



## 2011 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Awards Awardee Summaries

### **ArtLab**

**PlatteForum**

**Denver, CO**

**[www.platteforum.org](http://www.platteforum.org)**

PlatteForum's ArtLab is an intensive, year-round, out-of-school, arts-based internship program for disadvantaged high school students in Denver, CO. Youth, guided by master artists, address social issues affecting their generation; participate in workshops (literary, digital, visual and performance based art forms) directed by visiting artists and university professors; mentor at-risk children during workshops held at PlatteForum; and participate in service-learning projects. The annual programming is comprised of three components: an Academic Year session, a Summer Intensive session, and the ArtLab College Access Mentor Program which occurs year-round. Each year, the participants create original work for at least four artistic exhibitions acquiring skills throughout the creative process. The participants are paid a stipend during the school year and hourly wages during the summer intensive component. In each of the three components, the program utilizes the arts, mentorship, and structured facilitation to encourage the development of academic, life, and professional skills for youth. Since 2008, the program has seen a 100% graduation rate in a city where only 47% of students graduate on time and in 2010, 100% of the graduating participants went on to attend college.

### **ArtWorks**

**Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts**

**Grand Rapids, MI [www.uica.org/youth](http://www.uica.org/youth)**

ArtWorks is a comprehensive continuum of innovative job training programs for creative youth, ages 14 to 21, offered by the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts (UICA). The continuum readies young people for 21<sup>st</sup> century creative careers by providing intensive studio practices, professional resources, and opportunities for students to present themselves and their work to the community. ArtWorks began as a program of the East Hills Neighborhood Association, a community development organization serving an ethnically diverse and economically disadvantaged population in the southeast region of Grand Rapids, Michigan. After 10 years of program development, ArtWorks recognizes the importance of flexible programming to accommodate a wide-range of ages and skill levels. Students enter the ArtWorks program through an after-school seminar series, which includes hands-on workshops, films, presentations by local creative professionals, studio tours, and activities related to exhibitions at UICA. The students then graduate to the summer program, which provides team internships for students actively pursuing careers in the creative sector. An independent study that is tailored to meet the needs of the individual student is the third step in the continuum. For some students, this third stage is a paid internship that leads to employment and is recognized by many local schools and colleges as independent study credit. As the phases progress, the hours of engagement increase and participating students are supported by a stipend package. In 2010, 88% participants reported that the program

was successful at providing resources, connections, and ideas to help initiate a career as a creative worker. ArtWorks alumni have continued on to intern at national arts organizations, exhibit at the UICA and other local galleries, organize community art events and artists' collectives, and launch careers in the creative sector.

**Fleisher Youth Art Programs**  
**Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial**  
**Philadelphia, PA**

[www.fleisher.org](http://www.fleisher.org)

Every year, Fleisher Youth Art Programs provide over 2,000 young people in southeast Philadelphia with creative and transformative arts experiences. Fleisher engages youth ages 5-18 in free, high quality art-making classes, workshops, and residencies that emphasize inquiry, experimentation, and appreciation, providing each student with a positive means of self-expression. Fleisher's Youth Arts Programs present three gateways into art-making: Art School, Fleisher's free, year-round art classes for young people on Saturdays that culminate in a student exhibit in Fleisher's galleries; Community Partnerships in the Arts, residencies at partnering social service agencies and public schools; and Teen Lounge, which offers after-school, drop-in sessions to students ages 13-18 and allows them to create self-guided projects with assistance from professional artists. The programs provide instruction in drawing, painting, mixed media, sculpture, photography, and printmaking. They also incorporate the rich cultural traditions of diverse communities in southeast Philadelphia by offering classes in Cambodian Classical Dance and partnering with an organization called Migrant Education to present programs to students in English and Khmer. Fleisher is renowned for its commitment to making art accessible to all communities, regardless of ethnic or socioeconomic background. In 2007, the Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial received a Wallace Foundation Excellence Award, an honor bestowed upon exemplary arts organizations that pioneer best practices in engaging a broad spectrum of community members in the arts.

**HANDS-ON**

**ZUMIX**

**Boston, MA**

[www.zumix.org](http://www.zumix.org)

ZUMIX was created in response to a wave of gang violence that plagued Boston in 1991 with the mission of empowering youth to use music to make strong, positive changes in their lives, their community and their world. ZUMIX provides a safe space in which underserved young people participate in music and arts-based activities after school and during the summer months. ZUMIX's HANDS-ON program is designed to involve these young people over multiple years, in sequentially challenging in-depth arts experiences. The program targets youth ages 12-15, giving many students the opportunity for three to six years of arts study, long-term connections with the dedicated instructors, and the chance to pursue further studies at Berklee College of Music, the New England Institute of Art, and Boston University. This year-round program offers instruction in five areas: Songwriting and Performance, Instrumental Music, Music Technology (Z-Tech), and Radio, as well as

Sprouts, a series of programs for younger children. All of the programs conclude with a presentation or performance open to the community. In addition, the students are offered numerous opportunities to perform or to work as paid audio engineers and/or musicians; four of the teens are employed as Youth Arts Curators to assist in planning the programming of the ZUMIX performance space. Among the organization's accomplishments, 100% of the graduating seniors were accepted into college and several of the graduates received full scholarships to prestigious universities across the country.

### **Humanities Rock**

#### **Community Adolescent Resource and Education Center**

**Holyoke, MA**

[www.carecenterholyoke.org](http://www.carecenterholyoke.org)

Founded in 1986, the Care Center provides educational, artistic, cultural, and support programming for at-risk, predominantly Puerto Rican pregnant and parenting teens in Holyoke, Massachusetts. The agency's mission is to provide opportunities for young mothers to gain control of their lives and acquire the education, resources, and skills for life-long growth and wellness. The primary focus of the Center's programming is using the humanities as a vehicle to inspire, challenge, and motivate young mothers. Humanities Rock is a year-round, extracurricular program that engages participants in poetry reading and writing and college-credit humanities courses. The program is offered to young parents between the ages of 16-21, all of whom are school drop-outs, most having dropped out by 10th grade. The Humanities Rock program includes a broad range of activities such as Humanities 108, an introductory course to the humanities designed to develop critical thinking and skills in reading; the Clemente Course on Humanities at Bard College, which explores art history, American history, and ethics history; the Poetry Project through which students produce an annual anthology of poetry and art; and the Readers and Writers Series in which the Center partners with Smith College to bring visiting poets into the classrooms to discuss their work with the participants. In an evaluation of Humanities Rock conducted by the University of Massachusetts, 98% of the students have set goals for the future and 91% of the students plan to attend college.

### **Native American Composer Apprentice Project**

#### **Grand Canyon Music Festival**

**Grand Canyon, AZ**

[www.grandcanyonmusicfest.org](http://www.grandcanyonmusicfest.org)

The Native American Composer Apprentice Project (NACAP) nurtures the talents of Native American students in remote areas of the Hopi and Navajo Reservations. An intensive program focusing on music composition, NACAP provides students a complete composer experience with intense one-on-one tutoring in composition for string quartet and workshops with world-class professional ensembles. Each student creates original works for string quartet which are rehearsed, performed, recorded, and brought to audiences in the students' communities. NACAP provides a unique opportunity for Hopi and Navajo reservation youth, relative to national and state education standards, to traverse the creative process, from inspiration to rehearsal, performance and discussion. The program consists of three distinct phases: Phase One covers the art and technique of composition taught by the

composers-in-residence; Phase Two involves students working one-on-one in workshops and open rehearsals with the ensemble-in-residence, preparing their work for the performance and recording; and Phase Three features a day-long fair that includes students participating in the world premiere of the compositions performed by the ensemble-in-residence. Each of the student composers receives a portfolio of their work, including a professionally copied score and recorded CD. Since 2001 NACAP has created, presented, and recorded over 200 new works for string quartet written by reservation high-school students. The program boasts a long list of achievements and recognition including the 2010 Arizona Governor's Arts Award for Art Education.

**Positive Directions Through Dance**  
**The Dance Institute of Washington**  
 Washington, DC

[www.danceinstitute.org](http://www.danceinstitute.org)

The Dance Institute of Washington's Positive Directions Through Dance (PDTD) program combines high-quality dance training with life skills and obesity prevention to help at-risk youth succeed in life and learning. Serving DC's most vulnerable communities, PDTD is a dance/youth development program offered after school, on Saturdays, and during the summer for preteens, teenagers, and preschoolers from low-income neighborhoods. The program invites participants to enroll and train free of charge in either the community dance program or the pre-professional program. Both programs present a diverse range of dance disciplines including classical ballet, modern dance, hip hop, West African dance, and a pre-dance class. Preteens and high-school students also learn and record dance terminology which they are required to present to teachers at the end of each week. In addition, students are offered the opportunity to work with professional choreographers and the Institute's Founder/Artistic Director Fabian Barnes in rehearsing for a culminating performance for the community held at one of Washington, DC's cultural venues. Along with the classes and the culminating performance, the preteen and high-school participants receive weekly life skills workshops on topics such as financial literacy, nutrition, and job skills. Among the program's many successes, in 2010, PDTD reported that at the end of the school year, 100% of the participants advanced to the next grade level or graduated from high-school.

**Saturday Academies of American History**  
**The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History**  
 New York, NY

[www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/history4.html](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/history4.html)

Last year, more than 4,000 middle and high school students voluntarily attended extracurricular humanities courses through the Saturday Academy Program. Established in 1994 as a single-site program, the program now reaches students from hundreds of public, charter, and parochial schools at 23 sites in ten states and the District of Columbia. Students in the Saturday academies improve their basic literacy and critical reading skills through exposure to primary documents; engage difficult issues through class discussion, essay projects, and artistic expression; and strengthen their knowledge of the literature, arts, music, and drama. The courses take an interdisciplinary approach to American history, promoting learning in the arts and humanities. This strong interdisciplinary focus is evident in courses

such as “American Literature and the Lost Generation”, “Salsa: Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and Music”, and “The History of Comic Books in American Culture”. The Saturday Academy Program helps students understand and interpret their own history and the history of their communities. An indication of the program’s success has been the consistent growth in the number of students participating in the program. Program-wide, across the country, attendance has increased dramatically in recent years, from 2,484 student participants in the 2006- 2007 school year to 4,796 in 2009-2010.

### **Sojourn to the Past**

**San Bruno, CA**

[www.sojournproject.org](http://www.sojournproject.org)

Sojourn to the Past is a unique, humanities-based program that immerses 11th and 12th grade high school students from diverse backgrounds in a ten-day academic journey along the path of the Civil Rights Movement through five states in the American South. The program brings American history to life by introducing students to events of the past through literature, film, historical sites, museums, music, and to prominent foot soldiers of the Movement who, like the students, were young when they took up the cause for social change. Prior to the actual journey, Sojourn engages students in rigorous scholarly research, analysis, dialogue, and reflection, deeply exploring the history and lessons of the Civil Rights Movement and their relationship to current societal conditions and issues. The program combines five principal approaches to interpret humanities themes and scholarship: reviewing primary source materials (literature, historical documents, audio/video/film); oral presentations by Civil Rights leaders; visiting historical sites and museums; analysis and discussion in response to assigned reading, guest speakers, and field trips; and learning the important role of music during the Movement. Sojourn’s history and humanities curriculum is designed to engender original thought within students which continues into their adult lives. The program has been recognized both locally and nationally, including being honored by the United States Congress as the longest running program of its kind for youth in the country.

### **Young People’s Chorus of New York City, Inc.**

**New York, NY**

[www.ypc.org](http://www.ypc.org)

Founded in 1988, the Young People’s Chorus of New York City (YPC) provides high-quality music education to 1200+ young people from diverse ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The program offers a core After-School Choral Literacy and Performance program for students ages 7-18; a satellite schools program at nine schools and one community center throughout New York; a Partner Schools program that provides full scholarships to students from underserved communities to participate in the core After-School program; and the Bridges Program provides full scholarships to middle and high-school students attending schools with no music education to participate in the core After-School program. In addition to providing a comprehensive understanding of music, YPC also offers the participants performance opportunities with world-renowned performers in venues such as Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, as well as international tours. In order to prepare choristers for these performances, YPC conductors use the Kodály method, which

teaches musical literacy and sight-reading to both visual and auditory learners through rhythm syllables, solfege syllables, and hand signs. Choristers are taught a wide variety of music genres and learn to sing in many languages including Zulu, Japanese, and Italian. Among the programs list of accomplishments, 100% of YPC choristers finish high-school on time and pursue higher education.

### **Young Shakespeare Workshop Seattle, WA**

[www.youngshakespeare.org](http://www.youngshakespeare.org)

Each summer for 19 years, Young Shakespeare Workshop (YSW) has gathered middle and high school students from Seattle to join in a tuition-free, three-month program that brings together young people to learn and perform works by William Shakespeare. YSW has a clear mission to inspire the love of words and a passion for language in its participants. Beyond providing high quality theater training, YSW prepares students for rigorous academic work needed for college level study through the deep analysis of text. Structured as a three tier program, YSW is designed to engage students over several years. The first year students learn sonnets, speeches, and scenes, culminating in a public performance. Returning students progress to a full length Shakespeare play which is fully produced, professionally directed, and toured in different public venues. The third tier involves many of the alumni returning to assist with summer productions or to work as assistants in classes and rehearsals. The program recruits students from a very diverse range of cultural and socioeconomic communities that would otherwise never have the occasion to relate to each other and gives them a common purpose and a meaningful shared experience. Many of the program participants do not speak English as their first language and through the workshop, improve their use and confidence in the English language. By mastering and taking ownership in Shakespeare's eloquence as their own, the students give voice to their own experience in the world. The success of Young Shakespeare Workshop is evident in the academic achievements of its students with 100% summer participants graduating from high school or acquiring a GED and 95% going on to college.

### **826 Seattle Seattle, WA**

[www.826seattle.org](http://www.826seattle.org)

826 Seattle is known throughout the city for its youth writing workshops, as well as its unique location at the Greenwood Space Travel Supply Company (the universe's purveyor of space travel supplies). It is a chapter of 826 National, an organization founded by well-known literary figure Dave Eggers. 826 Seattle hosts a writing and tutoring center dedicated to helping youth, ages six to 18, improve their creative and expository writing skills. With an emphasis on stimulating the imagination to inspire creative story writing, the program's services are structured around one-on-one instruction by professional writers. 826 Seattle offers several out-of-school and in-school programs, each serving as an entry point to entice participants to consider creating stories. The year round, out-of-school programs include creative writing workshops and after-school tutoring that involves writing enrichment exercises. The students also participate in activities such the Botany Club, where they grow plants and record field notes to hone their writing skills. Additionally, a Pen Pal Club offers

participants the opportunity to correspond with senior citizens in the community. Seventy-five percent of the students who participate in the after-school tutoring do not speak English as a first language and are predominantly from East Africa. According to the 2009-2010 academic year survey of the after-school program, 86% of the participants reported improved grades.