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***THE PHILADELPHIA CULTURAL FUND AWARDS YOUTH ARTS ENRICHMENT GRANTS TOTALING  
\$244,000 TO 14 LOCAL ART & CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS***

Philadelphia, PA – June 6, 2017 -- This year the **Philadelphia Cultural Fund** has awarded \$244,000 in Youth Arts Enrichment (YAE) Grants to 14 local arts and culture organizations, supporting specific programming that uses the arts to enrich the lives of Philadelphia’s young people both in and out of school.

The Philadelphia Cultural Fund’s mission is to support and enhance the cultural life and vitality of the City of Philadelphia and its residents. The YAE grants will support high quality arts instruction, training, and participatory experiences to young people (aged 5 to 18) who are least likely to access cultural enrichment through other avenues. To qualify for a 2017 YAE grant, organizations had to qualify for and receive a 2017 Art and Culture Grant from the Philadelphia Cultural Fund. The 2017 grants will provide support for programs that occur between July 1, 2017 and December 31, 2018.

“Now more than ever, our children and youth need and rely on arts and culture programs” said Executive Director Barbara Silzle. “These exemplary youth programs have the power to transform the lives of young Philadelphians and students inside and outside of the classroom – and in turn help shape them academically while promoting civic engagement.”

Grants were awarded to the following organizations:

**Asian Arts Initiative - *Youth Arts Workshop***

Approaching nearly two decades, Asian Arts Initiative's Youth Arts Workshop (YAW) continues to provide safe, constructive out of school time space for Philadelphia's fast-growing Asian population and non-Asian youth through multi-media art-making.

**Astral Artists - *Classroom Classics***

The mission of Astral Artists is to discover the most promising classical musicians residing in the United States, to assist their early professional career development, and to present their world-class artistry to the community through concerts and community engagement programs. Classroom Classics introduces extraordinary artists and performances to Philadelphia students in grades 2 through 12 who have limited or no access to live classical music.

**BuildaBridge International - *Orchestral Dialogues: Accepting Self, Accepting Others***

Orchestral Dialogues: Accepting Self, Accepting Others is a youth orchestra project for students, in grades 4 through 8, that seeks to engage youth first, through quality music instruction and second, through dialogue workshops assisting participants and adults engage with reduced conflict in their homes, schools, and communities. Moving into its second year of programming Orchestral Dialogues will continue working with BuildaBridge's core constituency of low- or no-income African-American, Latino populations experiencing homelessness, International Refugee populations and will expand to low-income communities and families of varying cultural backgrounds.

**Girls Rock Philly - *After School Program***

Girls Rock Philly's Afterschool Program is offered over two semesters and allows youth aged 9 to 19 an opportunity to gain arts instruction in a supportive environment. Participants are girls, transgender and gender non-conforming young people between the ages of 9-19. Through the medium of music education, GRP After School Program participants gain the skills to communicate personal messages that build their self-worth and empowers them to make a difference in their own lives and their communities.

**Koresh Dance Company - *Koresh Kids Dance***

Koresh Kids Dance formed in 2006 as a pilot program beginning in a single classroom at F.S. Edmonds School. Since then the program has expanded to 17 classrooms in seven schools across the city of Philadelphia. In partnership with Philadelphia public schools Koresh Kids Dance provides free, in-school dance classes to elementary school students, in grades 3, 4 and 5 over approximately 30 lessons. Built to develop the whole student, the program enables young dancers to tell their own stories through movement vocabularies that are meaningful to them.

**Musicopia - *Musicopia String Orchestra***

The Musicopia String Orchestra (MSO) strives to give children and young adults, ages 7 to 18, high-quality, intensive music education instruction and training. The MSO ensemble was founded in 2005 based on the conviction that participating in serious, long-term musical endeavors over time can have a truly transformative impact on students.

**Norris Square Neighborhood Project (NSNP) - *Semillas del Futuro / Seeds of the Future Summer Program***

Semillas del Futuro/Seeds of the Future seeks to connect the youth of the Norris Square community to the history of their neighborhood and its gardens, facilitate intergenerational dialogue, and cultivate the collective wisdom and creativity of the neighborhood youth to imagine new futures for their communities, Philadelphia and the world.

**Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts - *School and Community Partnership Program***

The School and Community Partnership Program is PAFA's commitment to the young students, their caregivers, parents and community leaders of the Issac A. Sheppard School, Julia de Burgos Middle School and the North Kensington, Fairhill and Feltonville neighborhoods. Now in its fourth year of operation PAFA works year-round, including summer, to support 21st century skill development, particularly in visual literacy, through its partnership activities. Students in every grade participate in at least one 60 to 90 minute in-school, lesson per semester facilitated by trained educators in both English and Spanish.

**Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz and Performing Arts (PCC) - *Music Education Program***

The Philadelphia Clef Club's Music Education Program engages, educates and inspires young musicians, aged 10 to 17, in America's home-grown art form, jazz. Students from beginner through advanced levels will be offered an introduction to music and instruments, workshops, ensemble training, theory fundamentals, mentorship and private instruction.

**Singing City - *Singing City Children's Choir***

Singing City Children's Choir engages children in grades 4-8 from the James Rhoads Elementary School in West Philadelphia and in grades 2-5 at the Wissahickon Charter School in Germantown. Students learn repertoire from many styles and periods and absorb musical concepts, skills and theory by singing, listening and analysis.

**Spells Writing Lab - *Spells Writing Lab Summer Camp***

Spells Writing Lab believes that literacy is a cornerstone for future success, and that personalized attention and unconventional learning opportunities can inspire students to greater triumphs, both in the classroom and in life. Spells offers a free, six week writing camp for children ages 7-12 and one week for teens ages 12-16 summer 2017.

**Taller Puertorriqueño - *Youth Artist Program***

Founded in 1974 as a graphic arts workshop in Northeast Kensington, Taller Puertorriqueño has become the largest and longest operating Latino-focused art organization in the region. The Youth Artist Program (YAP) is an open studio program that provides quality arts instruction to high school students with the goal of producing a visual arts portfolio to be used for admission into art colleges, universities or other applicable post-secondary professional endeavors.

**The Village of Arts and Humanities - *Creative Impact Studios: Youth Apprenticeship Initiative***

Creative Impact Studios: Youth Apprenticeship Initiative (CIS-A) fuses art, social enterprise, and advocacy to highlight youth voices and perspectives for Philadelphia-based clients and causes. CIS-A provides paid opportunities for youth ages 11-18 to obtain, refine and advance their creative skills under the mentorship of professional teaching artists while producing creative works for clients across a variety of artistic mediums such as Music Production, Photography, Fashion Design, and Graphic Design.

**WHYY, Inc. - *WHYY's Media Arts Education Partnership with the School District of Philadelphia***

WHYY's Media Arts Education Partnership with the School District of Philadelphia continues WHYY's three year effort to provide middle and high school aged students in the School District of Philadelphia access to hands-on media arts training. Instruction will take place both in and out of school time, free of cost to schools and students. WHYY Media Instructors will work with students to become active, critical viewers of media specifically developing student voices through visual storytelling, script writing, and curating content for the School District's Public Education Channel, PSTV.

Recognizing the importance of arts and culture to the quality of life, well-being, and economy the City of Philadelphia, the Cultural Fund's purpose is:

- To provide operating support funds to serve Philadelphia-based arts and cultural institutions and organizations
- To advocate the value of the arts in daily life and their importance to the growth and future of the community
- To recognize the contributions of Philadelphia-based arts and cultural organizations, both new and established, that have a demonstrated track record to service, and the financial management and programming capacity to continue providing service
- To recognize and nurture artistic quality
- To encourage and increase opportunities for involvement and participation in arts and cultural activities by culturally diverse constituencies
- To preserve and protect the cultural heritage of Philadelphia and encourage a sense of pride and commitment in the city.

For more information about the Philadelphia Cultural Fund and the 2017 Youth Enrichment Grant recipients, please contact **Barbara Silzle** at [barbara@philaculturalfund.org](mailto:barbara@philaculturalfund.org), 267-419-7643.

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**About The Philadelphia Cultural Fund:** Established in 1991 to support and enhance the cultural life and vitality of the City of Philadelphia and its residents, the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, through the combined efforts of the Philadelphia City Council and the Mayor, promotes arts and culture as engines of social, educational and economic development and has played a key stabilizing role for numerous organizations by providing much-needed general operating funding. [www.philaculturalfund.org](http://www.philaculturalfund.org).