

NOISE



Mural Arts
Philadelphia

Our Annual Report is one of my favorite publications because it showcases the transformative power of our work. Through participatory public art, we not only beautify neighborhoods but also demonstrate our deep commitment to artists and equitable access to the arts across Philadelphia.

As actor Ossie Davis once said, “Any form of art is a form of power; it has impact, it can affect change—it can not only move us, it makes us move.” At Mural Arts, we believe art is a powerful force for good. In a rapidly changing world, we remain grounded in our mission, driven by a moral imperative to create meaningful change through art.

Central to that mission is our support for local artists. Each year, we employ over 250 artists, providing jobs, training, and resources to help them grow their practices and amplify their voices.

A shining example is our Philadelphia Fellowship for Black Artists, now in its fifth year. This program has supported 85 Black artists across mediums with financial support, mentorship, and visibility—fueling creativity, collaboration, and social impact.

Jibaro © 2023 City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program / Calo Rosa, 5th and Cambria Streets. Photo by Steve Weinik.



Hope Lives Here by Arshayla Robinson. Photo by Steve Weinik.

We’ve also developed smaller-scale projects to expand access and diversify our artist network. Programs like *Front Street Walls*, *Small Walls*, the Philadelphia Flower Show, and *Afromation Avenue* create new entry points for emerging talents. From curated affirmation street signs to vibrant murals in public spaces, these initiatives uplift voices and reflect the soul of our city.

And the artists we support are sometimes self-taught or have just an inkling that they like art. There is hidden talent everywhere. For example, take our *Color Me Back* program, an inspiring initiative that is part of our Porch Light program.

This same-day work and pay program blends art-making with access to social services, providing individuals facing economic hardship with income, resources, and a sense of purpose. In partnership with the City of Philadelphia, with support from the Scattergood Foundation, SEPTA, the Sheller Family Foundation, and Mental Health Partnerships, *Color Me Back* has created 15 murals, with four more in progress. Participants are scheduled for four consecutive 3.5-hour shifts, are paid \$50 cash, and have the opportunity to connect, contribute, and engage with outreach specialists who can link them with support services – including social and/or behavioral health services and potential opportunities for longer-term employment – while working in the program.

A standout piece is *Hope Lives Here* by Arshayla Robinson, painted with community members in Kensington, located at the Esperanza Health Center parking garage (860-898 E. Westmoreland St., Philadelphia, PA 19134). The project exemplifies the healing, empowerment, and connection made possible through the power of art.

Thanks to your unwavering support, we’ve achieved tremendous impact. As we look ahead, we invite you to deepen your engagement with Mural Arts. Your continued partnership fuels innovation, community building, and creative expression, ensuring that Philadelphia remains a place where art inspires and uplifts all. Your support allows artists, from all walks of life, to find themselves in a position to positively impact the civic life of our city.

Warmly,

Jane Golden
Founder and Executive Director

250+

artists employed

25K

people engaged through
our programs and projects

\$2.7M

invested in the creative economy

75-100

projects completed

Swim Philly: Christy
Recreation Center
© 2023 City of Philadelphia
Mural Arts Program /
Gabe Tiberino, Christy
Recreation Center, 56th &
Christian Streets. Photo by
Steve Weinik.



Peaceful Thicket © 2023
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aka Llyn.el, Jadel Recreation
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+\$495K

in direct payments to
Color Me Back participants
since April 2019

120

annual classes conducted
at Tacony Lab

Over the past five years, Mural Arts' Porch Light program has been running the highly impactful same-day work and pay program, *Color Me Back*.

This innovative program was designed in partnership with the Scattergood Foundation, SEPTA, the Sheller Family Foundation, and Mental Health Partnerships. *Color Me Back* participants have the opportunity to connect and contribute, while also engaging with outreach specialists who can link them to support resources like behavioral health services and longer-term employment opportunities. *Color Me Back* is managed by Mural Arts' Porch Light community wellness program, a collaboration with the City of Philadelphia's Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services.

Color Me Back held a special exhibition, curated by the program's artist, Cory Kram. The exhibition featured prints of each mural completed by *Color Me Back* since 2019 from both our Suburban Station and Kensington sites, along with samples of work from the small projects we've done over the years. This exhibition was hosted by *Color Me Back* participants, who were on-site to discuss their work in the program. The exhibition ran in July 2023 at the *Color Me Back* Suburban Station Studio, underground at 16th St. & JFK Blvd.



Public Art Beautifies

"The Color Me Back program gives me an outlet for healing and self expression that has been bringing me back to life after years of feeling like I could never be myself and life was not worth living. Through this program, I started to envision my future as an artist and actually find joy in learning, thinking about building my body of work, networking and sharing my story. Not enough can be said about this program, the people who run it and the effects it has had on my own personal wellness and growth, as well as the wellness for countless other participants."

Larissa (Reese) Juelg, *Color Me Back* program participant



Artist Katie Brown installing crochet work at the Garden Mural, *Stop the Risk* site on Kensington Avenue, August 2, 2023. Photo by Steve Weinik.

Beautify
Inspire
Empower



The Garden Wall series, developed by artist Mat Tomezsko, is an ongoing mural project that is collaborative in both design and implementation. *Color Me Back* participants are invited to contribute to an artwork that is greater than the sum of its parts. Each composition is made up of a multiplicity of colorful flowers, grasses, and plants designed and painted by individual collaborators. Everyone is encouraged to create according to their own skills and interests and leave their unique mark on the mural. Just as each seedling grows into a unique representation of a particular plant based on its environment, circumstances, and chance, each painting represents the unique talents, vision, and expression of the person who paints it.

Top: *Color Me Back* anniversary exhibition and event at Suburban Station. Photo by Steve Weinik.

Right: *Color Me Back* team works on a mural design by artist Arshayla Robinson, June 27, 2024. Photo by Steve Weinik.



Statistics

360

monthly *Color Me Back* jobs available

1,300

participants in *Color Me Back* since 2019

\$550K

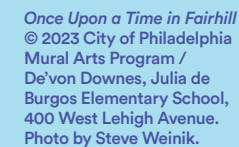
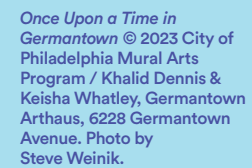
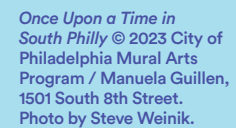
total wages paid to *Color Me Back* participants in 5 years

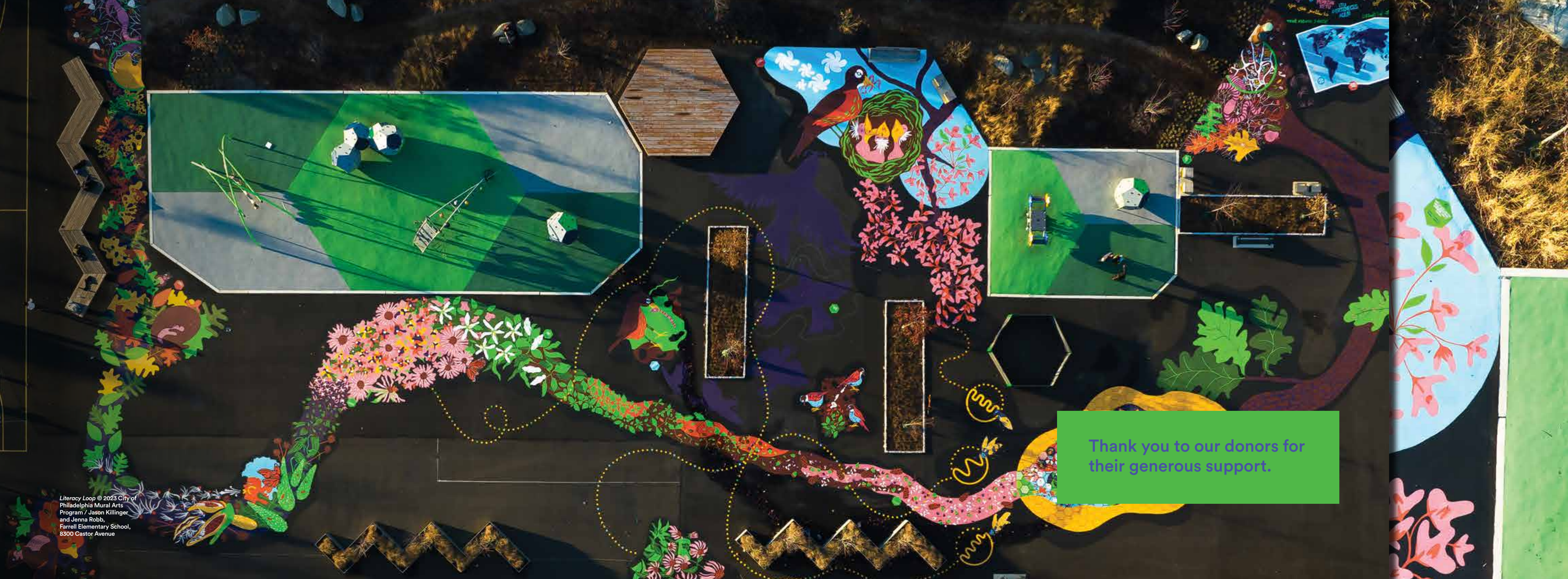
While the system and method remains the same, the content of each mural in the series is unique and ever-changing. As participants learn the process, they are invited to contribute to the imagery, adding to the templates that are used for each composition. Each mural is also shaped by the site and needs of the community.

Funding for *Color Me Back* was provided by the City of Philadelphia, the City of Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, Erik Hirsch & Margaret McAllister, Sheller Family Foundation, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Berkowitz Family Foundation, Notely Ventures, The Barra Foundation, Mental Health Partnerships, Skillshare, Mural Arts Philadelphia Advisory Council, Anonymous.

Bottom: *Garden Wall*: Tessera dedication, May 20, 2024. Photo by Steve Weinik.







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Thank you to our donors for their generous support.

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\$25,000+

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Opposite bottom: *Limitless*
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Tim McFarlane, George
Washington High School,
10175 Bustleton Avenue.
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Photo by Steve Weinik.



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Bouquet of Gratitude
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my art gives me a voice
© 2022 City of Philadelphia
Mural Arts Program /
Lisa Kelley, Suburban Station.
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and Jenna Robb,
Farrell Elementary School,
8300 Castor Avenue



“When you’re selected for the fellowship, it gives you a place of community and it allows you to be recognized monetarily for the work that you contribute to the city as an artist. Mural Arts is almost like the defacto art people of the city, providing this opportunity for us that we wouldn’t get otherwise.”

*Steven CW Taylor (aka The Time Thief), 2023 Black Artists Fellow and Founder/
Owner of Ubuntu Fine Art*

Advocacy Inspires

The Philadelphia Fellowship for Black Artists – Annual Exhibition Opening Reception, Ubuntu Gallery, February 2, 2024. Photo by Gavin Wilson.

THE FELLOWSHIP FOR
BLACK ARTISTS

The Fellowship for Black Artists stands as a cornerstone initiative at Mural Arts, directly reflecting our core mission.

This pivotal program commits to empowering Black artists across all mediums in Philadelphia, offering them financial support, mentorship, and a platform to amplify their vital voices. The Fellowship has supported 85 artists over the last five years.

Over the course of seven months, our Fellows immerse themselves in an enriching public art curriculum. This includes workshops on project planning, community engagement, design, and installation, equipping them with the tools to leave a lasting impact. Moreover, the Fellowship fosters collaboration among community members and fellow artists, creating a vibrant ecosystem of creative exchange. Supporting emerging artists is essential to the lifeblood of art itself.

The Philadelphia Fellowship for Black Artists was designed in 2020 to fund, foster, and elevate the important work of emerging Black artists residing in Philadelphia. The goal of the fellowship is to build a long-term community and creative connections among Fellows by fostering a spirit of practical, complementary teamwork. Mural Arts facilitates skill-building by providing equitable exposure to public and private art projects. Furthermore, the fellowship looks to strengthen their connections not only to each other, but to the greater community, culminating in the presentation of their work/practice through a curated group show.

In February 2024, Mural Arts celebrated the work of our 4th-year cohorts with The Philadelphia Fellowship for Black Artists - Annual Exhibition at Ubuntu Gallery. This exhibition displayed 35 works presented by 15 different artists. Participating artists included Dejeonge Reese, Shawn Alleyne, Tamia Alston Ward, German Alaya-Vazquez, Marian Bailey, Jordan Payne, Darryl Smith, Shakira Hunt, Kendra Dandy, Steven Taylor, Odochi Akwani, Jillian M. Rock, Akira Gordon, Shanina Dionna, Brandon Lynea.

In April 2024, Mural Arts welcomed its 5th cohort of the Philadelphia Fellowship for Black Artists, a program made possible by TD Bank. The evening announced the new cohort of 15 artists and featured past work by alumni artists from previous cohorts giving attendees a deeper appreciation of the Fellowship. Mural Arts Executive Director Jane Golden and TD Bank Market President Geoff Brandon welcomed the artists to the Mural Arts family. The new cohort includes: Brittany Anne Baum, Elijah Crawford, Terrell Halsey, Duwenavue Johnson, Keshawna Logan, Lusmerlin Lantigua, Kyle Mello Dixon, Alessi Morales, Kara Mshinda, Michele Pierson, Susan Ragland, Qiaira Riley, Ronald Washington, Shahv Williams and Nasir Young.



The Philadelphia Fellowship for Black Artists – Annual Exhibition Opening Reception, Ubuntu Gallery, February 2, 2024. Photo by Gavin Wilson.



Statistics

85

artists have joined the Fellowship to date

\$2K

stipends in unrestricted funding to fellowship artists

ARTISTS OPPORTUNITIES:
FRONT STREET WALLS, SMALL WALLS &
AFROMATION AVENUE

Mural Arts seeks to amplify emerging and underrepresented artists throughout the city of Philadelphia.

Three project areas that helped to increase artists opportunities, specifically for those who may be in the beginning stages of their artistic journey, include *Front Street Walls*, *Small Walls*, and *Afromation Avenue*.

Front Street Walls in Fishtown has been an arts and culture staple for the City of Philadelphia since 2016. Each year, the *Front Street Walls*, located on Front Street between Oxford Street and Columbia Avenue, get a refresh, allowing new art to inspire our community and giving new artists the opportunity to use the city as their canvas. This series introduced several new Philly-based mural artists to the public, including UNAPXLXGETIQ, Emily White, EL TORO, and Iris Barbee Pendergrass. Mural Arts celebrated these four new murals with a dedication in July of 2023. *Front Walls Street* is a partnership with Streets Dept Walls and CookNSolo's Lilah Events and Goldie Falafel, led by Mural Arts curator Conrad Benner.

Home is Where We Are
© 2024 City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program / Yuliya Semenova, 518 South 7th Street. Photo by Steve Weinik.

“Over the last number of years, my central work at Mural Arts has been to build more opportunities for new artists to work with the organization and learn the skills needed to push their creative talents to new heights. Front Street Walls, The Flower Show, To The Polls, Wawa Welcome America, Afromation Avenue, Best Philly, and various other “Small Walls” projects create much needed space and opportunity for Philadelphia’s working artists, while offering residents and visitors alike new worlds of imagination in which to delight.”

Conrad Benner, Project Manager, Mural Arts Philadelphia

Programs that Empower



Beautify
Inspire
Empower



Over 320 local artists applied to be a part of this project and these four artists were selected to meet specific curatorial goals.

Small Walls is intended for artists in search of an opportunity to prove themselves as capable muralists. It centers its efforts on the values of: creative expression, low-barrier access, talent acknowledgement, and artist support. *Small Walls* serves as an incubator and an introductory platform for artists interested in collaborating with Mural Arts, as well as a platform that welcomes graffiti artists/projects without the need to modify an artists' own aesthetic. The murals are meant to be on display for a year, with the intention to rotate to another artist to provide additional opportunities. For this first iteration, three artists who have worked with Mural Arts in the past couple of years as artist assistants were selected. Featured artists included Jaq "Jingle" Masters, Ibi Padrón Venegas, and Yuliya Semenova. These three *Small Walls* were celebrated during an artist talk held at Paradigm Gallery + Studio in May 2024. The artists spoke about their experiences with the production of their murals and their dreams going forward.



Top: *Listening to Hear*
© 2024 City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program / Jaq Masters, 1530 East Montgomery Avenue. Photo by Steve Weinik.

Above: *Front Street Walls*, © 2023 City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program / Emily White, El Toro, Iris Barbee Pendergrass, 1601 North Front Street. Photo by Steve Weinik.

Right: *Endless Unfoldment*
© 2024 City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program / Ibi Padron Venegas, 1401 N American St. Photo by Steve Weinik.



Left and below: *Afromation Avenue* © 2023 City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program / Kita Rich. Photo by Steve Weinik.

Afromation Avenue is a collection of curated positive affirmation street signs personalized by predominantly Black/African American communities throughout the city of Philadelphia. The project aims to create spaces for reflective thought and conversation while honoring the cultural identity of each community. Street signs are used to guide and regulate the traffic flow of people; they assist in helping others get from one familiar place to another. *Afromation Avenue* lends itself as a social-emotional guide in hopes of cultivating spaces where community members feel encouraged, valued, and respected. *Afromation Avenue* also supports the city's "Read By 4th" early literacy movement, the School District of Philadelphia's social-emotional learning focus, and furthers the city's beautification initiatives. It also hopes to drive tourism to less visited areas to continue strengthening communities struggling economically.



STATEMENTS
OF FINANCIAL
POSITION

NO SLAVERY. NO
EXCEPTIONS. © 2024
City of Philadelphia
Mural Arts Program /
Ernel Martinez, African
American Museum
in Philadelphia, 7th & Arch
Streets. Photo by
Steve Weinik.

Assets	2024	2023
Cash & Cash Equivalents	6,626,014	8,913,881
Grants, Program & Contribution Receivables	5,707,784	5,981,949
Inventory	196,108	153,757
Prepaid Expenses	57,370	67,758
Other Assets	0	2,469
Property & Equipment, Net	450,493	494,395
Intangibles, Net	75,722	99,338
Total Assets	\$13,231,654	\$15,793,914

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities		
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	564,514	804,896
Accrued Payroll & Related Liabilities	98,288	350,198
Operating Lease Liabilities	137,620	91,064
Refundable Advances	207,273	107,948
Total Liabilities	\$1,007,695	\$1,354,106

Net Assets		
Without Donor Restrictions	2,066,849	2,454,118
With Donor Restrictions	10,157,110	11,985,690
Total Net Assets	\$12,223,959	\$14,439,808
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$13,231,654	\$15,793,914

STATEMENTS OF
ACTIVITIES AND
CHANGES IN NET
ASSETS

Revenue & Support	2024	2023
Foundations and Corporate grants	3,504,352	7,390,669
Contracted Services:		
– Government and other grants	8,535,279	6,340,015
Contributions - Individuals	1,423,221	3,288,873
– In-kind contributions	794,574	1,147,863
Tour Income	228,933	198,219
Interest Income	209,762	0
Other Income	248,913	78,292
Total Revenue & Support	\$14,945,034	\$18,443,931

Expenses		
Programs	14,688,286	13,142,047
Management and general	1,682,111	1,159,760
Fundraising	790,486	884,761
Total Expenses	\$17,160,883	\$15,186,568
Change in Net Assets	\$2,215,849	\$3,257,363
Net Assets Beginning of Year	\$14,439,808	\$11,521,525
Net Assets End of Year	\$12,223,959	\$14,439,808

STAFF

Leadership

Jane Golden
Executive Director

Lisa Murch
Chief Operating Officer

Netanel Portier
Senior Director of
Learning and Practice

Chad Eric Smith
Senior Director of
Communications &
Brand Management

Don Veon
Senior Director of Finance

Directors

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HR Director

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Ellie Clark
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Director of Restorative Justice

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OUR MISSION

Through participatory public art, Mural Arts Philadelphia inspires change in people, places, and practices, creating opportunities for a more just and equitable Philadelphia.

Cover: *Finally on 13th*
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Mural Arts Program /
Nilé Livingston, 306 South
13th Street. Photo by
Steve Weinik.

Right: *Tribute to Rasual Butler*
© 2024 City of Philadelphia
Mural Arts Program /
Taqiy Muhammad & Calo
Rosa, Chew Recreation
Center, 1800 Washington
Avenue. Photo by
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