSH Buffalo collaborates with a host of local partners to bring the arts into their programming and services. They do this in order to help clients tell their own stories with dignity; to collectively advocate for change; to honor and build up sense of place; to provide opportunities for youth expression and skill training; and to bring residents and neighbors into decision-making.



ABOVE: Students in the Squeaky Wheel Studio Program. Source: Daily Public

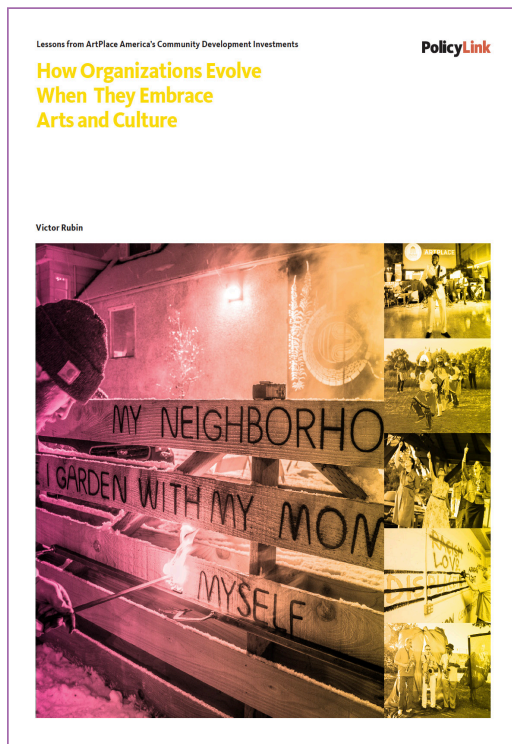
Lessons from PUSH Buffalo:

- **Let your constituents guide the direction** of your arts-based programming. They know best what they want and need.
- **Develop long-term collaborations with partner organizations** who specialize in the arts.
- **Include artists early on in the program planning process**, to make arts-based programming truly impactful.
- Make space for the arts to **help your service community advocate in their own voices**, provide economic opportunity, and celebrate culture and community.

FRAMING: NATIONAL RESOURCES & BEST PRACTICES

The core FC Creates team collected, shared, and reviewed reports, white papers, toolkits, and other resources that assembled best practices for using arts-based strategies in community development and affordable housing to pursue positive community outcomes. These resources, grounded in community development practice, provide frameworks and tell stories of what can be accomplished by using arts and cultural strategies in a community development context, and how to do it.

The following represents just a topline offering of resources and framings from the field. These are excellent resources for understanding how national leaders in creative community development frame the value of using arts-based practice and strategies in their work. These reports all contain case studies and real-world program examples that are well worth reviewing.



POLICYLINK: How Organizations Evolve When They Embrace Arts and Culture

2020

PolicyLink has been building a cross-platform resource hub for organizations that seek to grow through arts and culture practice. In spring 2020 they released a brief that shows how six pilot CDCs from across the country evolved through incorporating the arts:

- **Refined expression of values:** Organizations found new ways to express core values, leading to greater cohesion and more effective communications.
 - **Capacity for experimentation:** Organizations built greater capacity and openness to risk and experimentation.
 - **Refined definitions of success:** Organizations were able to identify different or nuanced definitions of success based on their new expressions of values.
- **Better interactions:** Organizations were able to use the arts and culture to craft more effective interactions with community members and partners.

The brief recommends four implementation steps for community development corporations to leverage creative community development practices:

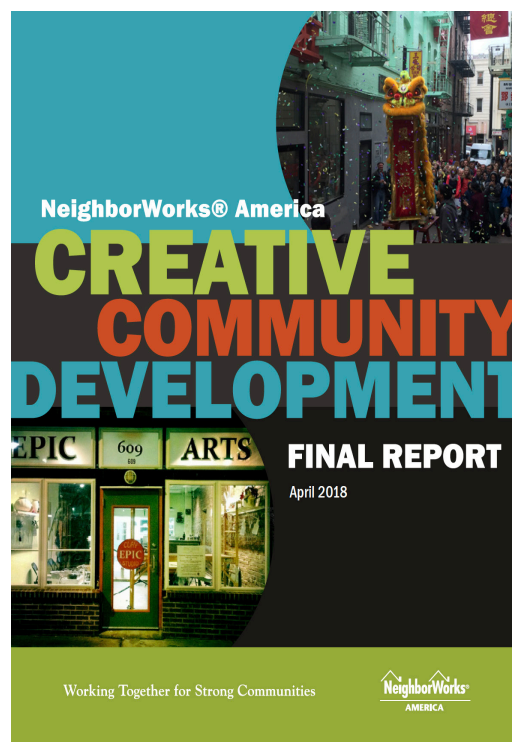
- **Share responsibility:** Assign and share responsibilities throughout staff for implementing arts and culture.
- **Use arts in planning:** Integrate arts into strategic planning process.
- **Diversify:** Diversify staff and leadership.
- **Incorporate artists:** Bring in artists as advisers and colleagues.

NEIGHBORWORKS AMERICA Creative Community Development

2018

National community development support organization NeighborWorks America produced their own exploration into creative placemaking, or what they refer to as creative community development. They identify eight areas where creative strategies can support community development work. According to NeighborWorks, creative community development can:

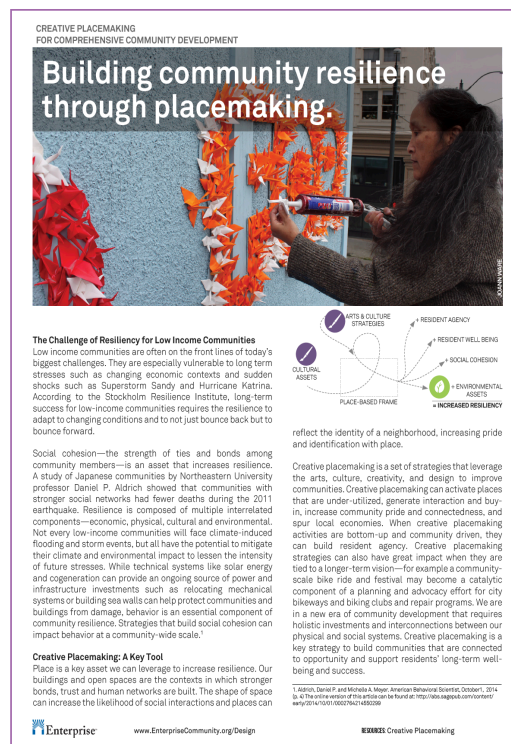
- Connect people across differences
- Improve business vitality
- Boost jobs and income
- Amplify residents' voices
- Animate public and private spaces
- Rejuvenate structures and streetscapes
- Generate imaginative problem solving
- Honor history



ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY PARTNERS: Building Community Resilience Through Placemaking 2017

This 2017 report from Enterprise identifies eight reasons that community development organizations should incorporate creative placemaking into their practice. According to Enterprise, creative placemaking can:

- Build trust
- Build social cohesion
- Get people engaged
- Protect neighborhood identity
- Counteract NIMBYism
- Create buzz
- Change neighborhood perception and make places feel more safe
- Spur economic development



The report also suggests a variety of strategies and directions for incorporating the arts and creative placemaking into community development practice:

Organizationally

- Hire artists on staff
- Have your leadership serve on arts orgs boards or visa versa
- Start an arts advisory council

In planning, design, and development

- Use arts-based engagement for design and development
- Use artists to help residents and community members highlight needed improvements
- Use the arts to engage youth in the planning process

At properties and in neighborhoods

- Brand the neighborhood, prioritizing equity, voice, and cultural history
- Address vacancy: Use art to activate vacant buildings
- Use the arts to “physicalize” proposed neighborhood changes

A CREATIVE PLACEMAKING FIELD SCAN

Exploring the Ways Arts and Culture Intersects with Housing

Emerging Practices and Implications for Further Action

Danya Sherman
April 2016

Commissioned by ArtPlace America

ARTPLACE AMERICA: Exploring the Ways Arts and Culture Intersects with Housing

2016

This housing “sector scan” by national creative placemaking support and research hub ArtPlace America identified six major strategies that can use creative placemaking to support larger affordable housing and community development goals:

- **Articulate:** Use arts strategies to help interpret, identify, and communicate about housing, neighborhood, and community challenges.
- **Nourish:** Use arts and culture to beautify properties and lift up the people who live in them. Provide opportunity through the arts for community collaborative design processes.
- **Organize:** Use arts-based tools and strategies in support of community organizing, movement-building, and collective action.
- **Bridge:** Use the arts to bring people and communities together and bridge differences.
- **Stabilize:** Use neighborhood stabilization strategies such as community land trusts to support and house long-time culture bearers and creatives.
- **Generate:** Use the arts to attract interest and attention from funders and other supporters.

PILOT PROJECTS

The FC Creates team identified three opportunities for pilot projects, in order to begin tangibly exploring how creative placemaking can look at Foundation Communities. The pilot projects were part of the Still Water Foundation initiative development grant. Each pilot was designed to help FC Creates learn more about where opportunities exist for future projects and programs, and what barriers and opportunities might need to be considered. The pilots were also an opportunity to discover what might be affordable and scalable to reproduce at many FC properties.



ABOVE: FC South Prosper Center creative placemaking pilot.

The COVID-19 crisis disrupted the planned rollout of the two main client-facing pilot projects, at Bluebonnet Studios and the Jordan at Mueller. Though the projects were not able to proceed, Rose Fellow Olivia Jiménez has continued networking and has maintained many of the client and site staff relationships she built in the ramp up to these projects. Through this continued coordination, FC Creates has adapted its

approach to using the arts and culture to better support residents and staff during this uncertain, challenging time. The adaptive strategies that the FC Creates team has undertaken to respond to COVID-19 are the subject of Part 2 of this report.

PILOT PROJECT #1: Using the arts into the FC design engagement process

January-February 2019

Early on in the FC Creates initiative planning process, the team convened FC staff, clients, and residents for an arts-based engagement to support design decision-making for the new Foundation Communities south Prosper Center. For this first pilot project, the FC Creates team worked with existing design partners to help incorporate creative community development strategies into the planning and design of the new Prosper Center. This was done through the use of photography and poetry telling the story of FC clients and residents in their own voices. These narratives launched a conversation about the needs and feelings of clients and residents as they enter into with FC offices.

From this first pilot project, the FC Creates team learned about both the strong desire on the part of staff and residents to work with arts and culture strategies in the context of their day-to-day work, but also about the challenges such work entails. We recognized that the fast pace of design and development that is needed in the creation of affordable housing can be a challenge when working to incorporate deeper resident engagement, especially using new arts-based strategies. Additionally, however, through this pilot, staff and residents were able

to communicate a great deal of interest and excitement for an arts and culture initiative at FC. This interest and these conversations were the launch point for the further staff and resident conversations that the team facilitated throughout the engagement process.

RAMPING UP RESIDENT OPPORTUNITY

Pilot Projects #2 & 3: January-March 2020

When Rose Fellow Olivia Jiménez joined the FC Creates team in fall 2019, she took on a leadership role in planning two 2020 pilot projects for FC properties.

PILOT #2: Bluebonnet Studios Arts & Culture Showcase

Existing Property, Supportive Housing for Single Adults

Olivia and the FC Creates team led a collective effort by staff, residents, and community partners to host a resident and staff arts & culture showcase at Bluebonnet Studios, turning the property's first floor into a temporary exhibition space. The plan was for the team to then review the idea of replicating the activity at other FC properties and/or scaling it into an annual event. FC Creates secured funding from the City of Austin Cultural Arts Division to support this event. The Resident Artist Showcase was scheduled for March 25th, 2020, but was postponed due to COVID-19. As we will discuss in Part 2 of this report, although the pilot as conceived was not able to happen, the relationships formed with residents for this event were reinforced later on with other opportunities, including COVID-19 public health posters for FC.



ABOVE: Event announcement for the SRO Showcase at Bluebonnet Studios. Design by Kristine Loubris/FC Creates.

PILOT #3: The Jordan at Mueller

New Property, Multi-Family Property

Preliminary planning for the third pilot at the Jordan at Mueller had just begun when the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders rolled out. The initial plan for this pilot was to outline a creative placemaking plan for the first year of operations at newly opened property, taking advantage of existing public space within the development via a cross-departmental collaborative process involving Property Management, Resident Services, the Learning Center, and Health Initiatives. The team also sought to use this opportunity to involve residents in the Mueller community at-large, and to solicit feedback on innovative community use of common spaces, for example, pop-up exhibitions, live music, and sculptures. Although the plan was disrupted, the team pivoted to “virtual programming” for the pilot, which is described in Part 2 of this report.

COVID-19 ADAPTATION

March 2020-present

Just as the FC Creates team were ramping up toward the pilots at Bluebonnet and the Jordan, COVID-19 disrupted everything. Not only were the FC Creates activities that were being planned no longer possible, but FC residents, clients, staff, and the entire world beyond the walls of FC suddenly faced life-changing public health and economic challenges.

The FC Creates team quickly began to adapt their focus and energy, understanding the great need to support residents, clients, and staff in this time of crisis. The ability of FC Creates to pivot their strategies and activities speaks to the power of the arts to help FC's community to communicate, share hope, and process trauma.

FC Creates was able to move nimbly precisely because of the relationships, passions, and shared wisdom of residents, staff, community partners, and national peers that grew over the course of the initiative development process described in this document. Everything that staff and residents built in these early days of FC Creates allowed the effort to be adaptable in this uncertain moment. This capacity for flexibility highlights the value of a full-fledged FC Creates initiative at Foundation Communities in supporting healthy, thriving, resilient communities.

The FC Creates response to the COVID-19 crisis is described in Part Two of this document.

ADAPTATION: MEETING THE COVID-19 MOMENT



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How FC Creates Contributes to FC's "Long Haul" COVID Response



PREVIOUS PAGE, LEFT, & DIVIDERS: *Mask Up: Artists vs. COVID-19 Poster. Project collaboration between residents, FC Creates & Health Initiatives. Designed by Jesse McCrum, Gabriel Reeberg, and Cynthia Pecore; facilitated by Olivia Jiménez*

INTRODUCTION: ADAPTING TO THE COVID-19 MOMENT

In March 2020, the spread of COVID-19 disrupted and transformed life across the globe. At Foundation Communities, the public health crisis necessitated an “all hands on deck” mentality to support wide-ranging assistance to residents and clients to match the wide-ranging crisis. Normal program operations were halted as FC pivoted toward meeting the moment.

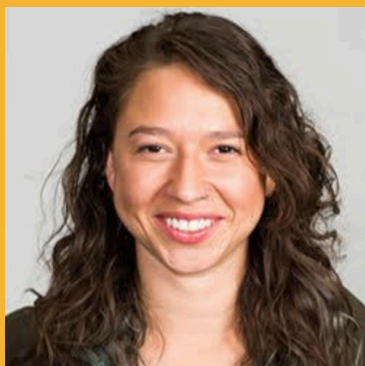
The original plan for the FC Creates team was that Spring 2020 would be a time of arrival, where the initiative planning work of the prior two years would manifest in accelerated pilot programming, new funding opportunities, and a strategic action plan and infrastructure to support the ongoing initiative. When the COVID-19 crisis began to directly impact our community, the FC Creates team shifted with the organization to meet the immediate needs of the FC community.

All of the planning, engagement, exploration and research that the FC Creates team facilitated over the prior two years oriented us to the critical role that creativity, culture, celebration, and expression plays in community resilience. Creative strategies are resilient, adaptable strategies. That is the power of creative community development: flexible, adaptable problem-solving to address complicated, dynamic community problems.

Everything that the FC Creates team learned and built over the initiative planning process positioned the young initiative to adapt nimbly to the needs of the moment. Through the work of FC Creates, creative community development is playing a key role at FC in supporting residents, clients, and staff. The team is tying adaptive strategies and outside the box thinking to best practices and existing systems to reimagine relationships, programs, and activities. These new offerings meet members of the FC community where they are at this uncertain moment, addressing issues such as:

- Supporting a community sense of hope and resilience
- Supporting successful communications (e.g., of important public health information)
- Strengthening resident networks and self-efficacy
- Combatting social isolation
- Fostering community partnerships for residents, clients, and staff
- Growing economic opportunity for residents and clients
- Encouraging pride and ownership of place for residents

This section addresses the FC Creates response to COVID-19. We describe existing and new programs and activities that FC Creates has nimbly adapted and managed. Critically, we also clarify how these new offerings tie into values, strategies, and best practices that were uncovered in the earlier research and engagement process. Finally, we address how FC Creates can and should be a continuing participant in FC's ongoing COVID-19 response.



My first six months at FC consisted largely of face-to-face interactions and delivery of programs, primarily with residents. Attempting that style of work while maintaining physical distance is basically impossible--and anything that is possible demanded extra time, energy, and frustration. COVID-19 required that we take a step back to reevaluate. It became clear very quickly that we needed to shift our approach. Currently, and moving forward, we are focusing on: ***Storytelling practices***; fostering mutually supportive, collaborative ***relationships***; and using creative strategies for ***building organizational capacity and resilience***.

We have been fortunate to work with community partners to support many of our pilot projects, and are in the process of building relationships with other service providers and organizations. This renewed focus on relationship-building has paid off exponentially, as we have been introduced to several new partners or non-arts-related opportunities. As FC residents, clients, and staff members transition into virtual spaces, we are finding new ways to stay creative, connected, and healthy. We have been able to bring together residents and staff from different properties - including North Texas - to work collaboratively, celebrate, and share stories and resources.

While a global pandemic was certainly never part of the plan, it has given us a chance to step back and refocus on our process and on creative exploration: How can arts and cultural practice support resilience? What do we know? What do we know that we don't know? Which challenges have already been addressed and what can we learn from them? Which challenges will require creative problem solving? What is the story that we are living together and how do we tell it?

OLIVIA JIMÉNEZ, FC ENTERPRISE ROSE ARTIST FELLOW

COVID RESPONSE ACTIVITIES



SUPPORTING COMMUNITY HEALTH



ABOVE: Mask Up: Artists vs. COVID-19 Poster. Project collaboration between residents, FC Creates & Health Initiatives. Designed by Jesse McCrum, Gabriel Reeberg, and Cynthia Pecore; facilitated by Olivia Jiménez

ARTISTS VS. COVID-19 POSTER SERIES

Health Initiatives, as part of their COVID-19 response, provided a paid opportunity for residents to produce collaborative artworks that featured messaging about safety and hygiene practices during the COVID-19 outbreak. These posters have been very well received, and have even been turned into t-shirts. This project was able to take advantage of the on-the-ground engagement and trust-building that Olivia did with SRO residents and staff for the Bluebonnet Pilot Artist Showcase, even though that showcase was not able to occur due to social distancing orders. The relationships and networks of resident artists that had already been developed for the

Bluebonnet pilot were critical to being able to roll out this project on such a tight timeline.

Who it's for: Residents

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Clear & engaging messaging around health and safety practices
- Supporting & paying resident artists
- Collaboration across properties and artistic disciplines

Partner: FC Health Initiatives (project lead)

Status: Currently rolling out

BILINGUAL YOGA

Health Initiatives began hosting daily (M-F) fitness classes on Zoom. Rose Fellow Olivia Jiménez supported by leading weekly bilingual (English & Spanish) yoga classes for residents, clients, staff, and community members.

Who is it for: Residents/Staff

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Support resident physical and mental health
- Support inclusive programming

Partner: FC Health Initiatives (project lead)



ABOVE: Mindfulness Moment activity

Status: Programming ongoing (Olivia led classes April-June)

MINDFULNESS MOMENTS

Olivia co-leads a daily mindfulness break in coordination with members of the Health Initiatives team. The breaks have included meditation, reflection, and other mindfulness-focused activities including creative and arts-based practices like drawing and dancing.

Who is it for: Staff

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Staff and organizational culture building
- Supporting staff mental health

Partner: FC Health Initiatives (project lead)

Status: Ongoing

POETRY AS A TOOL FOR WELLNESS

FC Creates is exploring virtual poetry workshops for residents and staff, in collaboration with a facilitator from Austin Clubhouse, who approached the FC Creates team about the project. These workshops would be skills based and support positive mental health outcomes.

Who it's for: Staff/ Residents

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Support mental health & creative expression
- Break down silos & divide between residents & staff
- Grow partnership with outside organization

Partner: Austin Clubhouse

Status: Initial development

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY NETWORKS & SELF-EFFICACY

INTERGENERATIONAL PEN PAL PROJECT

FC Creates is helping to coordinate a project that pairs youth participants from Austin Bat Cave (a nonprofit focused on youth empowerment through writing) with elder residents at FC. A third partner, Letterpress Play will print a commemorative piece at the end of the project.

Who it's for: Elder residents, starting with SROs but could expand later to elders and/or youth at family properties.

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Successful organizational partnerships with Austin Bat Cave & Letterpress Play
- Combat social isolation & encourage creative expression for seniors and youth
- Create an archive of this moment in time
- Foster community relationships beyond the walls of FC for SRO residents, and hope in a crisis moment

Partner: Austin Bat Cave, Letterpress Play

Status: Concluded

ART AMBASSADORS' CALLS

Before COVID, Olivia had facilitated regular in-person check-ins with a growing group of resident "Arts & Culture Ambassadors" at SRO properties. After shelter-in-place orders, she shifted these meetings to calls. These were intended to be a space for resident A&C

ambassadors to connect with each other, share resources, and brainstorm projects. This project has been concluded due to declining attendance, which speaks to some of the networking and digital connection challenges faced by residents during the pandemic.

Who it's for: Residents- SRO

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Resident community-building and self-resourcing
- Further brainstorming and info-gathering about what programs/projects/partnerships might be a good fit for residents

Status: Concluded

I'VE SEEN A LOT OF RESIDENTS COME OUT OF THEIR SHELL AND BEGIN TO EXPERIENCE A STRONGER SENSE OF COMMUNITY AFTER DISPLAYING THEIR WORK, AND IT'S PRETTY AWESOME.

ALYSSA RENNELL - GARDEN TERRACE, SS PROGRAM MANAGER

FC CREATES NEWSLETTER & MS TEAMS

FC Creates has continued to share out a newsletter and also activated a virtual MS Teams space to provide updates on creative activity and to share resources FC staff.

Who it's for: Staff

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Sharing resources and joy with FC staff
- Celebrating successful arts & culture work already being done by staff and community members

Status: Ongoing

CAPMETRO PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

FC Creates is coordinating with Capital Metro on a number of partnership opportunities. They worked with Capital Metro to assign a MetroAccess bus to provide free wifi hotspots from 2-8pm M-F at Trails at Vintage Creek, and possibly at other FC properties. Additionally, two FC staff members have been invited to serve on a MetroArt artist selection panel. Finally, the FC community at large has been invited to engage in ongoing MetroArt community dialogue and engagement. This emerging partnership speaks to the importance of FC Creates, specifically in terms of having staff dedicated to building and maintaining partnerships and the far-reaching ability of the program to support many aspects of FC's work.

Who it's for: Residents

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Residents can work & connect online
- Build ongoing partnership with CapMetro to support larger FC outcomes

Partner: CapMetro

Status: Currently rolling out



ENCOURAGING PRIDE AND OWNERSHIP OF PLACE

THE JORDAN AT MUELLER PILOT... TURNED VIRTUAL

After shelter-in-place orders, the FC Creates team regrouped to imagine how to proceed with a pilot for the Jordan at Mueller property, the proposed site for one of the Still Water Foundation grant pilot projects. The team has partnered with Creative Action and other community artists to reimagine the pilot as a series of virtual programs and temporary art installations connected with Barbara Jordan's legacy as an activist, environmentalist, and lover of the arts. The Jordan at Mueller Collaborative Team have been enthusiastic partners in developing these projects and have worked to keep spirits up during the pandemic and to channel resident feedback on what types of activities they would like to see directly into the programming.



ABOVE: The Jordan at Mueller Property Manager, Maria Deacon.
Photo credit: Jasmine Jackson

CREATIVITY PROVIDES A SPACE FOR US TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND RECOGNIZE FOLKS, AND REMINDS RESIDENTS THAT PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY, DRAW, PAINT, AND SING, AND THAT THOSE THOUGHTS AND IDEAS ARE VALUED.

ALYSSA RENNELL - GARDEN TERRACE, SS PROGRAM MANAGER

ART CARDS

Artists from Creative Action designed survey cards to engage with and survey residents, featuring questions like “what makes a good neighbor,” and encouraging response through expressive arts (writing, drawing, collage, etc.). Residents can then display these cards on their door, allowing them to share with neighbors in a distanced dialogue.

Who it's for: Residents

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Opportunity for residents to express themselves
- Engage with Barbara Jordan's legacy as an advocate for the arts
- Explore new ways of surveying residents

Partner: JM Collaborative Team, Creative Action

Status: In progress



ABOVE: String paintings by students at the JM Learning Center.
Photo credit: Olivia Jimenez

“ART-IVIST” YARD SIGNS

Inspired by Barbara Jordan’s legacy of activism and environmentalism, MFA candidates from UT Austin will guide Learning Center students in an exploration of climate justice, art, and activism. The students will create signs to beautify outdoor spaces and remind their neighbors of the impact their community can have on the environment.

Who it’s for: Residents - Family

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Creative opportunities for children
- Community collaboration
- Engage with the community beyond the FC property

Partners: JM Collaborative Team, Bill Rios, Giana Blasquez

Status: Currently rolling out

“STAINED GLASS MOSAICS

FC Creates is facilitating this crafting activity at the Jordan, where residents can make mosaics out of recycled lighting gels to create a “stained glass” effect. They can then hang the mosaics in their windows, creating a beautiful effect inside and outside their homes.

Who it’s for: Residents - Family

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Residents can have a hand in beautifying the places where they live
- Resource sharing
- Support community self-resourcing

Partner: JM Collaborative Team, Creative Action, Bill Rios

Status: Coming soon

EXPLORING THE DEVELOPMENT EQUATION

ENTERPRISE PROJECT MISSION WRITER WORKSHOP

Enterprise has developed tools designed to help create mission-driven and culturally resilient design processes that engage residents in the design process. Olivia is piloting a Project Mission Writer workshop first with the FC Creates team and then with the FC Design and Development team. This will be an important step towards collaboratively developing a role for FC Creates and creative community development in FC's development-side processes, beyond the initiatives work in programs.

Who it's for: Staff

What are the goals and outcomes:

- Clarity of mission & deeper engagement with resident experience for new properties
- Include resident perspectives in new designs
- Focus on why over what
- Keeping community at the forefront of the design process

Partners: Enterprise, FC Design and Development team

Status: Rolling out fall 2020

SITUATING THE COVID-19 MOMENT



NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS & BEST PRACTICES: COVID-19 ARTS RESPONSE



ABOVE: Source: Univ of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine Arts& COVID-19 Response Resource Repository

A growing body of work is developing to show how arts-based strategies can be used to help community development organizations respond to the COVID-19 crisis. The University of Florida Center for Arts and Medicine (a long-time ArtPlace partner producing valuable research at the intersection of creative placemaking and community health) has emerged as an early leader in sharing resources on arts-based COVID response with their “Arts & COVID-19 Resource Repository.” This group has been able to speak swiftly and with authority about how organizations can use the arts to support their residents and communities during this time. This resource focuses on two primary ways to use the arts and creative practice in response to COVID-19:

1) Creative practice can help advance health communication. The arts can help rapid and culturally relevant communication of critical health information to diverse communities during a community health crisis. Artists who are from specific communities or trusted in the community can help spread accurate and important information about health practices to communities.

2) The arts can help enhance connection, coping, and wellbeing for and through communities. The Center for Arts and Medicine’s larger body of work illuminates the benefits of the arts for physical and mental health and wellbeing. The arts can play an important role for individuals and communities during a crisis by providing social engagement, emotional connection, learning, and enjoyment. The arts can also activate the values of joy, hope, meaning, empathy, and resilience during this difficult time.

The UofF repository provides additional ideas, details, examples, best practices, and other resources for using creative practice in organizational COVID response. Additional resources for using the arts to respond to COVID-19 are being collected by other creative placemaking and creative community development organizations. ArtPlace America is a hub for sharing out much of this work.

RECOGNIZING OPPORTUNITIES

FUNDING

Since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, all fundraising at FC has been concentrated on unrestricted and emergency funding for direct COVID response. Per allowances from funders, a number of existing grants have been converted to unrestricted funding to respond to the crisis. So far FC has focused funding on immediate relief, including rent relief, health supplies, and food. With the ongoing crisis and basic needs for residents still in jeopardy, as well as having to take most programs virtual, apportioning funding for programs is still on the drawing board.

FC Creates has continued operating thanks to the presence of Rose Fellow Olivia Jiménez and initial funding from Still Water Foundation. As the activities described above show, FC Creates has shown flexibility in approaching this moment, working through low-cost interventions and partnerships to take action on activities and strategies to support residents, clients, and staff during this time. The presence of a full-time staff member, made possible by the Rose Fellowship, has been essential in making this pivot possible in this moment when it is not possible to pursue more substantial program funding in the short term.

The work that FC Creates has done to meet the fluid challenges of the moment show the value of arts and culture strategies for serving residents, clients, staff, and the organization as a whole. Arts and culture strategies will also be important tools for helping the organization rebuild and re-envision its narrative as the crisis stabilizes.

EMERGING PARTNERSHIPS

Understanding that the funding ecosystem is in flux, FC Creates has successfully begun to explore and expand community partnerships with groups such as Austin Bat Cave, Letterpress Play, Capital Metro, and Creative Action. These relationships operationalize the key theme of “organizational partnership” that emerged in the FC Creates engagement and research process. These partnerships are showing in practice how FC Creates can continue to work in collaboration to serve parallel goals and constituencies with community partners in order to serve FC’s clients and residents better. FC Creates looks forward to fostering new partnerships as well.



ABOVE: The Jordan at Mueller Property Manager, Maria Deacon.
Photo credit: Jasmine Jackson

DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

FC Creates has begun to explore opportunities for participatory design processes with the Design and Development team, from input on new construction through post-occupancy feedback. Arts-based design engagement can be leveraged for more equitable and inclusive design processes.

As a longer-term goal, co-locating creative space at FC properties could be a fruitful exploration. While the right opportunity has not yet come along, FC has opened its eyes to the possibility of collaborative space in future housing communities. The need for affordable creative space already existed in Austin prior to COVID and has only increased since then. The City of Austin is actively exploring opportunities to fund and provide affordable creative space, such as accelerating the Creative Space Assistance Program, organizing a cultural trust, and exploring City-owned properties for creative use. National best practices – for example, the work done by CDC’s Broadway Housing Communities, the Haven, and PUSH Buffalo featured in Part 1 of this report – show the mutual benefit for all parties that co-locating affordable housing and creative space can have. Should any of the City of Austin’s creative space funding opportunities come online, or should some other collaboration or funding opportunity emerge, Foundation Communities could be well-poised to serve broad community benefit for their own residents and clients and City-wide goals.

HOW FC CREATES CONTRIBUTES TO FC'S "LONG HAUL" COVID RESPONSE

This document has shown how FC Creates is using creative problem solving to pivot and meet the needs of the FC community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff have shown great flexibility and ingenuity in adapting their programming and rollouts to meet a fluid, uncertain situation. This adaptability will serve FC well when the COVID begins to stabilize, and as the organization begins to envision the re-building and re-strategizing process for long-term organizational and community resiliency.

CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING & SHARED NARRATIVES

The FC Creates team has already begun envisioning ways that they can support and contribute to this transition post-COVID. FC Creates will continue to bolster resiliency by organizing, sharing, and facilitating creative community development resources and activities for creative planning and problem-solving. The team will continue to support collaborative partnerships between departments, with residents, and with community partners.

As residents and clients move through the process of making sense and meaning of this crisis and its impact on their lives, FC Creates is prepared to facilitate healing-centered storytelling and trauma-informed programming. As FC residents and clients grieve, FC Creates is ready to respond with opportunities for healing-centered creative expression and processing.

IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE. AND I THINK RIGHT NOW, PEOPLE REALLY NEED A CREATIVE OUTLET TO BE OKAY. ESPECIALLY FOLKS AT SROS WHO FEEL SO ISOLATED.
KRISTEN "KG" GRABEN - EVENTS MANAGER, INDIVIDUAL GIVING

FC Creates continues to maintain and build on the resident and site staff relationships that have been cultivated by Rose Fellow Olivia Jimenez. We will continue to listen and learn from FC residents and clients about their needs, challenges, and hopes, and respond accordingly.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

This moment requires flexibility, adaptability, and reaction to complicated events that affect Foundation Communities along with the entire world. FC Creates has worked to use creative problem solving and creative community development practices to meet this moment, and support residents, clients, and staff through projects that address public health communications, staff and resident mental health, transportation, strengthening support networks, and more. When the moment is appropriate, FC Creates is prepared to be a contributing player in supporting the long-term resilience of the organization as a whole.

Fostering a role for FC Creates within the organization in the long-term is the topic of Part 3 of this report.

LOOKING FORWARD: A RESILIENT ARTS & CULTURE INITIATIVE





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PREVIOUS PAGE: *Bluebonnet Studios Flow Painting Class, Photo credit: Paula Suchland*

LEFT & DIVIDERS: *Participant with Daffodil Apartments Learning Center Garden mural. Photo Credit: Bianca Hernandez*

INTRODUCTION

FC Creates can help unlock flexibility, resiliency, and outside-the-box problem solving for residents, clients, staff, and the organization as a whole. The initiative's response to COVID has shown that it can adapt well by building from existing talents and energy and by always tying creative activity at FC to larger organizational goals and outcomes. With the uncertainty of the current moment, FC Creates will continue gestating, growing relationships, and meeting the needs of the moment with nimbleness and flexibility. FC Creates is prepared to continue evolving in order to play an important role in the character, community, and culture of FC as a whole. This document points the way to get from here to there.

This document maps out:

- What FC Creates does, why they do it, and how the initiative should go about operational decision making
- Thinking big about the full range of opportunity for FC Creates to serve residents, clients, staff, and the organization as a whole
- The elements of a successful, resilient creative community development initiative



Wow, what a journey these past two years have been. I feel privileged to work for an organization that embraces opportunity and doesn't shy away from innovative thinking and exploration. I feel proud of the approach that FC Creates took to engage all FC departments and local arts organizations in this planning process. I feel honored to have an Enterprise Rose Fellow who's been making our pilot projects come to life, even in the midst of a global pandemic.

So why creative community development at Foundation Communities? Because the time is now: staff is eager, residents are engaged, partnerships have been forged, and the potential is limitless. FC Creates is poised to build off of the momentum and trust built during our roadshows and pilot projects. Yes, we've hit some bumps along the way - COVID sure did through a wrench in traditional resident engagement strategies - but our ability to pivot and be a resource to efforts across the organization has proven successful. As we wrap up this comprehensive planning phase, we take all the insights and lessons learned thus far into our approach looking forward, following the energy and desire to turn organization challenges into opportunities through creative community development, art, culture and joy.

PAULA SUCHLAND, ASSET PROJECT MANAGER

THE ROLE OF THE INITIATIVE: WHAT FC CREATES DOES & WHY

We have learned many lessons from the engagement process, best practices from national peers, and other FC initiatives and programs about the best ways to use the arts and culture to serve FC residents, clients, and staff. We know that the horizon of opportunity is wide: Foundation Communities is a formidable organization, with hundreds of staff, thousands of residents, and tens of thousands of clients. We also know that the arts can serve a wide scope of community development and affordable housing objectives, including contributions to community health; equitable service and processes; pride and ownership of space; reducing isolation; strengthening networks, communications, and self-efficacy; and so many more.

With such a broad range of activities and outcomes to pursue, FC Creates must almost by definition serve primarily in the role of a creative strategist. The scope of opportunity and objectives is simply too vast for FC Creates to directly deliver all cultural arts activity across the organization. Indeed, the best creative community development programs at CDCs leverage partnerships and relationships – with staff, community partners, and residents themselves – to extend services beyond what is possible to accomplish alone. Partnerships are critical to this work. FC Creates may sometimes serve as the in-room facilitator for projects, but of equal importance, the initiative organizes partnerships with expert community organizations and collaborates with departments and site staff who are attuned to the specific needs of their residents and clients. While FC Creates may or may not directly coordinate or



ABOVE: Bluebonnet Studios. Foundation Communities stock photo.

deliver a particular activity, they provide the tools and resources for this work to flourish throughout Foundation Communities.

FC Creates identifies existing energy and builds opportunity from what is already fertile in the soil. They build and maintain relationships and trust with staff, leadership, residents, clients, and partners. Most importantly, they pursue projects that tie into the stated goals and objectives of the initiative and Foundation Communities as an organization. They ask questions like:

- Does this particular activity serve larger initiative and organizational goals, and how?
- Is this activity amplifying and channeling resident and staff interest and self-efficacy?
- Is this activity leveraging departmental and community partnerships to reach more ground, build relationships, and serve more efficiently?

THINKING BIG: EXPANDING AREAS OF WORK

To date, much of the activity generated by FC Creates has centered on programs. However, programs are just one of the areas of work where the arts can be of use at Foundation Communities. The arts can play a key role at FC in *development* and *organizational growth*. This section explores some ideas for growing these two areas of work.

The following pages explore ideas for growing opportunity in:

- Equitable **design and development** process
- **Placemaking** at properties
- Incorporating **cultural space** at properties
- Carving out safe space for vulnerable **organizational conversations**
- Fostering resident-involved ways of **expressing organizational culture**
- Reaching out to **new donors**

DEVELOPMENT

EQUITABLE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Foundation Communities wishes to increase opportunity for resident participation in property design and development, and the arts can play a key role in facilitating conversation and reducing barriers to participation in these design activities.

NEXT STEPS: The FC Creates team should work in collaboration with the Property Design and Development team to explore these opportunities.



ABOVE: FC South Prosper Center creative placemaking pilot



ABOVE: Bluebonnet Studios mural creation. FC stock photo.

PLACEMAKING AT PROPERTIES

One of FC Creates' goals is to help cultivate a sense of home, pride, ownership, and celebration of place. FC Creates can identify opportunities to animate shared space through resident-inclusive and resident-driven creative placemaking projects at properties.

NEXT STEPS: Placemaking at properties was a main focus of the Jordan at Mueller pilot activities pre-COVID-19. Even post-COVID, pilot activities at the Jordan will focus on place-based art and community-building. FC Creates

should continue collaborating with residents, community members, and site staff to expand these opportunities and practices. Ultimately, this work will empower collaborators with the skills and abilities to guide their own placemaking activities.

CULTURAL SPACE

The Property Design and Development team has attempted before to incorporate creative space into new property development. We can also look to national peers for examples of the integration of affordable housing and creative space, such as New York's Broadway Housing Communities and their development partnership with the nonprofit Sugar Hill Children's Museum which is integrated into one of their properties. Planning creative space as part of new housing development is a difficult equation and has a high possibility of being value engineered out of a project without appropriate funding and/or partnerships. Nevertheless, there is a clear need for affordable space for Austin's creative nonprofits, and potential opportunities exist to foster and grow long-term space-based relationships that would benefit FC residents and Austin's creative community simultaneously.

NEXT STEPS: FC Creates should continue conversations with the Property Design and Development team to explore potential for cultural space at properties, including barriers, funding, partnerships, and goals. For example, arts funding for a nonprofit cultural organization partner might lead to collaborative development that is mutually beneficial for that organization *and* FC residents. Or, FC might find that we have funders in common with arts groups (e.g., City of Austin Cultural Arts Division, the Still Water Foundation) who would be willing to partner on cultural space within FC housing.



ABOVE: Performance at Broadway Housing Communities. Source: Shelterforce Magazine

ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

HOLDING SPACE FOR DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

FC Creates is excited and poised to help Foundation Communities face the challenges that the organization is embracing right now, including equity, hearing resident voices, individual and organizational storytelling, and sustainability and resilience as the organization continues to grow. Creative problem solving and arts-based strategies can help the organization tell its story in new ways. FC Creates can help facilitate difficult conversations, leading to tangible outcomes. Arts-based practice gives physical form to process and helps create a safe space for the organization to do difficult work. FC understands that vulnerability and humanity are part of the organizational equation, and FC Creates can carve out a safe space for that vulnerability and channel it.



ABOVE: Staff roadshow. Photo credit: Julie Ann Candoli

NEW WAYS OF EXPRESSING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Creative practice can open up opportunities for residents to play new roles in telling their own stories. FC Creates can help Foundation Communities find new ways of expressing the organization's vision and values.

EXPANDING FC'S DONOR BASE

In terms of financial outcomes, expanded storytelling practices can lead to opportunities to broaden the FC donor base and bring a more diverse stream of donors into the work.

NEXT STEPS: FC Creates is ready to begin exploring ways to use the arts as an adaptive strategy in organizational growth through holding space for difficult conversations, inviting new ways of expressing organizational vision and values, and expanding FC's donor base. The FC Creates team will continue to deepen relationships and hold conversations with Foundation Communities leadership and departments. Through these conversations, the FC Creates team will help leadership and staff collaboratively envision the potential for arts-based strategies to serve organizational growth goals. FC Creates will work with leadership and staff to identify opportunities to use arts-based practice to help the organization successfully navigate growth.

A photograph of two children, a girl and a boy, standing in front of a wall covered in their own drawings. The girl is on the left, wearing a white t-shirt and dark pants, looking down at a drawing. The boy is on the right, wearing a grey t-shirt and dark pants, looking up at a drawing. The wall is covered in various drawings, including a large diamond shape, the letters 'gar', a star, and a house. The image has a blue tint.

THE SHAPE OF THE INITIATIVE TO COME

SCOPING A SUCCESSFUL FC CREATES

FLEXIBILITY & ADAPTABILITY

One critical way that FC Creates and creative strategies contribute to FC as an organization is that they can be nimble, flexible, and adaptable to meeting the needs of the moment. This flexibility is essential for FC Creates to use the arts to build community and support FC residents, clients, and staff.

CURRENT STRUCTURE & LOOKING FORWARD

The shape that FC Creates has taken so far has been determined by its initial funding. The Still Water Foundation grant has allowed two full time FC staff – Julie Candoli and Paula Suchland – to work with creative placemaking consultants Civic Arts to build out systems and goals. As that grant winds down, much of the operational work has been taken over by Rose Fellow Olivia Jimenez, whose two-year fellowship lasts through 2021. The core FC Creates team will continue to expand offerings and opportunities, and to seek out continued grant funding to support the program. Some of the core operations and initiative management structures may depend upon on funding.



ABOVE: Daffodil Learning Center Garden Visioning .Photo credit: Bianca Hernandez.

WHAT WE KNOW: HOW TO MAKE FC CREATES A SUCCESS

FC Creates must be **nimble, flexible, and adaptive** to the needs of the organization. Here are several key aspects and considerations that will make FC Creates a success as it adapts and grows. For FC Creates to be successful, the initiative must:

- **FOLLOW THE MISSION AND GOALS:** FC Creates activities should always contribute to building community - socially, physically, and organizationally - through fostering relationships and networks; facilitating organizational growth; contributing to health outcomes; encouraging pride and ownership of place; strengthening communication; supporting economic opportunity; and fostering joy.
- **CENTER EQUITY:** When done well, one of the main superpowers of arts-based practice is that it can open up new avenues and opportunities for participation to community members who are left out of standard processes. More room can be made at the table through arts-based expression and storytelling. FC Creates has the opportunity to center equity in all its work, and should formalize a channel of communication with the DEI Committee, to be a mutually supportive and accountable partner in this work.
- **ACT AS A “HUB” FOR ARTS AND CULTURE ACTIVITY, NOT THE SOLE PROVIDER:** FC Creates helps to grow new offerings, share resources and best practices, build networks, and connect partners. FC Creates may sometimes act as the provider of arts programming, but the main role of the initiative is to help spread the use of arts-based strategies throughout the organization.
- **REACH WIDE THROUGHOUT THE ORGANIZATION:** FC Creates pursues goals and outcomes that span across the entire organization. While FC Creates collaborates deeply with departments (health, sustainability, education, etc.), it should not “live” or operate exclusively within one single department. Instead, FC Creates should build mutually supportive relationships across the organization (i.e., with programs, Design & Development, the DEI Committee, etc.).
- **FOLLOW THE ENERGY:** Start from a place of resident, client, staff, and partner interest and excitement. Build organically from relationships, programs, and efforts that already exist.
- **FORM AN ADVISORY NETWORK:** Gather together staff, partners, residents, and clients who are enthusiastic and excited about this work to help “hold” a piece of the initiative and its energy by forming a mutually supportive network with FC Creates as a hub. The network can be the “cheerleaders” of the initiative, identify new opportunities, help grow and maintain relationships and connections, and employ creative placemaking strategies in their own practices.

- **LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS:** Foster long-term relationships with community arts organizations that are already experts in the work and have similar goals and objectives. Develop collaborative opportunities that serve the missions of both organizations. Be a good partner: Set mutually agreed upon goals and expectations; communicate clearly; start modestly and scale up; be a consistent presence.
- **PURSUE DIVERSE FUNDING:** Work closely with the FC Grants team to identify and aggressively pursue diverse funding opportunities that reach across departments, incorporate resident voices, and build relationships.
- **IDENTIFY FUNDING FOR AT LEAST ONE FULL-TIME STAFF MEMBER:** FC Creates has pursued low-cost interventions and partnerships to take action on activities and strategies to support residents, clients, and staff, even as long-term funding is in flux due to COVID-19. The presence of a full-time staff member, made possible currently by the Enterprise Rose Fellowship, has been essential in making this program viable and adaptable in the moment. Long-term funding for at least one full-time (or two part-time) FC Creates staff members will be critical for this work to continue to support building community at FC. Because FC Creates serves in a nimble creative strategist role, the initiative is able to exist without being staffed out aggressively.
- **ADDRESS BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION:** Acknowledge that residents have real and valid barriers to participation, such as lack of time, childcare needs, physical/mental health concerns, language barriers, and the absence of meaningful cultural connection. Work to address these barriers, for instance, providing tangible incentives for residents such as food or raffles. Make room for residents to be co-creators of the solutions to these barriers.
- **SHARE OUT STORIES AND CELEBRATE SUCCESSES:** Use FC Creates as a vessel for resident, client, staff, and organizational storytelling. Share out and celebrate FC as a community. This captures outcomes and can lead to more funding, but it also encourages sense of pride and community within the organizational community and at properties. Hold space for individual, group, and organizational reflection and narrative processing.

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THANK YOU

Still Water Foundation, Enterprise Community Partners, NeighborWorks America,
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CASE STUDY New York, NY

Source: Shelterforce Magazine

BROADWAY HOUSING COMMUNITIES

Broadway Housing Communities uses art to break down barriers between residents and neighbors, to build community connections, to grow a sense of home and ownership at their properties, and as a platform for youth expression and development.

What They Do: New York City supportive and affordable housing provider Broadway Housing Communities (BHC) has integrated art galleries into three of their properties. The Sugar Hill Project in Harlem was developed and opened with the Sugar Hill Children's Museum (an expansion from BHC's galleries) occupying the building's first floor.

Why They Do It: Broadway Housing Communities believes that simply providing "four walls" for residents is not enough, and that art can be a critical contributor to establishing their properties as permanent homes for residents, and breaking down social barriers between residents and the surrounding communities that they live in. By providing gallery space, BHC also serves low-income non-resident artists who struggle to locate places to exhibit their work. BHC's children's art and education programming channel youth expression, and plants seeds for community support and future success.

WWW.CIVICARTS.ORG

What's Their Magic: BHC's arts programming and spaces developed through organic staff and community energy, and succeed through addressing mission-aligned goals that overlap with community need and lift up staff, resident, and community leadership and participation.

BEST PRACTICE TAKEAWAYS

Follow the energy of enthusiastic staff, residents, and community partners. They will be the leaders of a successful arts program.

Use the arts to break down barriers between communities. Develop opportunities in the arts that serve the needs of your service community and the larger local community mutually and simultaneously.

Use the arts with resident and community children to **amplify their voices and to help process trauma.**

The Arts at BHC

Increasing Social Interaction

In 1997 staffers working at BHC's Rio building in Washington Heights noticed that many residents were socially isolated from each other and the surrounding community. They wondered, if residents had TVs in their own rooms, why did the Rio's recreation room also center around the TV? Might there be a better use for that space?

At the same time, they heard from artist friends and acquaintances that they were having a difficult time finding gallery space to show their work. BHC made the decision to convert the Rio's rec room into a functional art gallery, the "Rio Penthouse," despite initial resident wariness. Staff members relied on existing and developing relationships with artists in the community to get the word out about the opportunity.

These early gallery activities brought non-residents into the building. Relationships between non-resident neighbors and residents grew. Through interactions with neighbors and outside artists, some residents began to see themselves in a different light, as artists themselves, or as arts patrons. One resident-participant in these early events became an avid art collector.

The embedded gallery became such a valued part of the culture at the Rio that when BHC opened the Dorothy Day Apartments building in 2003, a mixed-use gallery/early childhood/after school center was integrated into the project development. The new space was named "Rio II" in honor of the original, and a "Rio III" gallery opened with the Sugar Hill Project in 2013.

Youth Expression & Trauma Healing

BHC addressed the absence of after school programs in some of their neighborhoods by developing programs of their own and with partners. They joined a city-wide joint-hosted after school program focused on providing a space for low-income children of color and immigrant youth.

When 9/11 happened, facilitators noticed that the children in this program were struggling and growing introverted or angry. In collaboration with artist Faith

LEFT: Source: BHC Facebook page

CENTER: Source: BHC website

RIGHT: Source: BHC website



CASE STUDY: BROADWAY HOUSING COMMUNITIES



Ringgold, the children in this group were guided through an activity creating poetry, essays, and visual artwork expressing their feelings about 9/11 and answering the prompt, “What would you do for peace?” Ringgold assembled the resulting artworks into a triptych of quilts that has been shown and celebrated at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and will be featured in 20th anniversary remembrances in 2021.

The “9/11 Peace Quilt Story” provided an emotional and expressive outlet for youth struggling with the community trauma of a post-9/11 New York, and gave them the opportunity to process their feelings collectively. The children who participated in the making art for the quilt are adults now, and many are still involved with Broadway Housing Communities. One young woman attended art school in Chicago and returned to show in one of the Rio galleries. Two other participants now work for Broadway Housing Communities, and are active in growing opportunity and supporting generational change for residents and community members.

Building a Museum

After the success of the Rio galleries, afterschool programs, and 9/11 Peace Quilt Story, conversations between BHC leadership and Ringgold led to the idea for launching a children’s museum as a part of their newest project, the Sugar Hill Project in Harlem, designed by architect David Adjaye.

The Sugar Hill Children’s Museum, which was built and developed as a part of the overall affordable housing project but exists as its own separate nonprofit, exists as a culmination of BHC’s belief in the value of integrating housing, education, and art. The blend of children’s education and exploration space with thoughtfully curated exhibits from emergent and established artists has also contributed to the success of the space.



ABOVE: Faith Ringgold quilt. Source: www.inter-relations.org/

Art to Feed the Soul

Art has continued to flourish and BHC. Due to support and donations from the community and artists who have shown there, art has overflowed from the Rio II gallery space at the Dorothy Day Apartments, and can now be found decorating all floors and areas of the building. In the over 15 years since they started displaying art at the building, the artwork has never been vandalized, which they attribute to the sense of ownership and pride it provides. Residents feel this BHC properties are their home, and that they are a part of the community. Likewise, neighbors in the surrounding communities also see the properties as part of the fabric of their neighborhood.

BHC believes that art turns housing into homes, places of pride and ownership for residents, and inspires children and provides an outlet of expression for dealing with trauma.



CASE STUDY: **BROADWAY HOUSING COMMUNITIES**

**CIVIC
ARTS**

ABOVE: Source: Sugar Hill Museum website

Recipe for Success

The Impact of the Arts

Residents have a sense of ownership over their space. Teens and youth have used art to help process collective trauma. Community connections have grown between residents and surrounding neighborhoods. Local artists have expanded opportunities to exhibit.

Scope/Programming

3 galleries at 3 properties:

The Rio Penthouse

Rio II (Dorothy Day Apartments)

Rio III (Sugar Hill Project)

The Sugar Hill Children's Museum

Artwork on display throughout properties

Vision & Strategy

Incorporate gallery and children's programming space at properties, in order to build cohesion with the neighborhood, sense of ownership and pride in place, and as an outlet and inspiration for children.

Goals

Integrate residents into surrounding communities.

Grow a sense of properties as long-term homes.

Provide opportunities for artists in surrounding communities to show their work.

Help children express themselves and deal with community trauma.

Key Players & Partners

Initial program development was driven by staff member excitement and energy. Staff members like Ana-Ofelia Rodriguez noticed resident isolation and community artist need for space to show their work, and pushed for a mutually supportive solution to these problems in the Rio Penthouse gallery. The success of this program and organizational culture shift made the integration of a gallery space into the development of new properties a natural fit.

The organic enthusiasm and desire to participate from artists and community members also drove the success of the program, and BHC succeeded in crafting the opportunity to channel that enthusiasm

WWW.CIVICARTS.ORG

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CASE STUDY: BROADWAY HOUSING COMMUNITIES



in a way that was beneficial for residents and community members alike.

Staffing

BHC Director of Community Engagement Ana-Ofelia Rodriguez is the only staff member at BHC who manages arts programming. The children's museum is a separate organization, and is staffed appropriately. Rodriguez relies on community volunteers to help run the gallery spaces, including two volunteer curators.

Funding

The Rio galleries are a mostly unfunded project, and have been possible mainly through repurposing existing space or setting aside space in projects already underway.

The museum was split off as a separate non-profit partially to open up other opportunities for grants and foundational funding that might not be available or likely for an affordable housing provider. In the short term, the museum has been supported in part through BHC operational funds, with a short-term plan from launch for financial independence and sustainability that both organizations feel confident of achieving.

LESSONS LEARNED & BEST PRACTICES:

Participation in **artistic expression** can contribute to long-term change for children dealing with community trauma.

For a successful program, **follow residents needs and staff energy.** Successful program development at BHC was driven by staff and community enthusiasm.

Look for opportunities to **address mutual needs from residents and the community at-large** simultaneously.

Use arts programming to **lift up staff, resident, and community leadership.**

BELOW: Source: Shelterforce Magazine



WWW.CIVICARTS.ORG

5



CASE STUDY Charlottesville, VA

THE HAVEN

ABOVE: Haven client with Housing2Home artwork.
Source: <https://vimeo.com/230669219>

The Haven's Housing2Homes program helps residents navigate the transition to permanent supportive housing by using art and decor to create a sense of home and ownership in their new residence. The organization also uses arts and culinary activities to break down barriers between clients and the larger Charlottesville community, encouraging both to see themselves as part of a whole.

What They Do: The Haven day shelter has occupied a historic church building in downtown Charlottesville, VA since 2010. In collaboration with the non-profit New City Arts, one of their early tenants, they launched an artist residency (2011-2015) and the ongoing Housing2Home program, which provides a stipend for art, decor, and furniture for clients transitioning into supportive housing. The Haven also opens up their Sanctuary space for community cultural performances and rentals, and hosts the weekly "Wednesday Cafe," a lunch counter staffed by clients.

Why They Do It: The Haven believes that the arts can help clients who are transitioning out of homelessness to reach greater stability and wellbeing, and to help new residents achieve a sense of home and ownership in their space. They also use the arts to generate public goodwill and to highlight their clients and space as an essential part of the fabric of the overall community.

WWW.CIVICARTS.ORG

What's Their Magic: The partnership between the Haven and New City Arts has been fundamental to integrating arts and cultural programming for their clients. The arts-based opportunities that the Haven manages occur in direct collaboration with their partner organization. They even share a staff member.

BEST PRACTICE TAKEAWAYS

It takes time to build up trust and relationships between artists and your service community. Encourage volunteerism among artists.

Give residents agency to use the arts to develop their own sense of home, place, and ownership of space.

In housing, arts-based programs may be very personal, and not always visible to the public.

The arts provide opportunities for your service community and the larger community to "see each other" and build relationships.

The Arts at The Haven

Partnering to Support Clients

The Haven opened as a day shelter, resource center, and supportive housing transition facilitator for Charlottesville residents experiencing homelessness in 2010. The organization operates out of the converted First Christian Church in downtown Charlottesville. Parts of the building were rented out to other non-profit organizations, and one of their first tenants was New City Arts, a non-profit working to support artists and grow opportunity for community participation in the arts. The relationship and partnership with New City Arts was critical for the growth of arts-based services at the Haven, who were not considering arts-based practices at the time.

From 2011 to 2015, these two organizations managed an artist residency program at the Haven. They emphasize how important it was for artists to become immersed in the organization and community prior to embarking on arts-based projects and interventions. Arts activities to serve people experiencing housing insecurity is not a “one-size-fits-all” activity, and an understanding of the specific context of the clients and organization is an important aspect for tailoring arts activities. It took time for resident artists to develop trust with their clients at the Haven. In fact, the Haven recommends that embedded artists

spend up to six months volunteering with the service community prior to launching a project.

The residency program and the other arts-based programming to come were born out of the deep relationship between the Haven and New City Arts. The two organizations had - and have - a stake in each others’ programs. Over time, they developed meaningful trust and the ability to listen and respond to each others’ needs.

“Not a Mural, but Curtains”

Early on in the partnership, a Haven volunteer developed a relationship with a client who was transitioning into supportive housing, but was struggling to settle in. This volunteer worked one-on-one with the client to help her select personalized decorations and decor in order to encourage a sense of ownership, pride, and buy-in in her new space. The process changed the client’s perspective and helped her transition to supportive housing more successfully.

Out of this activity, the Haven and New City Arts launched the Housing2Home program. The Haven saw that clients can often get caught in a “safety net of care,” and need additional assistance and perspective

BELOW: Housing2Home “Welcome Home” Card. Source: askartists.



CASE STUDY: THE HAVEN



in their transition to supportive housing. They asked themselves, “what does it mean for us to accompany them into housing?”

Housing2Home provides a \$1,200 stipend for each client to select and purchase artwork, decor, and furniture for their new home. A creative coordinator manages the shopping experience. Originally, the fund was intended for purchase of work by local artists, linked in through New City Arts. However, the organizations have iterated and grown their understanding that clients have different needs, tastes, and expectations for artwork. For example, an inspirational poster from Walmart might be exactly what the client wants and needs for their space to feel like home.

Initial funding for the Housing2Home program came from ArtPlace America. Since then, the program has been funded entirely by an annual Arts Auction.

The Housing2Home program illustrates how in a housing context, creative placemaking might not look like the public-facing, highly visible interventions we might otherwise imagine. For the Haven and their clients, creative placemaking is more about the recovery of privacy and personal space. It’s “not a mural, but curtains.”

Helping the Community to See Each Other

The Housing2Home program is the most formalized arts-based program at the Haven. Beyond that, however, the organization infuses the value of the arts to support and grow community in many of their activities and programs.

The Haven recognizes that Charlottesville’s local arts community also struggles with space scarcity. The organization occupies a quiet, beautiful, historic church, and they delight in opening up that space to community members and groups. The Haven Sanctuary - the literal sanctuary space from the church - acts as a “mezzanine” between the arts community and Haven clients. Music and theater groups use the space for rehearsals and



ABOVE: Haven Homecooking menu. Source: The Haven Facebook page

performances. The Haven also derives a small amount of income from renting the space out for weddings and events. They believe that by opening up the Haven to the broader Charlottesville community, they encourage public goodwill, highlight where they are and what services they offer, and expand and diversify their donor base.

In recent years, the Haven has launched a weekly cafe, sometimes referred to as Wednesday Cafe and other times as Haven Home Cooking. Every Wednesday, the Haven hosts a local chef, who sets the menu for lunch service. The cafe is staffed by Haven residents. Haven Home Cooking is not a workforce training program in a formal sense, but it does provide the opportunity for clients to earn some income, and some have used the opportunity to transition into more formal workforce training or employment opportunities. Additionally, the cafe represents another opportunity for the downtown business community “to see folks that they don’t see” normally, to develop relationships across experience and background, and to break down barriers between people experiencing homelessness and other community members.



ABOVE: The Charlottesville Women's Choir at the Haven
Source: pernmoot.wordpress.com

Recipe for Success

The Impact of the Arts

The arts contribute to the success of clients who are transitioning out of homelessness by enhancing a sense of ownership and pride in their new homes. The arts have broken down barriers between the Haven's service community and the broader community.

Scope/Programming

Housing2Homes program (primary arts-based service)

The Haven Sanctuary (community space, performance space, rental venue)

Wednesday Cafe/Haven Home Cooking

Vision & Strategy

Help residents transitioning into permanent supportive housing manage the transition and develop a sense of home and ownership of their new space through a stipend for purchasing art, decor, and furniture. Use arts, cultural, and culinary activities to promote visibility and generate a sense

of cohesion with the greater community.

Goals

Help clients to be successful in the transition to permanent supportive housing.

Support sustainability, wellbeing, privacy, and recovery of personal space for clients.

Facilitate the wider community "seeing itself" better across socio-economic divides.

Partnerships

New City Arts is a critical partner in the Housing2Homes program. The Haven's Executive Director Stephen Hitchcock emphasizes that the program was fundamentally born out of conversation and collaboration between the two organizations. The partnership was developed with a great amount of trust, listening, and time.

Staffing

The Haven and New City Arts share a full-time staff member who serves one-half of her time as the Housing2Home Creative Coordinator, who manages

CASE STUDY: THE HAVEN



clients transitioning into supportive housing and arranges shopping trips.

Funding

The Housing2Home program launched with a grant from ArtPlace America. After the initial ArtPlace funding, the Haven has hosted an annual Art Auction, which has fully funded the program. They are currently writing a grant with the City of Charlottesville's human services fund for additional resources.

Tracking Impacts

The Haven manages a "wellbeing survey" to track impacts, and also to generate a feedback loop with clients that they use to improve services.

LESSONS LEARNED & BEST PRACTICES:

Artists that work with clients need to **put in the time to build trust and relationships**. This avoids artists adopting a "one-size-fits-all" approach, and supports work that fits the specific organizational context. The Haven prefers that artists volunteer with the organization, for several months if possible, prior to doing arts programming.

Be sensitive and responsive to residents and clients' conception of "good art." The Haven has continually adjusted its parameters for purchase of artworks using Housing2Home funds to better meet client taste and needs.

Integrating new arts and cultural programming takes time to become a part of organizational culture, and for clients to grow used to it and to recognize its value.

BELOW: 2018 Haven Art Auction. Source: allevents.in/charlottesville/



WWW.CIVICARTS.ORG

5



ABOVE: PUSH Buffalo mural. Source: buffalonews.com

CASE STUDY Buffalo, NY

PUSH BUFFALO

PUSH Buffalo collaborates with a host of local partners to bring the arts into their programming and services in order to help clients tell their own stories with dignity; to collectively advocate for change; to honor and build up sense of place; to provide opportunities for youth expression and skill training; and to bring residents and neighbors into decision-making.

What They Do: PUSH Buffalo is a community development organization, grassroots organizer, and affordable housing provider in Buffalo, NY. They invite the arts into many aspects of their scope of service, including after school media programs for youth; a community art center; a black box theatre at one of their properties; murals; and in the design process.

Why They Do It: PUSH Buffalo believes that retaining and restoring marginalized cultures and traditions is a key aspect of their mission. They believe that residents and community members can use the arts to tell their own story rather than having their stories be told for them. They know that the arts are an important part of the dignity of life and experience for the communities they serve.

What's Their Magic: PUSH Buffalo provides arts-based services in collaboration with a large group of local organizations, some of which provide arts-based facilitation and opportunities as their core service. PUSH does not approach art as a discrete service,

but rather as part of holistic community experience. The organization looks for opportunities to integrate the arts wherever possible, and emphasizes the value of letting community members lead the process of identifying and pursuing arts activities that reflect themselves.

BEST PRACTICE TAKEAWAYS

Let your constituents guide the direction of your arts-based programming. They know best what they want and need.

Develop long-term collaborations with partner organizations who specialize in the arts.

For arts-based programming to be truly impactful, **include artists early on in the program development process.**

The arts help your service community advocate in their own voices, provide economic opportunity, and celebrate culture and community.

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The Arts at PUSH Buffalo

Community ownership of their own stories

PUSH Buffalo began in the late 2000s, when its founding organizers recognized an opportunity to address disinvestment and the effects of the recession on Buffalo's low-income and underserved community members, by recognizing, organizing, and amplifying local knowledge, culture, and expertise. They began with the simple premise and belief that the people closest to the problem will have the best solutions, and that the role of a community development organization is to bring in the resources to make those solutions real.

In the decade and a half since, PUSH has organized for political change; collaborated on community centers; developed and managed affordable housing properties; launched green building and water management programs; and linked community members to employment opportunities. The organization believes that the arts play a critical role in supporting the holistic health, wellbeing, and prosperity of the community and its members. They also believes in the importance of community members telling their own stories and advocating in their own voices, and that the arts help facilitate this. Beyond any discrete and targeted programming, the

arts are an organic aspect of many PUSH activities, from making protest signs to community murals to celebrating local musicians during community parties.

The importance of collaborative partnerships

PUSH Buffalo partners with other organizations to provide programs and services to the community members they serve. Many of these partners and programs are arts-based.

PUSH has been a contributing partner in the "WASH Project" community center. The center is a functioning laundromat, an arts makerspace, and a community gather center all in one.

In another collaboration, PUSH worked together with the film non-profit Squeaky Wheel to develop a skill-building program for teens in the community. They noticed that while some of these students were struggling academically, many were active and savvy

LEFT: Students in the Squeaky Wheel Studio Program. Source: dailypublic.com

RIGHT: The Wash Project. Source: [The Wash Project website](http://TheWashProject.org)



WWW.CIVICARTS.ORG



2

CASE STUDY: PUSH BUFFALO



social media users. The two organizations developed a multimedia program that works with the teen's skills and enthusiasm for new media-based expression to provide education on film and media production, media journalism, and website development. Teens from this program have contributed promotional videos for the larger PUSH organization, and some of them have even been connected to employment opportunities in the local film industry.

School 77

PUSH Buffalo organized with local community members to fund, design, and program an abandoned school building. The building, which now serves as PUSH's headquarters, has been developed with 30 energy efficient affordable residential units for seniors, a community gym, and a black box theater. The Ujima Theatre Company operates out of the theater, and hosts after school programs and opportunities for resident, youth, and other community members. They also provide programs and opportunities tied into other PUSH efforts. For example, the theater provides ticket discounts for patrons who bike or walk, in support of sustainable transportation goals.

Bringing community into organizational decision making

The arts are also used in development and design processes at PUSH. The organization understands that among their community members and even employees, not all people learn the same way. They leverage the arts in meeting facilitation to open up deliberation processes to different ways of learning and processing information.

PUSH has used the arts to bring community members more closely into the development process. For a new building project, they made maps, photos, and diagrams, and participants made cutouts of figures and used the figures to "walk the site." Through this visual, physical method,

participants were able to articulate their real or anticipated experiences on the site. This allowed community members who were not familiar or comfortable with design processes a "way in," to explain their concerns and desires for the site and contribute to real design choices on the project.



ABOVE: Performers at Ujima Theatre. Source: buffalonews.com

Recipe for Success

The Impact of the Arts

The arts have contributed to a thriving community in and around PUSH Buffalo properties and constituents. Residents and community members have opportunities to advocate for themselves in their own voice. Youth have participated in skill training and some have become employed in arts and media.

Scope/Programming

Arts activity at PUSH Buffalo is distributed throughout their scope of service, and includes (but is not limited to)...

Murals

Sign making and advocacy

Celebrations

Black box theater (w/ Ujima Theatre)

Artmaking center (w/ WASH Project)

Youth media program (w/ Squeaky Wheel)

Vision & Strategy

To use the arts to amplify directly impacted

community members' voices, making space for them to tell their own stories with dignity. To support and contribute to a just transition to a regenerative and renewable community, racially, economically, and environmentally.

Goals

Amplify resident and community voices

Make space for community members to voice their own stories, experiences, and beliefs

Contribute to healthy communities

Contribute to the provision of low-income housing

Provide equitable economic opportunity

Honor history and culture

Key Partners

Ujima Company (aka Ujima Theatre)

WASH project

Squeaky Wheel

Staffing

PUSH Buffalo does not have dedicated arts staff. Rather, much of their arts-based programming is done in coordination with organizations for whom the arts is a primary focus.

Funding

PUSH Buffalo has been the receipt of an ArtPlace grant for creative community development and a recent Kresge Foundation creative placemaking grant. Additionally, many of PUSH's arts-based activities and interventions are part of larger-scope project grants that they pursue as part of a team of partners. In "just transition"-based work, they pursue multi-year grants with several different local organizations. They include arts partners in grant writing scoping and let the partners tell them how they can amplify the work using the arts.

LESSONS LEARNED & BEST PRACTICES:

The people that are closest to the problem have the best solutions.

Your constituents and residents are your stakeholders. They are the ones who can best speak to their own needs. They will fill in the asset map. They will articulate how they like to express themselves. Find out what your community's gifts and talents are, and amplify them.

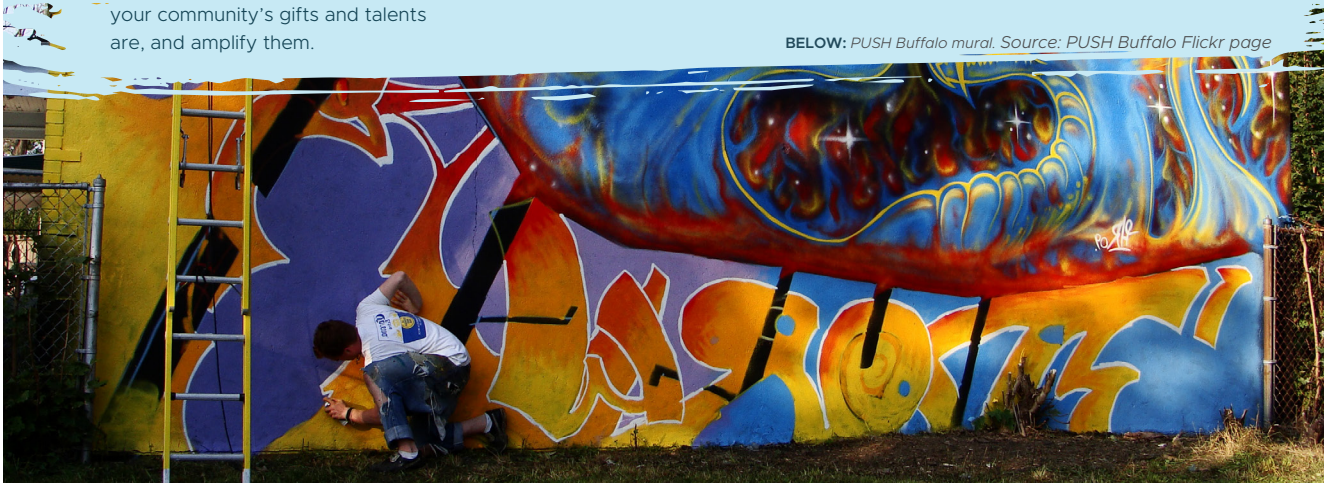
Include artists at the beginning of processes,

as planners and thought partners. Don't include them as an afterthought. If you're truly integrating the arts, they need to be there at the beginning.

Creative process takes time.

Pay your artists.

BELOW: PUSH Buffalo mural. Source: PUSH Buffalo Flickr page



RESIDENT & CLIENT SURVEY

Residents & Clients Share What They Want to See

FC Creates launched a resident/client survey outreach effort in late November 2019. We wanted to hear from residents and clients themselves about 1) what they hope to see at FC in terms of arts and cultural offerings and 2) what barriers they perceived might get in the way of their participation.

Fostering Inclusive Participation

It was important for the FC Creates team that the survey process be as inclusive as possible. The survey was translated and distributed in English, Spanish, and Arabic, in both paper and online form. In appreciation of their time, all survey participants were invited to enter a raffle to win one of five \$20 HEB gift cards. Gift card winners were from five different properties. Throughout the engagement effort, the Enterprise Rose Fellow, Olivia Jimenez, solicited participation from residents and clients at existing activities at FC properties. In addition to the survey responses, Olivia was able to gather informal data through 1-on-1 conversations with residents, clients, staff, and volunteers, including feedback on what has and hasn't worked in the past.

Response

Response was overwhelming: 83 residents from 12 different properties participated in the survey. Most of those responses occurred in just the four weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas, a busy time of year, which points to enthusiasm for arts and cultural offerings within FC's service population.

83 residents were surveyed.

They were from 12 different properties or prosper centers:

Survey Respondents by Property	
Cardinal Point	21%
Trails at the Park	17%
Bluebonnet	13%
Garden Terrace	13%
Crossroads	10%
Capital Studios	8%
Lakeline	5%
Cherry Creek	4%
M Station	4%
Live Oak	3%
Daffodil	1%
Arbor Terrace	1%

92% of respondents live at a FC property.

65% of respondents were female, 34% were male, and 1% were non-binary or genderqueer.

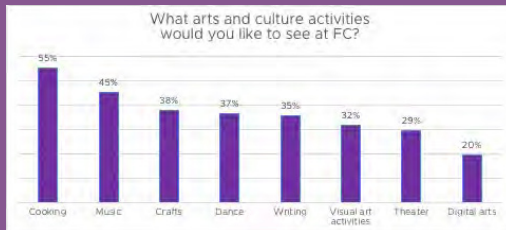
Respondents represented a broad age mix, with the highest number of responses coming from the 44-59 age range:

Survey Respondents by Age	
19 and under	4%
20-34	20%
35-44	13%
44-59	36%
60+	28%



TAKEAWAYS

Respondents indicated interest in a wide variety of activities. The clear winner is cooking, with over half of respondents (55%) indicating interest in cooking-related activities. 45% of respondents indicated that they are interested in music related activities. Crafts, dance, and writing activities rounded out the top five.



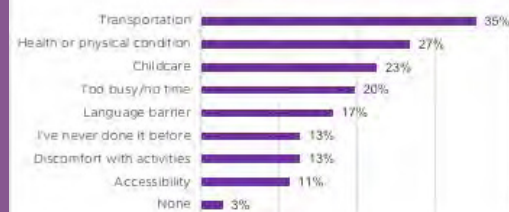
Respondents also wrote in other ideas for activities, including yoga, opportunities to develop resident teachers/facilitators, bingo, income development opportunities, talent shows, block parties, quilting, and board game groups.

Respondents reported being interested in a variety of activity types.

Respondent Interest in Activity, by Type	
Classes	48%
Events	38%
Opportunities to participate	27%
Opportunities to watch, view, or listen	32%
Family activities	34%
Individual activities	27%
Art for FC properties	26%

Concerning potential barriers, respondents indicated that their greatest concerns were around transportation (35%), health or physical condition (27%), childcare (23%), and lack of time (20%).

What might get in the way of you participating in arts and culture activities at FC?



Respondents also wrote in potential barriers. These included: hearing, racism, weather, and money.

How the Survey Serves the FC Creates Development Process

Through this survey, FC residents and clients were able to participate in their own voices, indicating their levels of interest in different activities and potential barriers. This is the most fundamental feedback for developing equitable and inclusive programming with FC Creates, and will be referenced and centered in all programming decisions. This is just the beginning of resident engagement, and we will continue to amplify resident voices through outreach, collaboration with Resident Advisory Committee, and relationship building on the ground at FC properties.





ABOVE: Brainstorming ideas at the Supportive Services roadshow presentation. Julie Ann Candoli (c) 2019.

STAFF ROADSHOWS

From May to August, the FC Creates team conducted 13 staff “Roadshows” – presentations and conversations at FC departmental staff meetings. The Roadshows had multiple goals:

- **PROVIDE BACKGROUND:** Educate staff about creative placemaking/creative community development and share information about the FC Creates development process.
- **ID VALUES:** Brainstorm with staff about how arts and culture can serve FC residents, client, and staff.
- **SHARE EXISTING PROJECTS:** Build a knowledge base about what arts and cultural activities already occur within the FC system.
- **DEVELOP IDEAS:** To find out “where the energy is,” or where staff is excited about these potential opportunities, and what types of arts and/or culture-based activities staff is particularly excited about.



Who attended?

The roadshows were attended by a total of 138 attendees from 13 departments.

DEPARTMENT	DATE	# ATTENDED
HUMAN RESOURCES	5/2/19	6
FINANCIAL PROGRAMS	5/8/19	22
COMPLIANCE	5/17/19	6
ASSET MANAGEMENT	5/23/19	7
VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS	5/28/19	4
ACCOUNTING	5/28/19	4
EDUCATION - LC COORDINATORS	5/29/19	8
INSTITUTIONAL GIVING	6/3/19	11
INDIVIDUAL GIVING & DONOR RELATIONS	6/3/19	
FAMILY SUPPORT-IVE HOUSING	6/4/19	14
ALL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT	6/18/19	24
HEALTH INITIATIVES	6/20/19	10
DEVELOPMENT	6/24/19	4
SUPPORTIVE RESIDENT SERVICES	7/23/19	18

How the Roadshows Served the FC Creates Development Process

- **Created common baseline knowledge** and understanding about creative community development and FC Creates across staff
- **Built up network of “staff advocates”** and began to form the basis for and expectation of cross-departmental collaborations and relationships



ARTS & CULTURE

- **Provided awareness about existing arts and cultural projects** and programs
- Initial **brainstorming about how arts and culture could or would fit into different departments**
- Staff-led development of a **menu of ideas, themes, and values for FC Creates**
- **Potential barriers and concerns** were surfaced

THEMES, LESSONS, & TAKEAWAYS

Staff provided so many incredible takeaways, lessons learned from past projects, and fresh ideas that it would be impossible to capture them all in a brief summary. Some of the many highlights include using the arts and culture to:

- **Include more residents and clients** in dialogue, including non-verbal communication
- **Build/strengthen FC internal relationships,** resources, and capacity; fostering collaboration and creative thinking
- **Cultivate resident well-being,** mental and physical
- **Activate properties** to encourage pride, ownership of space, and safety
- **Advance equity,** self-determination, and sense of self
- **Provide professional development opportunities** for residents and clients
- **Cultivate community joy** and belonging
- **Acknowledge that FC staff and residents already use the arts** in the work they do, and work to amplify these efforts for the betterment of our residents and communities.



FC Creates: Organizational Assessment

ABOVE: Health Initiatives Fitness Class,
Foundation Communities stock photo

June-August 2019

INTERVIEWS

LESSONS FROM HEALTH & SUSTAINABILITY

The FC Creates team conducted interviews with current and former leadership with Foundation Communities' Health and Sustainability programs, both of which have launched and grown within the organization in the last decade. These interviews provided important insight into how to successfully and sustainably grow new programming opportunities within Foundation Communities. From these staff leaders, we learned about how these programs approached structure, strategic planning, how to serve FC's larger goals, funding, prioritizing equity, leveraging external partnerships, and approaches that they found most successful.

Through these interviews, the FC Creates team were able to hear directly from other programming developers at FC about best practice strategies, considerations, challenges, and tradeoffs for growing program offerings that we are able to apply to the development and action plan strategy for arts and cultural programming at FC. We were also able to brainstorm with interviewees about potential collaborations with their departments.



THEMES, LESSONS, & TAKEAWAYS

1) **Partnerships are essential.** We don't do this work alone. Seek out partners and opportunities that align with goals, contribute to successful strategies, and lend credibility to FC's efforts. Look for community partners and national support.

2) **Be patient.** The early months and years of implementation are always difficult, but you can't force growth. Building community is part of the process. Build from "low hanging fruit" to more ambitious scope. "Failures" and lessons learned are a part of the process. This was a lesson we heard repeatedly at the national level; time is definitely part of the process, as is building the necessary relationships.

3) Innovative initiatives are a great opportunity to **encourage collaboration between FC departments that don't often work together.** Enthusiastic and collaboration minded staff members and departments will help this work thrive.

4) **Realistically assess program capacity.** Leverage events, activities, and programs that already occur at FC. Go where the energy is. Consider staffing bandwidth and on-site relationships and enthusiasm. Explore opportunities to recruit arts-oriented volunteers. [Here, the Enterprise Rose Fellow has made a critical difference in having the capacity to be able to move forward.]

5) **Resident engagement and participation is essential, and can be challenging.** Provide tangible incentives to engage, such as food or raffles. Build networks at the property level. Be aware that residents have real and valid barriers to participation, such as lack of time, childcare needs, language barriers, and the absence of meaningful cultural connection.



ABOVE: Daffodil Mini Grant Garden Project planning. Gabriela Rodriguez (c).

6) **Prioritize "low hanging fruit" projects** in the early days of the initiative. Ask what we can do that doesn't cost anything, or costs very little, but has a big impact. Make space for ideas and enthusiasm.

7) Health and Sustainability initiatives provide many **practical lessons:** Experiment cheaply. Have food at events. Consider whether the initiative should be a separate department or infused/diffused in the work of every department. Consider mini-grants to property staff and residents with small dollar amounts and very simple reporting requirements (e.g. a photo) to encourage participation, spread the impact, promote equity, and allow more staff and residents to "hold" the program.

8) **Measurable outcomes lead to more funding.** Setting and tracking metrics can be difficult and should be planned for. Share-out success stories with stakeholders and funders.

9) **Learn from and repeat successful events and activities.** Give the people what they want!

10) **Use the arts and culture to support advancing equity at FC.** Coordinate with other equity efforts within the organization.

These lessons inform the development of FC Creates, its programming possibilities, innovation, and responsiveness to organizational and resident/client needs.

STAFF ADVOCATE FOCUS GROUP

FC Staff Envision Arts & Cultural Opportunities

The FC Creates team held two staff advocate focus groups on October 29th, 2019. Foundation Communities staff who work directly with residents and clients, and who are interested in expanding equitable arts and cultural opportunities, were invited. Participants representing eight departments brainstormed individually and discussed in small and large groups about what opportunities they see for this work in the organization and how arts and culture can support overarching FC goals and outcomes. We discussed barriers that exist to success, and how to overcome them.

The purpose of these groups was not only to generate ideas about what arts and culture can do at FC, but more specifically to learn where the energy and ideas are from folks at FC who are passionate about this work, and how it will advance FC's equity and inclusion goals. After all, the success of FC Creates will only happen by prioritizing the passion, ideas, and voices of staff and community members.

PARTICIPATION STATS
Morning group
Spring Terrace
of participants: 7
From 6 properties/offices
Afternoon group
Garden Terrace
of participants: 11
From 5 properties/offices



ABOVE: At Garden Terrace, FC staff advocates discuss arts and cultural opportunities. Ben Martin (c) 2019

How the Focus Groups Served the FC Creates Development Process

The wisdom and ideas of focus group participants impacts the development of FC Creates in two ways:

- 1) Focus group insights will hone and guide the growth, goals, and tactics of the program.
- 2) The Rose Fellow and FC Creates team are following up about actionable opportunities to use A&C to equitably support residents, clients, and staff, based on the ideas surfaced at the focus groups.



MAJOR THEMES & TOPICS DISCUSSED BY PARTICIPANTS

ARTS & CULTURE PROGRAMMING CONSIDERATIONS

Goal: Expand A&C programming for a variety of goals, including education, psychological & physical health, economic opportunities, fostering community, and providing family activities.

Predicted barriers:

Staff capacity and time
For residents: transportation, childcare, too busy/
no time

Potential solutions or next steps:

Facilitate partnerships with outside orgs.
Let resident interest guide programming.
Look for opportunities to foster resident leadership
and facilitation.
Provide incentives (e.g. food, etc.) to increase
resident participation.

PROCESSING TRAUMA

Goal: Use art to help residents and clients by fostering a “No Judgement Zone” to express themselves (especially community members who process better non-verbally), and process and heal from trauma and loss.

Predicted barriers:

Processing trauma and loss can be messy.
Understanding triggers and boundaries requires
facilitator/organizational training and forethought.

Potential solutions or next steps:

Develop a psychological incident plan/protocol.
Explore opportunities to have artist-facilitators
team with trained psychological facilitator.

PRIDE & OWNERSHIP OF SPACE

Goal: Expand opportunity for residents and staff to activate space through art, to cultivate a sense of pride, ownership, and celebration of place and space throughout FC properties. One example discussed was allowing sidewalk chalk drawing at properties.

Predicted barriers:

Hard barriers to what is possible due to
administrative requirements and safety concerns

Potential solutions or next steps:

Rose Fellow will work with property management
and other staff to better understand the barriers
and concerns and identify potential opportunities.
Explore designating specific, bounded areas for
artistic expression.

SAFETY & COMFORT

Goal: Use art, culture, and expression to foster an environment and culture of safety at FC that is inclusive and supportive of residents, clients, and staff who are diverse racially/ethnically, culturally, in age, background, and gender, and many more ways.

Predicted barriers:

Fostering inclusive, supportive environments
requires a full organizational approach.

Potential solutions or next steps:

Work together with other FC equity efforts to
explore and expand on how A&C can support
those larger efforts.



COMMUNITY ARTS FOCUS GROUP

In September 2019, we held a focus group with representatives from local arts organizations with community, education, and social practice focus in order to develop a better sense of the opportunities for partnerships and collaborations with arts organizations in Austin.

How the Focus Group Served the FC Creates Development Process

We heard from participants about what makes for a great organizational partnership, from value alignment to transparency and good communication about practical considerations. Participants brainstormed ideas for potential partnership opportunities, and revealed and reinforced information about the role that artists should play in these collaborations. This focus group provided a roadmap for how FC Creates can leverage community partnerships and be a great partner itself.



ABOVE: Flow Painting class at Bluebonnet Studios, FC Creates, 2020

TAKEAWAYS

What makes a successful organizational partnership?

- Clearly articulated goals and expectation alignment
- Surfacing assumptions
- Consistency
- Mutual benefit
- Clear roles and systems of communication
- Excitement – we're in it together
- Empathy between partners
- Transparency about resources and feasibility

continued...



ARTS & CULTURE

Why are community arts partners excited about working with FC?

- Broad spatial and social impact potential
- FC's positive reputation as a trusted community partner
- Reduced transportation barriers when programming at properties
- Working with residents who are also artists
- Working with youth around issues of identity
- Working with youth to process local community change
- Physical site opportunities
- Working with early childhood education

What does a partnership of mutual support look like to community arts partners?

- Centering equity and diversity
- Mutual exploration
- Figuring out missional alignment
- Not stretching beyond capacity
- Speaking with clarity about how the arts and culture fit into FC's mission
- Create a one-pager of services and values in order to quickly assess missional alignment
- Starting small and scaling
- Working with early childhood education
- Tracking outcomes and data
- Cultivating long-term relationships
- Cross-pollination of clients, audiences, and people served
- Understanding and being clear about trajectory of outcomes



MEDIA

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Ence Morse, Clara. "Making New Friends an Old-Fashioned Way - Through Letter Writing." The Chronicle Austin, vol. 40, no. 1, 2020, pp. 16.

Instagram @fccreates

Blog www.fccreates.com

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Art from the Streets
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Austin Bat Cave

Austin School of Film
Creative Action
Dougherty Arts Center
Texas Folklife

The Contemporary Austin
Thinkery
Umlauf Sculpture Garden & Museum

Peer Organization Interviewees and Contributors:

Ana-Ofelia Rodriguez, Director of Community Development & Ellen Baxter, Executive Director, Broadway Housing Communities, New York, NY
Rahwa Ghirmatzion, Executive Director, PUSH Buffalo, Buffalo, NY
Stephen Hitchcock, Executive Director, The Haven, Charlottesville, VA

Thank you!