



CultureSource



MEMBER LOGIN

Support Us on the riseDetroit Challenge

SUBMIT YOUR MEMBER PROFILE INFORMATION FOR IXITI.COM



SUBMIT YOUR EVENT FOR IXITI.COM



JOB POSTINGS | HOME | ABOUT US | EVENTS | NEWSROOM | MEMBERS | SUPPORT CULTURESOURCE | FAQs | CONTACT US

Executive Director's Blog | Happening Now

## Building Healthy Communities through Art

Friday, September 05, 2014



I want to share a wonderful story about how art responds to community needs, builds bridges, and develops the talent of young people – all at the same time. Last month I went to Springwells Village in Southwest Detroit to tour a murals project by UNI (Urban Neighborhood Initiatives <http://unidetroit.org/>) and met with two local student muralists Phillip Patrick and Juan Hernandez. UNI has generated more than 100 murals, designed by students and painted on garages facing alleys, walls in neighborhood parks, and street-facing walls next to businesses like hairdressers and bike shops. Neighborhood residents commissioned the murals, and the students were trained by College for Creative Studies artists and paid through City Connect with local foundation dollars. Drive on any street – just go north from the Springwells exit of I-75 – and you will see these brightly colored, vibrant murals.

As wonderful as the murals are, the story behind one of them is even better. Springwells residents divide into two communities: homeowners, and the people who rent in crowded apartment buildings. Residents of one such building often sat outside on folding chairs or milk crates, on the concrete sidewalk in front of the building. That looked like loitering to homeowners. But UNI met with the apartment building residents, listened to them, and learned that all they wanted was a place to enjoy being outdoors. They wanted a yard, just like homeowners do. So UNI set about to develop the vacant lot next to the apartment building with a simple picnic table, built by volunteers,



and a few plantings and a white picket fence, to give the apartment dwellers a side yard and a place to enjoy the summer. A nearby resident commissioned the murals team to paint the back of her garage, just across the alley, facing this new side yard. She asked them to depict flowers and Chihuahuas. The result is a more beautiful community that welcomes renters and gives them a yard – and professional experience for the talented student artists Phillip Patrick as lead designer along with Leslie Castro, Braulio Castillo, Daisy Morales, Lizbet Martinez, Diane Martinez, Rico Vela, Laura Diaz, Henry Morales and Karen Lopez who painted the mural.



SEARCH

GO

### HAPPENING NOW

READ MORE

#### THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING RISEDETROIT

CultureSource and many of our member organizations had great success fundraising through the RiseDetroit Challenge! Thanks to everyone for their...

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING RISEDETROIT

THE DETROIT EXPERIENCE PASS IS LIVE

HOLIDAY TIME!

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS — NOVEMBER 2014

AMERICAN MUSIC ABROAD: PROMOTING CULTURAL DIPLOMACY THROUGH MUSIC

ARTIST-LED SOCIAL CHANGE PROJECTS

PUBLIC ART CHALLENGE

"DATA + STORIES = IMPACT" WORKSHOP

KRESGE ARTS FELLOWSHIPS

FUNDRAISING WORKSHOP IN LANSING

MINDEDGE COURSES FROM MNA

### OUR PROGRAMS



#### CULTURE VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are champions of change. CultureVolunteer is CultureSource's specially branded campaign...



#### FINANCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM

Arts and culture organizations of all sizes need sound financial management...

### SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

SIGN UP



Get the news, opportunities for funding, and updates on events—once a month, with alerts as needed.



This is such a wonderful example about how the neighborhood is the basic building block of a successful city. As UNI states in their vision, they want the walking-distance neighborhood to surround a child at every stage of development with an environment that is clean, safe, and beautiful -- one that is culturally diverse and stimulating, and also one that inspires people to stay in the neighborhood even as their incomes rise, because they belong. UNI's art project is part of a series of youth development programs, community empowerment, and blight reduction, all working together.



One final thought: Art projects like this work because they are part of the broader vision, and also part of a long-term commitment from a non-profit organization. Without UNI, or the College for Creative Studies, or the many other nonprofits throughout our region, we would not have murals, or festivals, or art classes, or concerts, or many other expressions of culture and community. We wouldn't have had the Detroit Jazz Festival or Arts Beats and Eats this past weekend. This is what nonprofits do: See needs, bring people together to solve them, and in doing so create memories

and relationships that truly anchor people to the places they love.



**2014 NAMP Conference**

November 10, 2014 (All day)

**smARTS Workshop: How to Raise the Money You Need to Fund the Work You Love!**

November 12, 2014 (9:00 am - 4:00 pm)

**CDP "Data + Stories = Impact" Workshop**

November 19, 2014 (10:00 am - 11:30 am)

[Show Full Calendar](#)

OUR MEMBERS |



OUR FUNDERS |

