$300K in 'inclusive' grants awarded to 10 S.I. cultural organizations

Updated May 7, 11:13 AM; Posted May 7, 11:03 AM

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STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- The borough's premier culture umbrella, Staten Island Arts, has chosen 10 borough organizations to receive the largest amount of regrant funding in its 25 years of service.

The grants, totaling $301,800, were awarded as part of the new audience development initiative: Dubbed *Expanding Audiences and Cultural Participation,* the push launched in June 2017 with the goal of gaining support for S.I. culturals as they strive to develop inclusive strategies for attracting diversity across all platforms related to the community.

"We at the arts council are heartened by the interest and enthusiasm shown for this initiative during the workshop phase and throughout the application process," said S.I. Arts Executive Director Elizabeth Bennett. "The learning we've seen and experienced has been tremendous. We look forward to continuing to share that journey with not just the grantees but also the phase one participants, who we hope will return for ongoing professional development."

Bennett said the 10 winning proposals were chosen by a panel of distinguished arts professionals during a competitive review process. All of the funded projects are geared to help accomplish "the goal of creating more access to cultural activities across the Island."

The 2018 *Expanding Audiences and Cultural Participation*grantees:
ALICE AUSTEN HOUSE MUSEUM: *Intergenerational Story Telling through Photography.* Austen House will conduct a series of intergenerational photographic storytelling workshops focusing on LGBTQIA communities from Staten Island and Manhattan.
ART LAB, INC: *Colors of the Carnival: Traditions and Culture of Mazatlan.* Art Lab plans a pilot program celebrating Mexican cultural heritage traditions through a carnival-themed gallery exhibit and art workshops serving the Spanish speaking Staten Islanders working with La Colmena.
MAKERPARK RADIO: *Open Airwaves! A music celebration, Open House, and Concert Series.* MakerPark Radio will launch a combined programming/marketing initiative to reach African American and Latino American audiences.
STATEN ISLAND PHILHARMONIC: *United in Harmony.* Philharmonic teaching artists will prepare developmentally disabled adults from On Your Mark to sing as a chorus in three Philharmonic concerts.
STATEN ISLAND SHAKESPEAREAN THEATRE: *The Port Richmond Initiative: Developing Audience and Diversity.* SIST will create an after-school theatre education program to connect with young residents in Port Richmond, and to develop workshops in collaboration with the neighborhood's Mexican/Latinx communities.
STATEN ISLAND CHILDRENS MUSEUM: *Open Museum!* Staff from all levels of the institution will participate in professional development trainings to improve cultural competencies in order to work with a wide and diverse audience.
STATEN ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY/ HISTORIC RICHMOND TOWN: *Building Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Historic Richmond Town.* Historic Richmond Town is planning to hold diversity, equity, and inclusion training for board, staff, and key stakeholders.
STATEN ISLAND MUSEUM: *Black Lunch Table*. The Museum will host Black Lunch Table, an artist-led, participant-driven, community building initiative, in free public programs that foster critical dialogue and amplify the voices of people of color.
STATEN ISLAND MAKERSPACE: *SI MakerSpace Parent Creative Alliance.* MakerSpace will launch SI MakerSpace Parent Creative Alliance, a new initiative to provide low-income and immigrant families with access to MakerSpace's facilities in order to learn new skills, work on creative projects, or build their own small businesses.
UNIVERSAL TEMPLE OF THE ARTS (UTA): *Expanding Arts Access for Residents in Staten Island Public Housing Developments.* UTA will develop a strategic marketing and community outreach campaign to engage underserved, low-income community residents through arts services.
WHERE THE $$$ ORIGINATED: The funding comes from a cohort of New York City-based foundations: New York Community Trust, The Altman Foundation, The Staten Island Foundation, Stavros Niachros Foundation, and the Time Warner Company.

S.I. Arts supported the 32 organizations who participated in the initiative's first phase: Five months of professional development workshops about community engagement, partnerships, customer relations, grant writing, marketing, and social media.

Participants also experienced a day-long introductory workshop in diversity, equity, and inclusion thinking and practices. That November training workshop marked the first Staten Island visit made by the renowned California-based organization artEquity.

As part of the initiative, S.I. Arts is working on an ongoing basis with community engagement and audience development visionary Donna Walker-Kuhne and members of her firm, Walker International Communications Group.

Walker-Kuhne has led workshops and held one-on-one consultations with leaders from the participating organizations. She will expand her work with the grantees as they further develop and implement their projects over the next year.

"The Staten Island Arts audience development initiative is a precedent setting initiative that provides the tools and funding to advance diversity in the arts and the cultural community of Staten Island. I am inspired and excited to work with the grantees to help them actualize their plans for diversifying their audiences."