



# Creative Communities Initiative Summary Report

Community Schools of the Arts and Public Housing:  
Findings, Lessons Learned, and Strategies for Successful Partnerships



NATIONAL GUILD OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS OF THE ARTS

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2006

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Geoff Forrester, dance performance, Concord Community Music School, Concord, NH

Geoff Forrester, dance performance, Concord Community Music School, Concord, NH

Geoff Forrester, concert, Concord Community Music School, Concord, NH

Back cover (clockwise from top):

Bennie Nelson West, art class, Memphis Black Arts Alliance, FireHouse Community Arts Academy and Center, Memphis, TN

Jonathan Herman, dance performance, New Orleans Ballet Association, New Orleans, LA

Wendy Litke, African drumming class, The Music School of the Rhode Island Philharmonic, Providence, RI

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P. 32: Jonathan Herman, dance performance, New Orleans Ballet Association, New Orleans, LA

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# Preface

In 1999, the Arts Education Partnership released a seminal report documenting the power of arts education to enrich learning and improve academic performance. That report—*Champions of Change: The Impact of Arts on Learning*—made clear that arts education can have a transformative effect on learning experiences, and that this impact was especially strong for young people from disadvantaged circumstances.<sup>1</sup> The research presented in *Champions of Change* helped identify the elements of high-quality arts programming that promote arts learning, support educational attainment, and enhance young people’s personal development. At the same time, other studies were examining how to sustain arts programming for young people and pointing to the critical role played by local stakeholders, parents, and other community members.<sup>2</sup> The idea that collaborations between arts and non-arts partners could foster the growth and impact of arts education was beginning to take shape.

The National Guild has long recognized the fact that sustained, high-quality arts education has a central place in fostering healthy development and academic progress for all youth, but most especially for those considered at-risk. This knowledge, in conjunction with the growing body of confirmative research, led the Guild to begin an exploration of how to bring arts resources more directly to underserved populations. Thus, in 1999, the Guild launched ArtsAccess, a pilot program to provide arts instruction to children residing in public housing developments through partnerships with public housing authorities in three cities. Based on the experiences of several Guild schools that offered similar programs in their communities, ArtsAccess demonstrated that such partnerships could achieve powerful outcomes for children, families, and communities. In 2001, the National Guild moved to build on the successes of this model with the Creative Communities Initiative. Creative Communities sought to expand access to serious, progressive instruction in the performing, literary, and visual arts for children and youth living in public housing communities, in order to promote skills leading to greater self-sufficiency and improve quality of life in their communities.

Creative Communities was a three-year collaboration among the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the National Guild. It funded twenty community schools of the arts to partner with public housing authorities in twenty cities across the country.

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<sup>1</sup> See Resources.

<sup>2</sup> President’s Committee, *Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts That Value Arts Education*. See Resources.

The Initiative also included a comprehensive evaluation completed by the Institute for Cultural Policy & Practice at Virginia Tech, in collaboration with Emc.Arts, LLC. This report summarizes the evaluation findings and highlights the lessons learned and the practical strategies utilized by practitioners across the twenty Creative Communities sites. Our hope is that this report will be both an inspiration for community schools of the arts to seek out partnerships that can expand access to high-quality arts education and a guide to addressing the many challenges that such partnerships present.

# Acknowledgments

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Sony Music Entertainment

After startup, Americans for the Arts, through its YouthARTS Resource Initiative, provided all sites with a resource packet and YouthARTS tool kits. As the project evolved, the Carnegie Mellon Center for Arts Management and Technology provided web hosting and development services for Creative Communities Online, and Connecticut College's Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy provided sites with summer interns.

The following individuals played key roles in designing, developing, and implementing the Initiative:

<b>HUD</b>	<b>NEA</b>	<b>National Guild</b>	<b>Advisory Group</b>
Gloria Cousar	Scott Shanklin-Peterson	Lolita Mayadas	Wendy Fleischer
Paula Blunt	Lee Kessler	Jonathan Herman	Grady Hillman
	Michael McLaughlin	Shawn Dove	Joanne Williams
		Suzanne Sousa	Camille Akeju
			Latetia Ramirez

This report draws on the extensive documentation of the Creative Communities Initiative evaluation prepared by the Institute for Cultural Policy & Practice at Virginia Tech in collaboration with Emc.Arts, LLC. This comprehensive evaluation could not have been completed without the assistance of staff, artist-teachers, family members, and youth from all twenty of the Creative Communities grantee sites and their public housing partners. In addition, initial site reports prepared by the University of Missouri System Consortium for Educational Policy Analysis provided important insights into how grantees confronted the challenges of startup. This report was compiled and edited by Karen Mahler.

# National Partners

**The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts** provided training and technical assistance to each of the twenty Creative Communities sites. The National Guild was responsible for the initiative's strategic planning, oversight of its evaluation, providing training and technical assistance to grantees, and sharing best practices. The Guild was also responsible for raising matching funds to support these activities.

The Creative Communities Initiative was the first and largest Leadership Initiative to be funded under the Challenge America program of the **National Endowment for the Arts** (NEA). The NEA invested \$500,000 to support CCI over the initial three-year grant period and administered the grant contracts for the twenty community schools of the arts.

The **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development** (HUD) provided \$3 million in support of CCI. HUD's resources enabled the National Guild to provide technical assistance and training services to the twenty partnership sites.

## About the National Guild

Since its founding in 1937, the Guild has been America's only national association for community arts education. With the goal of making high-quality arts education available to every interested child and adult, the Guild supports the creation and development of community schools of the arts by researching and promoting best practices, providing opportunities for professional development and dialogue, and advocating for broad access. Three hundred twenty-three non-profit, non-degree granting institutions in 44 states and Canada are currently members of the Guild. Its core values of access and excellence resonate as much in the Guild's contemporary work in today's public housing communities as it did in the settlement houses of a century ago.

Guild member schools are located in urban, suburban, and rural communities throughout the country. These schools serve more than 500,000 students with sequential arts instruction and hundreds of thousands more through exposure to arts activities. Their faculties consist of over 13,000 teaching artists, and they sponsor over 2,500 artist/faculty concerts, exhibitions, and productions each year. Recent data show that 12 percent of community arts school students are ages 5 and under, 71 percent are school-aged, 14 percent are adults under 64, and 3 percent are seniors. Along ethnic/racial lines, 65 percent of students are white and 35 percent come from minority communities. School enrollments range from less than 100 to over 15,000 students per year, and annual budgets vary from \$25,000 to \$8.5 million.

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# The Creative Communities Initiative

Partnerships between community schools of the arts and local housing authorities are vital and viable strategies for arts education, youth development, and community-building.

STATEMENT FROM THE CREATIVE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

## Introduction

Creative Communities is a ground-breaking initiative to bring high-quality arts instruction to underserved children and youth in public housing communities. Developed in 2001 as a collaboration among the National Guild for Community Schools of the Arts, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the Initiative (CCI) was the first-ever collaboration between NEA and HUD and represented a \$4.65 million investment in, and commitment to, community arts education.

Through a competitive grant application process, CCI provided grants to community schools of the arts in twenty U.S. cities. Sites

were selected based on the quality of the applications and on geographic diversity. Funds were used by grantees, often in partnership with local housing authorities, to provide serious, high-quality, sequential arts instruction during non-school hours to children and youth living in low-income public housing communities. The intention was to help them develop skills that would enhance self-sufficiency and improve quality of life in their communities.

CCI's goals were to serve 5,400 young people in these communities and benefit 39,000 community residents and individuals. The following outcomes were anticipated:

- Increase and strengthen the arts skills of children and youth.

- Create safe havens for children and youth in public housing.
- Improve the quality of life for residents in public housing.
- Develop sustainable partnerships between community organizations and public housing;
- Establish and/or strengthen partnerships between local and state arts organizations and public housing authorities.
- Develop a trained and experienced cadre of artist-teachers.
- Identify, define, and promote best practices.

CCI grew out of the National Guild’s experience with ArtsAccess, a pilot project providing arts instruction to children living in public housing in Knoxville, Philadelphia, and Portland, Maine.

The pilot demonstrated the feasibility of partnerships between arts organizations and public housing authorities and indicated that such partnerships could result in powerful outcomes for children in these communities. CCI was conceived as a direct-service program rather than a field experiment to generate knowledge about the design of community arts partnerships. Nonetheless, it was hoped that by tapping into the accumulated wisdom of personnel associated with the Initiative, such knowledge could be gleaned.

CCI was built upon four central findings from the cumulative expertise of researchers and practitioners in the field of community arts education:<sup>1</sup>

- Children who participate in arts education on a sustained basis, in school and out of school, are often transformed by the act of artistic creation.
- The arts can enable children and youth to learn better and to develop transferable skills.
- Arts-based programs are particularly effective in promoting positive youth development, especially for at-risk youth.
- The most effective youth development strategy is one that engages a variety of community partners.

These facts drove the design of the CCI model, which included seven key components:

- A competitive application process awarding three-year grants of \$135,000 to twenty community schools of the arts
- The development of strategic partnerships among grantees, local housing authorities, residents’ councils, state arts agencies, and local arts, cultural, and social service organizations
- Free arts instruction provided by professionally qualified artist-teachers to interested children and youth living in public housing

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<sup>1</sup> Fiske, *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*. Washington, DC. See Resources.

- A 25 percent match provided by grantees
- Professional development for staff and participating artists
- A comprehensive evaluation of the impact of the initiative
- Strategic planning and capacity-building activities offered through an intermediary organization with national reach and a rich history and legacy of community arts education

The NEA administered the grant contracts for the twenty community schools of the arts, and the National Guild managed all aspects of the Initiative, including strategic planning, oversight of the evaluation, provision of capacity-building assistance, and sharing of best practices.

The capacity-building activities provided by the National Guild included:

- A series of **training institutes** focused on the design and implementation of arts programs and partnerships
- A **Creative Communities Online** website, a portal for information about CCI
- The **Consultants' Corner**, a resource listing of consultants with expertise in a variety of areas including artist-teacher training, conflict resolution, and fundraising

- **Mini-grants** of up to \$3,000 for a range of professional development and capacity-building activities, including travel to training institutes for additional partners, outreach, and marketing
- A **listserv** for the CCI community

CCI exemplifies the mission of the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts to make quality arts education accessible to all communities. CCI's premise is that high-quality arts instruction is a key element of a basic education—and often a crucial one for children in impoverished neighborhoods. Research has shown that engaging children in the arts and using art as a vehicle for academic learning can “level the playing field” for young people in disadvantaged communities.<sup>2</sup> Yet it is often the neediest children, such as those living in public housing, who lack access to high-quality arts education. Many public housing communities are served by low-performing public school systems, offer limited after-school activities, and have few of the support services or enrichment programs for youth that are available in other communities. Public housing provides shelter to nearly 850,000 of the nation's poorest children living in households whose mean income is \$11,295, well below the federal standard for poverty. Despite the many problems associated with public housing,

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<sup>2</sup> Fiske, *Champions of Change*.

the potential to develop critical services and supports that build on the sense of community shared by residents is strong. As noted in *Comprehensive Services in Public Housing: Lessons from the Field*, a 1999 publication of the Center for Community Change,

housing authorities are beginning to experiment with programs intended to significantly change the lives of those living and growing up in their developments... If they succeed—and if enough policy-makers see and acknowledge their success—public housing communities could become laboratories for implementing promising ideas for assisting at-risk families.<sup>3</sup>

CCI is an opportunity to make arts education a required ingredient in the mosaic of youth development and family support services offered to residents of public housing communities across the nation.

The Guild's purpose in developing this guide is to take the lessons learned from CCI to communities across the country and bring them to bear on the development of a national strategy for arts education, youth development, and community building.

## Overview of the Creative Communities Sites

The twenty CCI sites varied enormously in terms of the size and scope of the partners, the types of partnerships they formed, the populations they served, and the programming they offered. Sites formed partnerships not only with housing communities, but also with schools, community agencies, and non-arts service providers (Y's, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.), and these partnerships represented varying degrees of synergy among the organizations involved. The arts disciplines featured in CCI programs included performing arts, visual arts, and art forms reflecting diverse cultural traditions. The length of a semester ranged from eight to sixteen weeks, and the number and timing of sessions per week also varied; most took place after school on weekdays, but some sites also held Saturday and/or summer classes. Students served ranged from pre-school to late adolescence. Some sites made the CCI programs part of other programs and initiatives they were already running, while others treated them as separate programs with a distinct identity and a separate budget, presenting them as such in their marketing and communications materials and raising funds specifically for them.

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<sup>3</sup> Saasta and Dahlem, *Comprehensive Services in Public Housing: Lessons from the Field*. See Resources.

Below are brief descriptions of the twenty CCI sites, their partners, and the programming they were initially funded to provide.

### Space One Eleven, Birmingham, AL

Space One Eleven partnered with the Birmingham Housing Authority to provide sequential arts instruction for young people in four public housing communities.

### Los Angeles Music and Art School (LAMAS), Los Angeles, CA

LAMAS collaborated with the Estrada Courts Public Housing Development to provide classes in Early Childhood Music and Dance, Visual Arts, and Folklorico dance.

### Artists Collective, Inc., Hartford, CT

The Artists Collective partnered with the Hartt School Community Division/University of Hartford and the Hartford Housing Authority to develop a music instruction program for youth.

### Dance Institute of Washington, Washington, DC

The Institute partnered with three public housing communities to provide dance/exercise classes for youth aged eight to eighteen.

### Merit School of Music, Chicago, IL

Merit partnered with the Duncan YMCA and the residents of the ABLA public housing community to provide music instruction. The site also offered scholarships for private lessons and classes.

### New Orleans Ballet Association, (NOBA), New Orleans, LA

Through a partnership with the New Orleans Housing Authority, NOBA offered free dance instruction to youth residing in four New Orleans public housing communities.

### Federated Dorchester Neighborhood Houses, Dorchester, MA

The Art a la Carte program, a division of Federated Dorchester Neighborhood Houses, provided classes for teens on-site at Boston Housing Authority developments.

### COCA—Center of Creative Arts, St. Louis, MO

In collaboration with COVAM Community Development Corporation, the St. Louis Housing Authority, and Jefferson Elementary School, COCA provided after-school and summer arts instruction to children living in housing developments adjacent to the Jefferson School.

### Concord Community Music School (CCMS), Concord, NH

In partnership with the Manchester Housing & Redevelopment Authority, CCMS offered classes for children ages 5–12 in music, creative movement, and dance through its Music in the Community Initiative.

Poeh Arts Program/Pueblo of Pojoaque,  
Santa Fe, NM

Poeh partnered with Pojoaque Pueblo Boys and Girls Club to offer a wide range of craft classes.

Nevada Ballet Theatre (NVB),  
Las Vegas, NV

In partnership with the Las Vegas Housing Authority and the Cultural & Community Affairs Division of the City of Las Vegas, NVB provided ballet classes.

The Children's Art Carnival (CAC),  
New York, NY

In partnership with the New York City Housing Authority, CAC offered sequential arts instruction to youth ages eight to eighteen at the Manhattanville Community Center.

Cleveland Public Theatre (CPT),  
Cleveland, OH

In collaboration with the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority, CPT expanded its Brick City Theatre in two public housing communities.

City Arts Center (CAC), Oklahoma  
City, OK

In partnership with the Oklahoma City Housing Authority, CAC enhanced its existing programs at public housing centers offering after-school arts classes.

The Village of Arts and Humanities,  
Philadelphia, PA

In partnership with the Philadelphia Public Housing Authority, Fairhill Tenant Council, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Village offered classes in painting, drawing, writing, dance, and media arts.

The Music School of the Rhode Island  
Philharmonic, Providence, RI

The Music School presented a Music Education & Appreciation Program and a teen mentoring program in collaboration with the Housing Authority of the City of Pawtucket.

Creative Spark, Mt. Pleasant, SC

In collaboration with the City of Charleston's Office of Cultural Affairs and the Housing Authority for the City of Charleston, Creative Spark offered multidisciplinary arts education.

Memphis Black Arts Alliance,  
Memphis, TN

In partnership with the Memphis Housing Authority, the Alliance offered youths at Lamar Terrace and LeMoyne Gardens multidisciplinary arts classes and case management services.

### Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts (MECA), Houston, TX

MECA partnered with Irvington Village Public Housing to provide programming in visual arts, contemporary dance, and capoeira and access to MECA's support services.

### Vermont Arts Exchange (VEA), North Bennington, VT

VEA partnered with Applegate Apartments and the Bennington Housing Authority to provide a multidisciplinary arts education program for youth in three public housing sites in Bennington County.

## The CCI Evaluation

The comprehensive CCI evaluation was implemented during the project's initial phase by the University of Missouri System Consortium for Educational Policy Analysis and later by the Institute for Cultural Policy and Practice at Virginia Tech, in collaboration with Emc.Arts, LLC.<sup>4</sup> The evaluation focused on the success of the CCI sites in achieving the project's goals.

There were three main sources of data for the evaluation:

### Questionnaires from various target populations

- Surveys of elementary and middle-school students about their attitudes and experiences in CCI classes
- Student assessments provided by artist-teachers
- Surveys of artist-teachers about their attitudes and experiences in CCI, especially in regard to its impact on their professional development

### Self-assessments by partnership leaders

- Programming self-assessment, consisting of ten elements including values, expectations, program fit, integration of goals, and program ownership, among others
- Partnering self-assessment, consisting of six elements such as process and structure, communication, vision and purpose, and resources

### Site visits

- Visits were made to all sites in Year 1 and then to a select group of sites in subsequent years. Site visits included interviews with key personnel on a wide range of program, partnership, evaluation, and sustainability issues.

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<sup>4</sup>Because of organizational changes at the Consortium for Educational Policy Analysis, this evaluator withdrew from the project after Year 1 and was replaced by the Institute for Cultural Policy and Practice. Efforts were made to align the evaluation across Year 1 and subsequent years.



## Summary of Findings

See, before this, I was mad all the time because I didn't think I could do things...  
Now I can sing, dance, use a computer, tumble... And even if I moved somewhere where  
there wasn't any [CCI], I know that I could find things I love to do . . .  
because I can do things. I know that now.

—IMANI STOVALL, AGE 9, STUDENT OF AFRICAN AND JAZZ DANCE  
IN COCA'S URBAN ARTS PROGRAM

It's really the life changes that are so dramatic. Students' expectations of themselves  
have risen as they come to understand that [we] expect so much from them.  
We believe in them and they respond to that. That's what is so amazing to watch.

—ERICA SUTHERLIN, MUSIC AND DRAMA INSTRUCTOR,  
COCA'S URBAN ARTS PROGRAM

The greatest success of the Creative Communities Initiative was to consistently deliver high-quality arts education to children and youth. Most sites highlighted, encouraged, and rewarded students' artistic development. Many programs were dedicated to high artistic standards and sequential, rigorous instruction, and staff were skilled in adapting curriculum and instruction to age, ability, interest levels, and the shifting composition of

classes. Artist-teachers consistently had positive interactions with students, and students received plentiful attention in classes that maintained a low ratio between artist-teachers and students. Instruction was organized into a variety of workshops and projects. Differences between sequential and workshop approaches had little impact on students' satisfaction or their desire to learn more about the arts.

Over the three years of the Initiative, more than 7,000 children and youth enrolled in CCI classes, with an average enrollment per term of 62; at some sites enrollment was far higher, in one instance reaching 295 students. The majority of children and youth served achieved positive youth development outcomes, reporting increases in their ability to resolve conflicts, their capacity to be responsible for their own learning, and their skills in working well with other students.

Overall, CCI had notable success in achieving its programmatic goals, such as strengthening the arts skills of participating children and youth, developing an experienced cadre of artist-teachers, and identifying best practices in community arts partnerships. For other goals, success was modest; these goals included improving the quality of life for residents in public housing and creating safe havens for children and youth in public housing. The goal of establishing and/or strengthening partnerships between local and state arts organizations and public housing authorities was scarcely addressed by the sites. Finally, most sites did not in any way meet the goal of developing sustainable partnerships between community organizations and public housing. Highlights of findings in these areas follow.

## Impact on Art Skills of Children and Youth

I want to improve my skills and build the portfolio I've started so I can show people what I can do. I think I want to write, illustrate, and publish books some day.

—TYRELL BRONNER, AGE 9,  
STUDENT OF VISUAL ARTS AND COMPUTER ART IN  
COCA'S URBAN ARTS PROGRAM

- More than 90 percent of participants said they learned new things in class and wanted to learn more about the arts.
- More than three-quarters of participants felt that their capacity to express themselves through art and to make or perform artworks increased.
- According to artist-teacher reports, almost all participants were able to convey ideas and emotions through art-making at least some of the time.
- Eighty-three percent of participants felt they could achieve a lot artistically in the future and wanted opportunities to make or perform art at a high level.

- High enrollment rates did not always translate into regular student attendance, but even at sites with relatively low attendance, site leaders were able to maintain core groups of students able to experience continuous learning.

## Creation of Safe Havens

- A large majority (89–94 percent) of participants reported feelings of safety and belonging in their classes.
- According to artist-teacher reports, 70 percent of students always or usually showed respect for other students.
- Even successful sites struggled at times with classroom management and student behavior problems.
- Access to reliable transportation to the CCI sites for children and youth remained a challenge for many programs throughout the Initiative—more than one-third of students reported that it was hard to get to class.
- Space availability or adequacy was at times a challenge for those programs offering classes directly at the housing site.

## Impact on Public Housing Residents

My daughter is volunteering with the little kids. She talks about that a lot... she'll come home and show me how she has helped these little kids. I think it makes her more creative, spending her time doing that instead of watching TV.

—JADE JACKSON, PARENT OF STUDENT IN COCA'S  
URBAN ARTS PROGRAM

- Parents took considerable pride in their children's achievements in CCI.
- Most CCI sites offered a wide variety of culminating performances to parents and community residents at or near the housing sites.
- Few sites developed feedback systems to communicate regularly with parents, guardians, and family members, and few opportunities were created to involve parents and other housing residents.

## Impact on Artist-Teachers

I've learned that I have a wonderful ability and gift to teach children music, movement, and expression. CCI has contributed to my personal growth in so many ways. I've begun to write children's music and am creating my own studio for classes and recording.

—MICHAELE EMMET, EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC/MOVEMENT TEACHER, LOS ANGELES MUSIC AND ART SCHOOL

- Ninety-four percent of artist-teachers felt the Initiative offered them opportunities to advance professionally, and nearly all felt that teaching in the program gave them a chance to develop new strategic teaching methods. For example, in response to students' cultural backgrounds, teachers relied less on verbal instructions, giving greater emphasis to showing, not telling; they designed activities customized to different age levels simultaneously; and they engaged irregular attendees in activities sequenced to their progress while also moving class content forward for frequent attendees, all the time maintaining a sense of the group as a whole.
- One hundred percent of artist-teachers felt that the program encouraged them to be innovative.

- Sites placed a greater emphasis on orienting artist-teachers to the program than on providing them with on-site professional development.
- Many sites did not establish specific criteria for hiring, retaining, and evaluating artist-teachers.

## Development of Sustainable Partnerships

- Overall, sites paid greater attention to programming than to partnership development.
- One-third of sites did not actively pursue sustainability strategies.
- Artistic and housing staff often lacked strong organizational and management skills.
- Some partnerships were characterized by a lack of mutual respect and trust.
- Nearly one-quarter of site leaders felt that the roles and responsibilities of each member of the partnership were unclear.



# Lessons Learned

In general, CCI sites focused their attention and finite energies far more on programming activities than on developing their partnerships. This is understandable given the funder's emphasis on direct service, the small amount of money received by each grantee, and the priorities of the grantees and their partners. This focus led to a range of challenges for program sites, including uncertainty over the shared vision for the program, lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities, limited avenues for clear communication, and insufficient attention to the structures and systems that would have allowed for resource development and sustainability planning.

Nonetheless, the experiences of personnel at CCI sites revealed much about how to craft programming and navigate these partnerships

through the various phases of program implementation.

## Initiation and Startup

- Gearing up operations to offer new arts programming in new settings is a large, complex task. Recognizing this allows programs to make adjustments in expectations and address key issues at the outset.
- Allow sufficient planning time before on-site implementation of the project and engage all potential partners in the planning process, to secure buy-in.

- Set reasonable enrollment targets that reflect the realities of the site and the complexities of startup.
- Ensure adequate time to recruit students before scheduling classes.
- Make attention to program logistics, such as safe, reliable transportation of students, a priority.
- Develop a plan to ensure effective communication among site partners and with parents.
- Ensure at the outset that adequate space is available for classes. Among programs that offered arts programming at the housing site, space availability was often an issue, with the arts program sometimes competing with other housing site meetings and at times igniting conflicts over values and priorities among housing residents.
- Innovative and flexible programming allowed sites to meet a variety of needs and address the multiple values and missions represented among the partners.

In Washington, DC, children are transported from the housing developments to the studios and generally have two dance classes per evening. Parts of some evenings are used for life-skills workshops, and the end of the second class is always reserved for reflection and writing activities. For example, in the first hour children attend a Peace Works workshop, designed to encourage use of positive language and behaviors. In the second hour, they attend their hip-hop class.

## Implementation and Programming

- The consistent participation and professionalism of artist-teachers were vital elements of program success. Although shifts in teaching staff were common, sites that had clear curriculum guidelines were able to cope with this challenge and achieve consistency in students' experience over time. Providing new artist-teachers with a thorough orientation helped ease them into their new role, clarify the program's goals and objectives, and ensure greater consistency.

- Children and youth in public housing communities may have multiple and complex needs. Artist-teachers will need support to address them.

Some sites struggled with what they described as the "playground effect": during some activities, such as dance or drumming, children get "wired," and the artist-teachers, who often have

limited classroom management skills, have difficulty calming them down. In St. Louis, staff worked with an educational specialist from the local school district who held workshops for artist-teachers on a “positive behavior” model of discipline.

- Meeting enrollment targets may take a great deal of outreach, creativity, and effort.

The Providence site used innovative programming to increase student enrollment. Students performed at the local housing authority Christmas party, which generated a lot of positive word-of-mouth about the program. The Music School obtained a grant to purchase guitars and violins for each student to take home. The children learned to be responsible with the instruments, while allowing them to bring the instruments home had an enormous impact, as participating students became visible ambassadors for the program, bringing new students in.

## Building Relationships

- At times, the pressures of meeting deadlines and enrollment targets have to yield to the need to cultivate relationships.

In Birmingham, programming proceeded slowly because site leaders first wanted to build relationships and trust with the housing development communities. CCI staff implemented a limited program at one site as a step in building

trust with the residents’ council president; existing after-school youth programming at this housing development had been focused on helping children improve their academic skills, and Initiative leaders did not want to be perceived as competing with these goals. This sensitivity led to strong support from the residents’ council and a positive relationship that evolved into a strong commitment to the program.

- Attention and sensitivity to the culture of the community is crucial to obtaining local buy-in and support for the program.

In Houston, program startup was marked by negative experiences between the residents and CCI planners, which seemed to result from lack of cultural sensitivity. The CCI program coordinator, who grew up in the community and had a background in drama, decided to establish trust by building the program through personal outreach, one family at a time. The coordinator also worked to find teachers who were culturally sensitive.

- Student and faculty performances and exhibitions at housing sites were important ways of making connections with housing community residents.

The Santa Fe site presented an exhibit of student work in ceramics and glass fusion at the centrally located Boys and Girls Club, one of the site’s primary partners. In St. Louis, the culminating performances were held in the public school partner’s auditorium. They showcased student achievement in African dance, modern dance,

computer arts, and circus arts. Audience members included parents, friends, and community members, as well as foundation representatives, corporate sponsors, and private housing developers. At the Chicago site, the annual spring concert was a community event featuring student performances in choir, guitar, and percussion, followed by a pizza dinner for students.

Reaching and engaging parents in the housing projects was a consistent challenge. Volunteer opportunities for parents and other residents and, in some cases, paid jobs (the CCI coordinator in Providence was a housing project resident) enabled residents to perform important program roles. These volunteer and paid jobs created program buy-in among those directly involved and, in some cases, among other parents and residents as well.

## Administration and Management

- Program coordinators need the authority and resources to carry out key tasks such as supervising day-to-day program implementation, problem-solving with artist-teachers and housing community personnel, acting as liaison between the arts and housing partners, and responding actively to the needs and concerns

of students and families. Hiring a dedicated CCI coordinator to undertake these and other tasks enhanced the program's continuity and effectiveness.

The New Orleans site has a strong administrative structure and an experienced staff who are sensitive to the needs and issues of program implementation particular to the community they serve. The administrative and instructional staff have worked hard to establish the program as a meaningful and positive experience that benefits children in the community. The site used innovative strategies to overcome the challenges of a skeptical residents' council and a community not used to engaging in the sort of dance (creative movement) that the program offered.

- Programs were far less successful if they designated a coordinator who was overburdened with other tasks, for whom coordination and oversight of CCI was just one among many other responsibilities.
- Adequate training, a clear job description, and the opportunity to take ownership of the position were all keys to success for CCI coordinators.
- Many grantee arts organizations were strongly identified with one person, usually the founding director. These individuals brought a great deal of personal commitment to CCI, but also had responsibility for many other programs.

While this level of personal investment was often critical to a site's success, it was also problematic in that competing needs could overload the individual's capacity to devote the necessary resources to the implementation of a new initiative.

## Partnerships

- Sites that had integrated partnerships which communicated across multiple organizational levels were the most effective in meeting program goals.

In St. Louis, personnel at both the arts and housing organizations, including logistics administrators, mid-level program managers, and executives, attended to grassroots advocacy, day-to-day implementation, resource development, increasing public awareness, and leveraging political capital in ways that supported the other levels of the partnership.

- Effective partnerships were characterized by clarity about roles and expectations, the use of multiple channels for feedback and communication, and a mutual understanding of the goals that each partner was pursuing.
- An individual's role must be well defined and integrated with that person's official job responsibilities. At times, high levels of

engagement among housing authority staff depended more on personal commitment than official job responsibility.

The lack of a clear role and defined responsibilities for the housing partner in Birmingham left Initiative staff and residents' council members feeling that the housing authority was not providing them with the support they needed to succeed. Lack of reliable transportation was one critical challenge that threatened the project's continuation at this site.

- Personal commitment and relationships can be central to success.

In Providence, the success of the Initiative was attributed, among other things, to the partners' desire for success and their fundamental belief in the goals of the Initiative.

- Constructive partnering can be a way for competing organizations to work together for mutual benefit.

The Hartt School and the Artist Collective in Hartford had been competitive with each other within the community. The Collective feared the School's presence in the downtown area because of a long history of organizational conflict. However, through CCI, these organizations worked together to benefit mutually from the partnership. Subsequently, the Hartt School began building an extension campus for the fine arts approximately ten minutes from the Artist Collective, and the partnership with the Collective has become vital to the success of the expansion.

- Partnering with several different organizations (a “big fan” philosophy) is an effective way to add fresh assets and resources to a partnership.

The Providence site created mini-partnerships with a range of community organizations to provide additional support and opportunities for the youth in CCI, including job and leadership training and community service. Their partners included the Boys and Girls Clubs, Johnson and Wales University, the Center for Leadership Development, Blackstone Academy, Pawtucket Public Schools, four other local arts agencies, and the City of Pawtucket.

## Sustainability

- Leverage the resources of each partner to build a creative funding mix. Arts organizations tend to seek grants from a standard array of funders for arts education, while funding is available to public housing for workforce development and neighborhood development—neither of which is usually accessible to arts organizations.
- Raising the visibility of programming, for example through student performances and exhibitions, can bring attention—and support—from elected officials, business leaders, and new funders.

- Be cautious about relying on the individual strengths of key personnel to achieve long-term sustainability. While their commitment is important, and may be crucial at project conception, too much reliance on an individual’s passion and commitment, rather than on the integration of the project into the organization, may leave the project vulnerable to shifts in personal priorities.

- Involve senior personnel at CCI sites in discussions and decision-making about fund development, public awareness, and sustainability.

- Think creatively about ongoing program funding.

Concord Community Music School plans to ensure the long-term viability of all their community partnership programs by becoming less reliant on one-time, relatively small grants from foundations and corporations. Instead, CCMS will seek more support from unrestricted major gifts and donations to its endowment. The intention is to turn individual donors into “grantmakers” who provide multiyear, unrestricted support. CCMS’s strategy is to make the case to both donors and community members that the school is an asset to the entire community whose programming should be protected from shifting philanthropic priorities and whose staff should be freed, as much as possible, from the effort that goes into securing small, restricted donations.

## Issues Related to the Program Model

Although one of CCI's goals was for sites to establish sustainable partnerships, the grant application process did not require documentation of established partnerships or memoranda of understanding laying out the roles and responsibilities of the partners. Nor were sites able to allot time prior to startup to implement comprehensive planning or community assessment efforts. A program application and funding structure that more directly supported early design, communications, and planning efforts could have prepared sites to address and mitigate many of the challenges faced throughout the Initiative, and might have allowed sites to address several key concerns more fully:

- “Forced marriages” between community schools and housing partners, leading to disparities in commitment and resources, limited knowledge of partners’ organizational culture, and lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities
- Difficulties in reaching student attendance targets and in involving parents in volunteer and other supporting roles

- Limited time between participants’ selection and the start of program implementation resulted in little time for local planning, careful examination of partners’ assets and liabilities, clarity about personnel requirements, or development of long-term sustainability strategies.
- Grantees were required to address programming expectations rather than meet specific outcome targets. Program funds were distributed based on submission of descriptive progress reports, rather than on achievement of performance targets.

The following measures can help resolve these issues:

- Integration of CCI with established programs within the partnering organizations
- A better understanding of how various issues in the arts and housing sectors—including philanthropic trends, the organizational hierarchies of housing communities, and emerging federal housing initiatives—would impact the viability of CCI programs



# Strategies for Sustaining Success

## General Considerations

The high quality of arts programming achieved by the CCI sites and the many positive student outcomes clearly indicate that it is possible to bring rigorous arts instruction to children and youth living in public housing. A more complicated issue raised by CCI is how arts and housing organizations can best work together to deliver arts education in these settings, and how to ensure that successful programming continues after grant funds have run out. The degree to which the collaborative efforts of the CCI grantees resulted in sustainable programs and partnerships is a marker of success that goes beyond the capacity of a site to deliver services over the course of a finite funding period. The lesson drawn is that careful planning and strategic partnering are the foundation for creating

programs that can spark the creative energy of underserved children and bring the power of the arts to needy communities in enduring ways.

At the end of the CCI project funding period, five sites (Concord, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Providence, and St. Louis) appeared well positioned to sustain their CCI programs. What factors accounted for their success? According to the CCI evaluation, these sites shared a general approach to implementation and collaboration that included the following characteristics:

- Each integrated the goals of CCI into the vision, purpose, and identity of the host organization.
- Each viewed CCI as a platform for long-term organizational development rather than solely as an opportunity to provide direct services and obtain project funds.

## Ten Principles for Successful Public-Private Partnerships

1. Have clear goals.
2. Regularly measure progress toward predetermined goals.
3. Involve families when developing programs and services.
4. Include a broad base of partners and key stakeholders from the beginning.
5. Involve powerful champions who can make the initiative visible to the public.
6. Establish clear governance structures that define partner roles and responsibilities.
7. Be flexible to allow adaptation to changing conditions and resources.
8. Enable all partners to benefit from and draw on each other's assets.
9. Plan for sustainability at the outset.
10. Form relationships and support the work of others focused on related goals.

Adapted from *A Guide to Successful Public-Private Partnerships for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives*, by Sharon Deich, 2001, The Finance Project.: available at [www.financeproject.org/Publications/ostpartnershipguide.pdf](http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/ostpartnershipguide.pdf).

- Each used organizational knowledge gained from their CCI experience in designing and implementing other programs.
- All constituencies in the organization—board members, executive staff, administrative staff, advisory groups, and, in some cases, a core set of artist-teachers—sought “ownership” of CCI and had a stake in the program’s success.
- Each developed a sound business model and made CCI a central component of strategic program and resource development.
- Arts and housing partners had substantive roles throughout the project period.
- Each used the resources and contacts of all CCI partners to leverage funds.
- Each used innovative resource development strategies, such as bundling CCI into broader proposals for community arts or youth development and/or using it to spur individual giving.

## Specific Strategies

In a set of follow-up interviews with personnel from these successful initiatives, staff from both arts and housing organizations elaborated on

some of these points, highlighting concrete strategies that were key to the success of their initiatives and the viability of their partnerships. From these discussions emerged five factors considered crucial for implementing programs and sustaining the partnerships that support them. Not surprisingly, these factors echo the prevailing wisdom on best practices for building effective community-based partnerships, as documented in recent publications (see sidebar).

## 1. Invest in collaborative planning at the outset.

The New Orleans Ballet Association (NOBA) had historically been very careful and strategic about the partnerships it entered into, and this marked its approach to CCI as well. NOBA insisted from the outset that the Initiative's collaborative planning process entail clear articulation of what all partners wanted to get from the partnership and what resources they would be able and willing to commit. This strategy is directly tied to the organization's long-term sustainability: NOBA aligns its long-range programming and resource development plans and makes partnership choices that fit with its organizational mission.

With considerable experience in partnering through its Music in the Community Initiative, Concord Community Music School (CCMS) approached the initial pre-application meeting with the Manchester Housing and Redevelopment Authority (MHRA) with a willingness to walk away if it appeared that

MHRA was not going to be a "true" partner. Benchmarks for effective partnerships that CCMS looked for at this meeting included a willingness to commit sufficient funds, services, and staff support; adequate facilities; a commitment to serving young people; a strong sense of mission; an enthusiasm for programming innovation; and executive-level support. To cement their plans, the partners developed a memorandum of understanding outlining their respective personnel and resource commitments. (See Appendix, page 44).

In the absence of upfront collaborative planning, problems are likely, and the existence of the Initiative may be threatened.

In one site, the local housing development leadership agreed to enter into the CCI partnership because the residents were interested in arts programming. Housing development staff felt that they had made a special effort to support the CCI program by making space available, helping to mail promotional flyers, and providing a mobile stage for a holiday presentation. However, the housing development leadership felt the arts partner did not sufficiently appreciate these efforts, while the arts partner viewed them as an expected part of the collaboration. This type of misunderstanding could have been avoided if the partners had established at the outset realistic expectations for each other as well as the financial resources that each would commit.

## 2. Ensure ongoing communication across multiple levels.

Communication is the key that makes or breaks a partnership. It is extremely important to keep the lines of communication open between partners, in order to share information and respond promptly to requests.

In Providence, formal channels of communication, established early on as part of the program's operation, were key to its success. Each month, the Music School's executive director, outreach coordinator, and artist-teachers meet with coordinators from both housing sites and the Public Housing Authority executive and program staff. At these meetings, the partners take stock of progress and identify problems in various areas—staffing, student behavior, and parent involvement. They also review program quality, examine space, make budget adjustments to accommodate program growth, and plan for collaborative resource development. As one key housing official noted: "You need great communication—you've got to pick up the phone and talk to people. You have to hear their voice to know if they believe in the same thing that you do; you can't just email, email, email."

In Concord, ongoing communication occurred between arts and housing representatives, regardless of their position within the hierarchy of their respective organizations. This allowed for a significant degree of trust and mutual respect to develop through all levels of the partnership.

## 3. Focus on building relationships.

Relationships are the glue that holds partnerships together. Cultivating and nurturing relationships among partners is key, but equally important to the success of CCI partnerships was developing relationships with families and the public housing community. Many Initiative staff emphasized that a great deal of "upfront work and leg work" had to be done to engage the community and build trust. Also crucial was taking a "big picture" approach, recognizing that there were many different perspectives—including those of kids, parents, site staff, and artists, not to mention funders and administrators at partner organizations—that Initiative staff had to consider and balance.

In St. Louis, COCA—Center of Creative Arts and its housing partner committed considerable resources to reaching out to families in the community to determine their interests and apprise them of their children's progress. Housing staff went door to door, giving parents individual updates about their children. They surveyed community residents about their interests and needs, and then responded to their requests by developing relationships with other community organizations that could offer complementary activities to residents. This allowed CCI to develop a summer program for middle-school students, bring in employment groups for job training, and complete a mural project that was hung in the housing project's community center. In this way, the Initiative met the needs of the students it was funded to serve, while demonstrating its commitment to serving the larger community. As a

result, when a new principal at the school where CCI was situated threatened to withdraw his support for the arts program, community residents demanded that the program remain. As COCA's director of education noted, "We have become entrenched in the culture of the community—the kids call themselves 'COCA kids.'" COCA and its housing partner built a solid foundation for CCI's sustainability by cultivating a variety of constituencies and giving each one a reason to believe in the value of the project.

For many community schools of the arts, working with their housing partners was their first foray into collaborating with the local housing authority. Developing this partnership was often tricky. As one art school education director noted, building this relationship required "seeing beyond the box of what you have been trained to see... a lot of conversation is required to discover what the initiative needs... these are long-drawn-out processes, and you have to give it time. You can't just go in with 'here's what we are going to do.' These relationships have to be nurtured over the entire course of the initiative."

#### 4. Publicly champion the project.

Successful ventures are those that find a way to "speak" to constituents about the passion and values reflected in their programming. Championing the Initiative to a range of local stakeholders is an important way to gain community support and is crucial for grabbing the attention of funders. Concord Community Music School, for example,

promotes CCI in its publications, including its regular newsletter. The organization views CCI as a "flagship" program that "demonstrates the value of its work in the community to funders and elected officials." By disseminating information about CCI, the Music School makes apparent to its constituents that, far from being an "elitist" organization that primarily serves well-to-do patrons, it has deep roots in local communities and is strongly committed to community engagement. For CCMS, "being able to make this point, and make it convincingly, is a key part of a larger strategy" to build its financial base.

At the Music School of the Rhode Island Philharmonic, promoting the programming and raising the money required to support it go hand in hand: "We do a lot of PR—we promote with the Mayor all the time—we send him invites to what we do, and send notes updating him; we draft press releases and we have had local papers come to talk with the kids."

#### 5. Don't forget evaluation.

The National Guild undertook a large-scale evaluation of CCI in which all grantees participated, and grantees were not required to evaluate their own programs independently. However, for the most successful initiatives, a commitment to gathering evaluative information on a regular basis, interpreting it, and acting on the results was an important factor in maintaining the program and responding to the needs of the Initiative's various constituencies. Regularly meas-

uring progress toward predetermined goals is one of the most important ways to build and sustain effective public-private partnerships.

NOBA employs evaluation every year to guide its work and assess the strengths and weaknesses of its programs. Using self-assessment tools with all levels of staff and participants—site coordinators, artist-teachers, parents, and students—has been important to the organization’s ability to stay on top of the program, maintain program quality, and adapt to changing situations and emerging needs. It has also proved a useful tool to check in with local stakeholders.

## Special Considerations in Working with Public Housing Communities

Partnerships focusing on public housing bring special challenges because of the nature of the population served and the complexity of the relationships with various housing community stakeholders. The five key strategies described above are essential elements of effective community-based partnerships with public housing communities. Beyond these measures, implementing these partnerships requires sensitivity to the unique qualities of these settings. CCI personnel noted three essential types of specialized knowledge.

### 1. Get to know the site and the concerns of residents.

Ultimately, successfully offering arts programming to children and families in public housing means recognizing the specific needs of this population and adapting to them. No program will be successful if the site is not chosen well or if residents’ basic concerns are not met.

CCMS reconsidered its site selection when it discovered that the community needed programming that focused on elderly residents rather than children and families.

Many grantees faced concerns about safety at public housing sites and had to learn just what this meant for residents.

At one program, the children had a nine-block walk to the art classes. Although this distance seemed reasonable to staff from the arts partner, on-site housing personnel noted that as far as this particular community was concerned, nine blocks “might as well be nine miles.”

Commitment and consistency are crucial; residents of public housing have seen many well-intentioned programs come and go, and they may be unwilling to invest themselves in a venture that they don’t see as serving their long-term needs.

As NOBA staff reported, housing community residents “want something that is going to be there... if

you go in and just whirl through, you will not gain their trust that you are going to be there. They need to believe that even if it gets hard, you are not going to be leaving.”

CCMS made special efforts to ensure low turnover among arts faculty so they could develop long-term relationships with children and families. “This was the most important factor—no surprises! Staff has been stable for five or six years. Staff know what to expect, and so do the kids.”

In the words of the Providence site director, “I can’t say enough about how important it was to have had a respected resident as staff. From the beginning, she established trust with the parents by enrolling her own children in the program, recruiting on a personal level, and by being multilingual and assuring parents.”

The capacity to build trust with public housing communities relies to a large extent on the skills and attitudes of staff. Successful leaders exercise care in making staffing choices. Personnel who work with housing communities must have a welcoming attitude and demonstrate a desire to work collaboratively with residents, rather than imposing programming on them. Recognition that the program will benefit from resident input goes a long way in establishing enduring trust. Being flexible with programming decisions to enable community involvement is key.

NOBA staff offered a key insight about the challenges of delivering programming to public

housing communities: Employing the arts as a vehicle to affect social change is akin to providing a social service. Maintaining high artistic standards is critical, but realizing that the community may view the program as a “service” can make a big difference in understanding the challenges of delivering meaningful, high-quality programming in these settings.

## 2. Understand local protocol.

Do your homework before attempting to implement any type of program within a public housing environment. Reach out to staff on-site and at the local housing authority’s central administrative offices, and always include the resident leadership.

Many CCI arts partners did not enter the process of partnering with the benefit of detailed information on the administrative structure of public housing authorities. Some sites partnered not with city housing authorities, but with the “middle rungs” of housing management, such as a single housing site or even an element within a single site (for example, a residents’ council). In such cases, the CCI programs often operated “under the radar” of senior management at housing authorities, so that there was no senior person who had a stake in the success of the program or who saw it as being in his/her own interest to help contribute to that success.

It is also important to understand differences in housing community governance. For example,

resident management corporations are nonprofit organizations that work with a committee of residents to make decisions and allocate resources for services, in contrast to the more traditional residents' councils. Different governance structures may have different accountability systems and distinct relationships with central housing administration offices that can affect program implementation. When discussing the complexities of navigating these relationships, many arts partners at the CCI sites indicated that their collaborations would have progressed more smoothly had they mastered some of these subtleties at the outset.

encourage involvement and buy-in. However, housing authority terms and conditions covering income limits and housing benefits and the stipulations of federal and state policy regarding work requirements and public assistance must be fully considered to ensure that residents are not penalized financially for their involvement (for example, compensation received for program-related work could have a negative impact on the calculation of their rent).

### 3. Understand public housing authority rules and regulations.

It is important to know housing authority regulations and how they impact programming and resident participation. Encouraging resident participation and giving residents meaningful program responsibilities are productive ways to



# Conclusion

The Creative Communities Initiative demonstrated that a unique concept, implemented with skill, patience, and goodwill, can be turned into a transformative experience for children and families living in public housing communities. The Initiative showed that bringing rigorous, high-quality arts programming to underserved children and youth is a viable way to nurture and promote their artistic and human development, their inner spirit as human beings, and, in the long run, the well-being of their communities.

The larger lesson of CCI, though, is that making this kind of programming an enduring component of the services offered to children in public housing is a challenge that requires careful

planning and a strong, flexible partnership. Findings from the CCI evaluation, condensed and summarized in this report, provide a roadmap of sorts for community schools of the arts to follow as they pursue partnerships with public housing authorities, as well as with other public or private entities. Thankfully, this is a path that others have traveled as well, and they have shared their wisdom through a variety of documents, many of which can easily be obtained online; they are listed in the Resources section.

# Appendix: What Is an MOU?

MOU stands for “memorandum of understanding.” MOUs are designed to clarify and define the roles and expectations of a working relationship between all partners that contribute services and resources to a project.

## Why develop an MOU?

The best working relationships are characterized by clarity of purpose and communication. When you begin a partnership, there are many questions to answer: What exactly is your partner going to provide? What is your site going to provide to the partner? Who will be responsible for what? When? For how long? What can both

parties reasonably expect from their partnership? These are but a few questions that may come up which an MOU can help sort out.

## How do we create an MOU?

Developing a basic MOU is not difficult. It should simply state all the parties that are participating in the agreement and the overall purpose of the agreement, then list each partner’s responsibilities. You can create MOU template to use and adapt for all partnerships.

The following sample is adapted from the template at [http://www.lincolnclc.org/who/operating\\_principles.html](http://www.lincolnclc.org/who/operating_principles.html).

# Sample Memorandum of Understanding

BETWEEN X COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER  
AND Y COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) describes and confirms an agreement between X Community Learning Center and Y Community-Based Organization. The purpose of the agreement is to formalize and clarify expectations and relationships between all parties. For the purpose of the MOU, Service Provider is defined as an agency representative providing services to students and adults on a school site affiliated with the Community Learning Center programs.

## Community Learning Center Responsibilities

- Provide a designated person responsible for supporting and maintaining the community partner/service provider at the school site.
- Provide site specific orientation and review for the community partner/service provider.
- Provide reasonable space, as agreed upon by site supervisor and service provider, to facilitate services to students and adults.
- Provide reasonable resources to facilitate services (e.g., access to telephones, computers, and communication mechanisms).
- Notify service provider, as soon as known, of any schedule changes that will interfere with service provision.
- Notify service provider of any key staff changes.
- Complete annual performance review data collection in collaboration with service provider.
- Facilitate regular meetings with service provider to ensure services reflect best practices, meet quality standards, and meet the needs of students and adults utilizing the services of the Community Learning Center.
- Invite service provider to school-wide event.

## Community-Based Organization Responsibilities

- Ensure program staff receives site orientation for the Community Learning Center.
- Provide a descriptor of services to be provided at the Community Learning Center:
  1. Actual service being delivered
  2. Personnel assigned to deliver the program
  3. Days and hours of the service
  4. Length of time the service is intended to be delivered
- Submit required service provider information:
  1. Child abuse register check
  2. Criminal history check
  3. Proof of liability insurance
  4. Childcare health check
- Familiarity and compliance with the Community Learning Center parent/student handbook.
- Designate person in the agency to act as liaison to Community Learning Center site.
- Notify community learning center site supervisor of any staff changes.
- Maintain a standard of professionalism and behavior consistent with Community Learning Center expectations.
- Complete all evaluation information in collaboration with site supervisor.
- Complete the daily attendance sheet and submit to site supervisor.
- Agree to share information on students with appropriate school staff to maximize student success.
- Notify site supervisor if service provider staff will be late or unable to attend. The agency is responsible for providing a substitute or replacement.
- As mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, report to Child Protective Services as necessary. Inform site supervisor.

# Resources

## Publications

### The Arts and Learning

Fiske, Edward B., ed. (1999). *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*. Washington, DC: The Arts Education Partnership.

A report compiling seven major studies that provide evidence of enhanced learning and achievement when students are involved in a variety of arts experiences. Available at [www.aep-arts.org/publications/info.htm?publication\\_id=8](http://www.aep-arts.org/publications/info.htm?publication_id=8).

President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, *Coming Up Taller*. Washington, DC: President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

This report, produced with Americans for the Arts, describes how local artists and educators help turn around the lives of young people and identifies the common characteristics of effective arts and humanities programs. Program Profiles describe over 200 after-school, weekend, and summer programs contained within the Coming Up Taller report. Available at [www.cominguptaller.org/report\\_pp.html](http://www.cominguptaller.org/report_pp.html).

YouthARTS Development Project (1998). *YouthARTS*. Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts.

This toolkit describes how to establish, maintain, and evaluate arts programs for youth at risk. It was produced by the YouthARTS Development Project, a collaborative effort of the Regional Arts & Culture Council, Portland, Oregon; the San Antonio Department of Arts and Cultural Affairs, San Antonio, Texas; the Fulton County Arts Council, Atlanta, Georgia; and Americans for the Arts, Washington, DC. Available as a downloadable PDF and an interactive website at [www.americansforthearts.org/youtharts](http://www.americansforthearts.org/youtharts).

## Developing Partnerships

Amin, Takiyah Nur (2004). *Exploring Partnership Development & Evaluation: Inside Three Arts Organizations*. MFA thesis, Virginia Tech. Available at [www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archive/73amin.pdf](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archive/73amin.pdf)

Backer, Thomas E. (2002). *Partnership as an Art Form: What Works and What Doesn't in Nonprofit Arts Partnerships*. Working Paper of a Study Conducted for the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Encino, CA: Human Interaction Research Institute. Available at [www.humaninteract.org/images/hiri\\_b25.pdf](http://www.humaninteract.org/images/hiri_b25.pdf).

Deich, Sharon (2001). *A Guide to Successful Public-Private Partnerships for Out of School Time and Community School Initiatives*. Washington, DC: The Finance Project. Available at [www.financeproject.org/Publications/ostpartnershipguide.pdf](http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/ostpartnershipguide.pdf).

Guttman, Jacqueline Sideman (2005). *Partners in Excellence: A Guide to Community School of the Arts/Public School Partnerships, from Inspiration to Implementation*. New York: The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts. Available at [www.nationalguild.org/programs/partners\\_publication.htm](http://www.nationalguild.org/programs/partners_publication.htm).

National Assembly of Health and Human Service Organizations (2002). *Dimensions of School/Community Collaborations: What It Takes to Make Collaboration Work*. Washington, DC, National Human Services Assembly.

This final report highlights promising practices in successful after-school collaborations that were identified through a literature review, a series of surveys, telephone interviews and three case studies. Available at [www.nassembly.org/nassembly/NAPublications.htm](http://www.nassembly.org/nassembly/NAPublications.htm).

National Collaboration for Youth, Coalition for Community Schools, and Institute for Educational Leadership (2002). *Helping Young People Succeed: Strengthening and Sustaining Relationships Between Schools and Youth Development Organizations*. Washington, DC: National Collaboration for Youth, Coalition for Community Schools, and Institute for Educational Leadership.

Based on a spring 2002 national meeting of education and youth development leaders, this report advocates re-establishing strong links between schools and communities, particularly youth development organizations. Available at [www.communityschools.org/Resources/helpingyoungpeople.pdf](http://www.communityschools.org/Resources/helpingyoungpeople.pdf).

President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and Arts Education Partnership (1997). *Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts That Value Arts Education*. Washington, DC: President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and Arts Education Partnership. Available at [http://www.aep-arts.org/publications/info.htm?publication\\_id=13](http://www.aep-arts.org/publications/info.htm?publication_id=13).

Saasta, Timothy, and Dahlem, Katherine (1999). *Comprehensive Services in Public Housing: Lessons from the Field*. Washington, DC: Center for Community Change.

Walker, Chris (2004). *Arts and Non-Arts Partnerships: Opportunities, Challenges and Strategies*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. Available at [www.urban.org/publications/311043.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/311043.html).

Walker, Christopher; Boris, Elizabeth T.; Jackson, Maria-Rosario; and Scott-Melnyk, Stephanie D. (1999). *Community Partnerships for Cultural Participation: Concepts, Prospects, and Challenges, Early Findings Report*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

An extensive look at how community partnerships can be made and facilitated, particularly focusing on the role of community foundations in the partnership process. Available at [www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=409020](http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=409020).

### **Building Communities Through the Arts**

Americans for the Arts (1996). *The Arts Build Communities Training Handbook and Video*.

This handbook and companion video, prepared by Americans for the Arts for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, profile arts programs in public housing communities, describe the goals of each program, delivery of services, funding sources, and characteristics that can be adapted to other communities, and include a step-by-step action

plan for program development. Video features program footage and interviews with municipal leaders. Available at [americans4thearts.stores.yahoo.net/arbuilcomtra.html](http://americans4thearts.stores.yahoo.net/arbuilcomtra.html).

Center for Community Change (1999). *Comprehensive Services in Public Housing: Lessons from the Field, A Study of Five Programs That Provide a Broad Range of Services to Public Housing Residents*.

This study examines five cities that have tried a variety of approaches to improve residents' lives. All five take a comprehensive approach. One chapter summarizes the lessons from the five cities. Available at [www.communitychange.org/shared/publications/downloads/ServPublicHousing.pdf](http://www.communitychange.org/shared/publications/downloads/ServPublicHousing.pdf).

Partners for Livable Communities (2005). *Mobilizing Arts and Cultural Resources for Community Development: A Resource and Workbook*. Washington, DC: Partners for Livable Communities.

The resource guide contains over a dozen case studies and examines six approaches, including: economic development; youth services/family support; social capital/community empowerment; training and leadership development; community design and planning; finance/regional strategies. The workbook contains a step-by-step strategy for bringing your knowledge to the next level. Available at [www.cultureshapescommunity.org/images/stories/documents/plc\\_mobilizingartsculture\\_wrkwbk.pdf](http://www.cultureshapescommunity.org/images/stories/documents/plc_mobilizingartsculture_wrkwbk.pdf).

## Organizations & Websites

### Americans for the Arts, Washington, DC, and New York

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

The nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America, partnering with local, state, and national arts organizations; government agencies; business leaders; individual philanthropists; educators; and funders throughout the country. Provides arts industry research

and information and professional development opportunities for community arts leaders via specialized programs and services, including a website and annual national convention.

### Building Community Collaboration and Consensus

[www.communitycollaboration.net](http://www.communitycollaboration.net)

This website, created by C.R. Pete Petersen, M.Ed., and supported by Tamarack, An Institute for Community Engagement, in Waterloo, Ontario, contains useful information on why and how to build successful community collaboration. Includes grant listing and detailed information on conflict prevention and resolution.

### Community Arts Network, Saxapahaw, NC

[www.communityarts.net](http://www.communityarts.net)

CAN promotes information exchange, research, and critical dialogue within the field of community-based arts. The CAN website is managed by Art in the Public Interest.

### Community Building Institute, Annandale, VA

[www.communitytools.net/cbi/](http://www.communitytools.net/cbi/)

CBI was founded to help communities improve the way they conduct public business, so they can be more inclusive, more collaborative, and more effective. CBI believes that efforts to build vibrant, sustainable, and healthy communities must involve citizens and a wide array of public and private institutions to achieve real change. CBI works directly with communities as well as with federal and state agencies and national foundations, with efforts that serve multiple communities.

The Institute's Collaborative Communities website hosts the Collaborative Communities newsletter ([www.collaborativecommunities.org/](http://www.collaborativecommunities.org/)), featuring information on the latest resources

in community collaboration, conflict resolution, partnerships, and citizen participation; stories of efforts to build collaborative communities; reports on relevant research; and information on upcoming events.

### Culture Shapes Community, Washington, DC

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

This initiative, managed by Partners for Livable Communities, recognizes and encourages neighborhood-based arts and cultural organizations as unique stakeholders in poor neighborhoods experiencing economic and demographic shifts. Programs search out and make use of neighborhood identity and public space, promote social integration among mixed-income and mixed-race residents, offer opportunities for upward economic mobility and empower all to have a strong voice for fair and equitable neighborhood change.

### National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, Washington, DC

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

NAHRO is the leading housing and community development advocate for the provision of adequate and affordable housing and strong, viable communities for all Americans—particularly those with low and moderate incomes. Its members administer HUD programs such as Public Housing, Section 8, CDBG, and HOME.

### National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, DC

[www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov)

The nation's largest annual funder of the arts, a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education.

## Partners for Livable Communities, Washington, DC

[www.livable.com](http://www.livable.com)

A national, nonprofit organization working to restore and renew our communities. Culture Builds Communities: Putting the Arts, Culture and Amenities to Work for Your Community ([www.cultureshapescommunity.org](http://www.cultureshapescommunity.org)) is a national initiative of Partners. A series of programs demonstrate how cultural resources can contribute to youth development, economic development, social development and community design.

## Urban Leadership Institute, Baltimore, MD

[www.urbanleadershipinstitute.com](http://www.urbanleadershipinstitute.com)

A social enterprise organization focusing on leadership development through consultation services, program development, research, and market analysis.

## U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC

[www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov)

To support its mission of community development and increasing access to affordable housing free from discrimination, HUD partners with faith-based and community organizations that leverage resources and improve HUD's ability to be effective on the community level.



The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts aims to make high-quality arts education available to every interested child and adult in the United States.

The Guild's national network encompasses arts education professionals, organizations, volunteers, and philanthropic supporters. In concert with this network, the Guild researches and promotes best practices, provides opportunities for professional development and dialogue, and advocates for broad access.



**NATIONAL  
GUILD**  
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SCHOOLS OF THE ARTS

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OPENING DOORS  
TO EXCELLENCE IN  
ARTS EDUCATION