



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

### Urbana Arts & Culture Program Monthly Progress Report

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month– September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Prepared by Rachel Lauren Storm, M.Ed., Arts and Culture Coordinator

#### Introduction

The following Urbana Arts & Culture Program Monthly Progress Report describes activities of the Arts & Culture Program for the Urbana Arts & Culture Commission. The report includes information regarding projects that are in progress, recent requests and recommendations from the public, staff activities, and upcoming events.

#### Staffing Update

- **Summer Youth Employees:** Arts and Culture interns through the Illinois Arts Council Summer Youth Employment Grant, Aria Pleasure and Emilia Muckenhirn, will be completing their internships this week. Both students of Urbana High School, put in numerous hours assisting with events and program planning in the office. CARE4U Program intern, Kaylee Crushshon, also completed her summer internship through a grant with the Regional Planning Commission. All interns have indicated an interest in staying involved as volunteers.
- **SOCW 461: Professional Practice Seminar:** The Urbana Arts and Culture Coordinator will be a site supervisor for SOCW461 students from the University of Illinois for the fall 2019 semester. A group of 2-4 senior-level social work students will work 2 hours per week at the City, coordinating a project centered around arts and culture. Their office hours, a group project, and writing assignment will be supervised by the Arts and Culture Coordinator who will assign each student a grade at the end of the semester. The students will work from Sept 9<sup>th</sup> and end on Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> and receive class credit through the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- **YWCA Women in Leadership Program:** The Urbana Arts and Culture Coordinator will be a site supervisor for the YWCA's Women in Leadership Program and as a result, will have a small group of students working on a projects developed in collaboration with staff. The students will work with the Urbana Arts and Culture Program through May of 2020.

#### Updates on Current Projects

- **Immigrant Welcoming Week:** Created by YMCA of the USA's national partner Welcoming America, Welcoming Week, which takes place each year in September, celebrates the growing movement of communities that fully embrace new Americans and

their contributions to the social fabric of our country. It's a chance for neighbors—both immigrants and U.S.-born residents—to get to know one another and celebrate what unites us as a community!

Locally, there are over 30 Welcoming Week events happening throughout Urbana-Champaign—from concerts to advocacy trainings, celebrations and educational events. The Urbana Arts and Culture Program is joining dozens of local organizations and the Mayors of Urbana and Champaign for the kick-off event outdoors Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> from 4pm-7pm at Orpheum Theater in Downtown Champaign. Commissioners are encouraged to sign-up to volunteer at our booth. Welcoming Week 2019 takes place September 13-22.

- **Artist of the Corridor Belonging(s) Exhibition:** In celebration of Welcoming Week, the Urbana Arts and Culture Program, The Urbana Free Library, and Spurlock Museum of World Cultures are proud to present the latest installment of the City of Urbana's Artist of the Corridor exhibition series. BELONGING(S) is a collection of photography and short stories from local immigrants exploring identity, artifact, memory, and the meaning of home. Participants in the project identified an object from their home and through storytelling, illustrated its relationship to their personal experience with immigration. For the first year ever, the exhibition includes a display of the objects themselves at Spurlock Museum.

The opening reception will be in conjunction with the Immigrant Welcome Awards Ceremony and Celebration at The Urbana Free Library. Join us for live music, awards, and a chance to view the exhibit on display. The exhibition will be on display from September through November, with a closing reception and story slam on November 20<sup>th</sup> at Spurlock Museum.

- **The 6th Annual Immigrant Welcome Awards:** Saturday, September 21 from 3:00 - 5:00 pm at The Urbana Free Library, come celebrate the diversity of cultures that make up our community with an afternoon of food, music, and special guests. The Immigrant Welcome Awards Ceremony recognizes the contributions of individuals and organizations that have created a welcoming atmosphere for immigrants in the Champaign-Urbana community. The event will also feature the opening of BELONGING(S), the latest installment of the City of Urbana's Artist of the Corridor exhibition series. BELONGING(S), which has been curated by Urbana Arts and Culture Program, is a collection of photography and short stories from local immigrants exploring identity, artifact, memory, and the meaning of home. The Welcome Awards are sponsored by C-U Immigration Forum with cosponsors The Urbana Free Library, Urbana Arts and Culture Program, University YMCA New American Welcome Center, the Channing Murray Foundation, the City of Champaign, and the City of Urbana.
- **Urbana's Inaugural Poet Laureate, Will Reger:** The City of Urbana's Mayor's Office and the Urbana Arts & Culture Program honored inaugural Poet Laureate, Will Reger, continues to present numerous projects with the help of Urbana Arts and Culture Program staff, including Poets on a Park Bench, Poems on Glass, and a now weekly poetry prompt

released to the public. The Urbana Poet Laureate has made guest appearances in news media, open mics, public readings, and will soon partner with Urbana School District #116 staff to present writers workshops in area schools.

- **Art Now:** September's edition of [Art Now](#) features local multimedia artists Laurel Nobilette and Sean Tierney. A joint production by the [Urbana Arts & Culture Program](#) and [Urbana Public Television](#), Art Now airs at 6:15pm every Monday on UPTV6, re-runs at 11pm on Tuesdays, and online on the [UPTV6 Youtube Channel](#).
- **Downtown Get Down Series:** The Urbana Arts & Culture Program wrapped up the last of the Downtown Get Down partnership with the Urbana Park District, 40 North Champaign County Arts Council, and the Urbana Business Association. The downtown events series for Downtown Urbana took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month May-August, featuring live concerts, DJs, an artist's street market, kid's zone, inflatables, games, live arts demos, and performing artists. August's event was held in conjunction with Urbana Sweetcorn Festival featured a mini Makerlab in the Busey Lot and performances by DJ Silkee and New Souls. Attendance was the best in Urbana Sweetcorn Festival's recent history and the Downtown Get Down section had record-breaking attendance. The partnership proved very successful. Overall, the Downtown Get Down has featured over 75 individual local artists, over 45 unique community organizations and maker groups, and over 100 area events held by Downtown Urbana businesses. The committee is holding a debrief meeting in the next week and Urbana Arts and Culture staff will give a more detailed report at the next commission meeting regarding outcomes.
- **Urbanalove Summer Movie Nights:** The City of Urbana's Arts & Culture Program wrapped up the summer partnership with The Urbana Free Library, Kanopy, and Urbanalove to offer the Urbanalove Summer Movie Nights. The planning team is currently exploring adding two fall films to the line-up.
- **Art at the Market:** In partnership with Urbana's Market at the Square, the Urbana Arts & Culture Program, continues to offer mid-morning concerts and arts workshops led by local artists at Market IN the Square every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month. The August 10<sup>th</sup> activities for Art at the Market celebrated *National Farmer's Market Week*, featuring creative family-focused farmer's market activities in addition to a live performance from Jean Rene Balekita and Bomoyi. The September 21<sup>st</sup> event will feature the Afro-Caribbean Jazz Collective and Weiskamp Screenprinting with a screen print demo that celebrates immigrants in our local community in honor of Welcoming Week.
- **The Young Artist's Studio:** The Young Artist's Studio series presented by the Urbana Arts & Culture Program and the Urbana Free Library features youth arts workshops every once a month on Sundays at 3pm. A Manga Workshop from Kofi Bazell-Smith took place on August 18<sup>th</sup> and on September 15<sup>th</sup>, the series will feature an African Drum Workshop from Susan and Cindy Ogwal of the CU Black and African Arts Festival. All workshops are held 3pm-3:45pm in the Urbana Free Library's Children's Library.

- **Urbana Sculpture Project:** Local group MCDJ (Mike and Connie Hosier, David and Janet Peshkin) have pledged to sponsor a new sculpture this cycle as part of the Urbana Sculpture Project, *Tumble Arch*, by Jim Gallucci from Greensboro, NC. Urbana Arts and Culture staff are in conversation with The Urbana Free Library Foundation about a proposal to install solar lighting to illuminate *Races* by Bobby Joe Scribner.
- **Murals on Glass/Urbana Utility Wrap Program:** Murals on Glass, an initiative to feature local artworks on downtown Urbana windows, will soon open an application period. Now the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle, Murals on Glass selects artwork from a resident artist from Champaign County to have their work reproduced in adhesive vinyl and adhered to the front windows of a municipal building. The selected location this year will be the Cunningham Township Office's front windows. Staff are developing the plan for the Urbana Utility Wrap Program.
- **Outreach and Partner Presentations:** Arts and Culture Coordinator, Rachel Storm, will present on the Urbana Arts Grants on October 7<sup>th</sup> from 12pm-1pm at the School of Art and Design (410 Flagg Hall) as part of the school's Graduate Forum.
- **Volunteer Support:** The Urbana Arts & Culture Program is seeking volunteers through new listings with CU Volunteer and the University of Illinois' Office of Volunteer Programs.

Arts & Culture Commissioners and the public are encouraged to get involved with the Urbana Arts & Culture Program's ongoing events and initiatives. Those interested in volunteering with the Urbana Arts & Culture Program can join planning efforts or sign up to volunteer at: [https://www.urbanaininois.us/arts\\_support](https://www.urbanaininois.us/arts_support).