



FAR  
SOUTH  
BORDER  
NORTH



ARTISTS & CULTURAL  
PRACTITIONERS IN COMMUNITY

# IMPACT REPORT

## 2022 -2024



**A California Creative Corps Program**





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## INTRODUCTION

### San Diego is driving change through an arts workforce program.

Arts and culture are vital facets of today's society. They can help inspire us, move us, expose us to new ideas and help shift our perspectives.

#### What is Far South/Border North?

Far South/Border North: Artists and Cultural Practitioners in Community (Far South/Border North) is a California Creative Corps program designed to address systemic issues by creating a new ecosystem that enhances the regional economy. This program supported artists and cultural practitioners working to serve their communities. Through Far South/Border North, artists and cultural practitioners connected with each other and with their communities, providing an essential platform for guiding media, outreach and engagement campaigns that promoted the health and well-being of the most disproportionately impacted communities in San Diego and Imperial counties by addressing key regional issues.

Far South/Border North was a two-year investment focused on providing financial support to artists and cultural practitioners within the Far South region of California. It created jobs through grant funding and development opportunities for individuals and organizations in San Diego and Imperial counties. The program supported artists and cultural practitioners in developing and implementing public awareness campaigns to cultivate awareness, belonging, social cohesion and connection across the bi-county region, particularly in the communities ranked in the lowest quartiles of the California Healthy Places Index (HPI).

The program integrated arts and culture into public work while demonstrating the importance of intersectionality in tackling pressing regional challenges and opportunities. It also showcased

the significant potential for artists and cultural practitioners to collaborate with nonprofits and government agencies to contribute to health equity within communities in San Diego and Imperial counties.

#### Public/Private Arts Investment

Arts and culture are critical to the health and well-being of California. To support recovery and enhance environmental, civic, and social engagement in the state's most disproportionately impacted communities, the California Arts Council developed the California Creative Corps program in partnership with the State Legislature.

The 2021-2022 state budget allocated \$60 million to the California Arts Council to create this program. California Arts Council selected 14 statewide administering organizations (AOs) through a competitive process to regrant funds across various service regions. The City of San Diego, through Cultural Affairs, was selected as one of the 14 AOs and was awarded \$4.75 million in 2022 to administer a pilot California Creative Corps arts program for the Far South regional service area, which includes San Diego and Imperial counties.

Recognizing the crucial role that artists and cultural practitioners play in supporting local communities, the Prebys Foundation committed an additional \$1.4 million to the Far South/Border North region in 2023. This funding boosted the initial \$4.75 million California Creative Corps grant from the California Arts Council, bringing the total funding for the program to \$6.15 million.

The funding from the Prebys Foundation, in addition to state funds, is a prime example of the importance of public/private financing in public sector work. This collective effort has enabled additional resources to be allocated to Far South/Border North artists and cultural practitioners through grant funding augmentations and supported professional development programming and administration.

#### Regional Collaborative Partnership

Far South/Border North was not just a program, but a testament to the power of collaboration. Led by the City's Cultural Affairs, the initiative was implemented through a bi-county regional collaborative. The implementation partners, including Catalyst of San Diego & Imperial Counties and San Diego ART Matters, all worked hand in hand to make Far South/Border North a reality. Catalyst of San Diego & Imperial Counties was the City's primary contracted implementation, providing critical insight, program administration, and partnership, particularly in engagement and activations in Imperial County. At the same time, San Diego ART Matters developed and managed the application and panel review

process during the Far South/Border North application phase. In addition to this partnership, the San Diego Foundation advised early in the program development on the intersection of the region and art. This first-time regional collaborative, particularly among Catalyst of San Diego & Imperial Counties, San Diego ART Matters, and the City's Cultural Affairs, was essential to designing this new system of cross-sector support and implementing it across the Far South region, showcasing the strength of the partnership.

Five social-sector organizations, each serving as a unique social impact hub, played a crucial role in supporting the Far South/Border North program. These hubs, including Alliance San Diego, ARTS: A Reason To Survive, Casa Familiar, Imperial County Food Bank and RISE San Diego, brought their distinct expertise and resources to the program, serving as the vital link between artists and cultural practitioners and the program's goals. Their contributions to campaign support, professional development, and mentoring were invaluable.

The City's Cultural Affairs also worked with Mixte Communications, a local marketing firm, and with the creative youth development organization The David's Harp Foundation to develop promotions working with creative youth for the Far South/Border North program.

Far South/Border North was acknowledged as a key initiative in the Community Program of World Design Capital San Diego-Tijuana 2024, emphasizing its importance in the region.



PROGRAM

Centering Artists and Cultural Practitioners

The City's Cultural Affairs and its regional partners successfully allocated \$5.12 million in grant awards to 78 recipients throughout San Diego and Imperial counties. This funding was distributed over two rounds, allowing participants to engage in a comprehensive 12-month experience to help support the health and well-being of communities in the lowest quartile of the California HPI in San Diego and Imperial counties. It aided in incubating and carrying out public campaigns that cultivate awareness, social cohesion and connectivity and it ensured the enrichment of the two counties' creative, artistic and cultural practices.

In the initial round of funding, which specifically targeted individual artists and cultural practitioners, 60 individuals were chosen based on their applications and awarded grant funds to support their participation in the program and develop public awareness campaigns. The second round focused on organizations with 18 diverse organizations in the arts, culture, community and social services receiving grants to hire artists and cultural practitioners to create similar campaigns in collaboration with them.

The Far South/Border North partners took an innovative approach by establishing a program framework grounded in a strong commitment to equity and the overall well-being of the diverse communities within the San Diego-Imperial region. Recognizing that many local artists and cultural practitioners were already contributing significantly to their communities with minimal

financial backing and scarce opportunities, the program was designed to prioritize their needs and amplify their voices.

This dedication to centering artists and cultural practitioners emerged throughout various program dimensions in administering regional open calls. For instance, the review process involved external evaluation of eligible applications by peer panels representing the demographic and creative diversity of the lowest-quartile California HPI communities in San Diego and Imperial counties. Moreover, to make the application process more accessible, the program introduced a streamlined application format and established additional criteria to support health equity.

Far South/Border North also implemented a comprehensive outreach strategy to build and strengthen relationships within less-served communities. This approach involved technical assistance to engage new grant applicants who may have previously faced barriers in accessing funding opportunities, ensuring a wider range of participants could benefit from the program. Through these efforts, the program partners worked to create an inclusive environment where artists and cultural practitioners could thrive and meaningfully contribute to health equity within communities of San Diego and Imperial counties.

The grantmaking process's results exceeded the regional collaborative's expectations. Round I grantees comprise a diverse group of artists and cultural practitioners, with 77% working or residing in areas designated within the Far South's lowest quartile of the HPI. Similarly, 67% of the Round II organizational recipients, which include both emerging and established artistic, community and social service organizations, are also based in the lowest quartile of the HPI in the Far South.

From the outset, Far South/Border North aimed not just to fund artists and cultural practitioners, but to do so in a liberating way. These individuals play a unique and vital role in communities, and the collaborative sought to support them in a manner that genuinely empowers their work. The upfront funding they received was not just financial support; it represented empowerment, allowing them to focus on their practice. Notably, 86% of Far South/Border North awardees were first-time recipients of state funds, which fosters creative practices within their communities.



Grantee Demographics Breakdown\*

RACE/ETHNICITY	
Asian	8.5%
Black or African American	22.9%
Hispanic or Latino/a or Mexican or Chicano/a	33.9%
Middle Eastern	.9%
Native American or Native Alaskan	4.2%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	.9%
White	3.4%
Two or More	25.4%
AGE RANGE	
18-24	2.6%
25-34	31.3%
35-44	33.9%
45-54	15.7%
55-64	10.4%
65+	4.4%
Prefer not to state	1.8%
GRANTEE ARTISTIC DISCIPLINE BREAKDOWN	
Dance	5
Design	3
Film	3
Folk	4
Literary	4
Media arts	7
Music	6
Theatre	6
Visual art	21
Multi-discipline	17
Other	2
ADDITIONAL GRANTEE IDENTITIES REPORTED	
2S/LGBTQIA+	
Transgender	
Male	
Female	
Immigrants	
Refugees	
Veterans	
People with disabilities	
Justice impacted people	

\*Optional demographic data collected from grantees for artists and cultural practitioners; rounded.



“The Far South/Border North grant has made me feel valued as an artist. The resources provided by the grant helped [give] me the freedom to create a project that speaks to my artistic vision of creating with and for the community, as well as be able to pay other artists for their work, and that is such a gift.”

- Miki Vale, Artist

Arts Workforce and the Creative Economy

Far South/Border North has positively impacted the regional economy by creating 940 jobs and providing 126,000 paid workforce hours. This initiative has strengthened community resilience by reinforcing a vibrant creative economy that bolsters public sector work and drives positive change.

Through this program, artists and cultural practitioners received professional development opportunities, subsidized job training to design and implement 71 public messaging campaigns, funding to build their creative businesses, communities of practice, and socially beneficial creative initiatives, particularly benefiting communities ranked in the lowest quartile of the California HPI in San Diego and Imperial counties. Additionally, the program has facilitated public and private investment to support the hiring and retention of artists and cultural practitioners, equipping them with the skills and tools necessary to enhance local creative impact and social sector accountability.

This initiative is notable for being the largest arts workforce program ever aimed at individual artists and cultural practitioners in the Far South region. It has introduced new workforce development infrastructures and expanded access across traditional boundaries. A distinctive and engaging aspect of this program was establishing a new network combining public and private resources to enhance artistic practices, create job opportunities and foster collaboration across sectors to uplift communities.

940

Total Number of Jobs Created

700

Total Number of Artists Involved

126,000

Total Number of Paid Workforce Hours

9,362

Total Number of Volunteer Hours

18

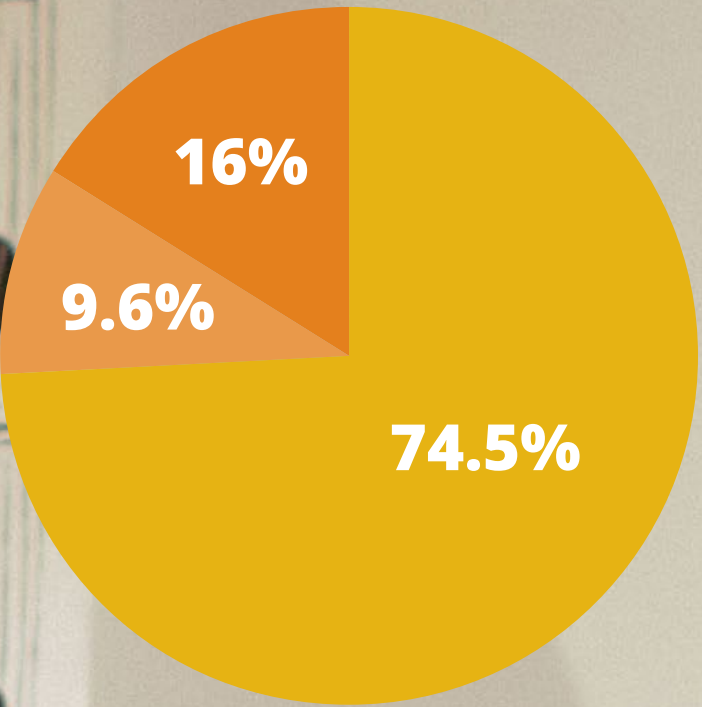
New Positions Created for Artists and Cultural Practitioners

\$6.15m

Total Program Investment

\*Type of Jobs

- Artists/Cultural Practitioners
- Contractors/Other Jobs
- Administrative







“There are few opportunities where artists receive support to bring their ideas to life and even fewer opportunities to support artists in the ideation, development and dream stages of our work, which is just as important as the final product. I had the chance to network with our community of artists and coordinated free speaker series, events and workshops for the community that facilitated conversations around civic engagement and community leadership among Pacific Islander communities”

- Olivia Quintanilla, Artist

**Incubator Model for Driving Campaign Development, Empowering Peer Learning and Cultivating Strategic Networking**

A central component of the Far South/Border North program was the innovative incubator model, powered by the Social Impact Hub (Hub) infrastructure. It provided vital support to grantees throughout their campaign development and implementation. Each nonprofit social service and community development organization, acting as a Hub, specialized in a distinct focus area aligned with the program goals and was strategically located within the region to maximize reach across both counties. These hubs have cultivated strong relationships with communities in the lowest quartile of the California HPI, specifically in the Far South region. The ongoing engagement of each Hub with these communities and the grantees was instrumental in informing the Far South/Border North program. This collaboration highlights the importance of developing a robust Hub infrastructure that effectively bridges artists and cultural practitioners with the program's goals, ensuring seamless execution and meaningful impact in the communities served.

The community-based organizations listed below operated the Far South/Border North hubs.

- Alliance San Diego’s mission is to build collective power to create an inclusive democracy where everyone can participate with dignity.
- A Reason To Survive (ARTS) is a community organization that lifts young people to become confident, compassionate and courageous community builders through the transformative power of creativity..
- The mission of Casa Familiar is to enhance the quality of life for individuals living in underserved and underrepresented communities.
- Imperial Valley Food Bank is an organization created and operated for and by residents of Imperial Valley to feed those in need living in Imperial County.
- RISE San Diego’s mission is to elevate and advance urban leadership through civic engagement, dynamic partnerships and support to increase the capacity of urban residents to effect meaningful community change.

At the start of their 12-month experience, each grant recipient was paired with a Hub. These hubs fostered a community of artists and cultural practitioners. They provided expertise and support for campaign design and implementation and assistance in navigating the requirements of receiving government funding. The Far South/

Border North hubs played a crucial role in integrating resources and connections to support artists, cultural practitioners, organizations and communities.

The incubator model allowed for thorough campaign design where grantees identified their campaign objectives and how these aligned with a primary focus area. They developed strategies and tactics and outlined methods for measuring outcomes, with many seeking feedback from targeted HPI communities to enhance campaign development and implementation success. This exploration enabled the creation and implementation of innovative approaches to designing creative public awareness campaigns.

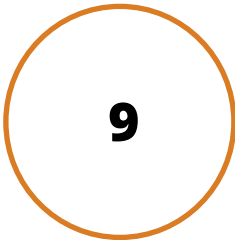
The hubs played a vital role in offering one-on-one support and community sessions. They provided specific advice or a platform for gathering input on campaign ideas, guiding participants toward successful campaign development and implementation. Additionally, the collaborative hosted regional cross-Hub peer learning events in Imperial Valley and San Diego, which included practical topics like financial management and focused on supporting campaign development.



Individuals attended Hub cohort trainings.



Individuals received one-on-one technical assistance or capacity-building support from hubs.



Far South/Border North program sessions and regional convenings for grantees.



Total attendance across program sessions and regional convenings.



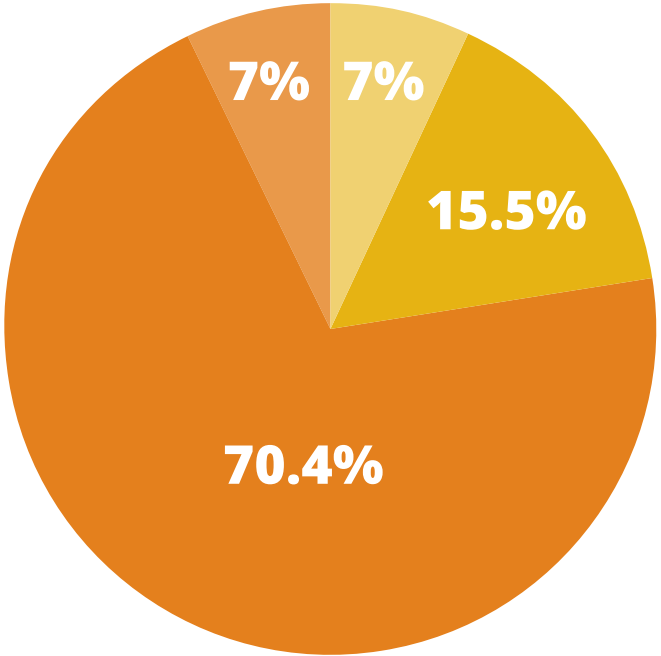


### Program Goals and Campaigns

Far South/Border North served as an essential platform for impactful public messaging campaigns aimed at raising awareness, fostering social cohesion and enhancing connectivity within communities that rank in the lowest quartile of the California HPI for San Diego and Imperial counties.

Artists, cultural practitioners, and organizations involved in the program developed and implemented a diverse range of campaigns that showcased incredible creativity. These campaigns included various artistic expressions such as interpretive dance, spoken word, culinary arts, film, and more. One notable campaign focused on capturing the wisdom and stories of elders, while another launched a mobile healing arts lab dedicated to promoting mental wellness. All of these campaigns addressed one or more of the Far South/Border North program goals.

In total, there were 71 campaigns aligned with four program goals.



- Public health to stop the spread of COVID-19 and associated diseases or health disparities
- Social justice and community engagement
- Civic engagement, including election participation
- Water and energy conservation, climate mitigation, and emergency preparedness, relief, and recovery

\*Many campaigns were aligned with multiple program goals; the primary goal for each campaign is noted in the rounded percentages above.

“The Far South/Border North grant funds provided me with time and space to research and practice methods of working with art and craft as vehicles for individual and collective engagement. The resources allowed me to thoughtfully explore art as a force and space for building intra-personal and interpersonal connections. With more time to research, reflect and develop ideas, I was able to expand my understanding, and practice new ways of facilitating opportunities for individual and cooperative play, skill sharing, and non-linear teaching and learning.”

- Sarah Garcia, Artist



“The Far South/Border North artist grant was of tremendous support to me as a mother, an artist, and a mental health clinician. The grant came at a time in my professional career that deeply affirmed the trajectory of my work as a community-based service provider in the healing arts. By fabricating a mobile healing art studio as part of my campaign project, I can continue to bring this tool to public spaces and activate them into healing art spaces of belonging.”

- Ana Ruth Castillo, Artist



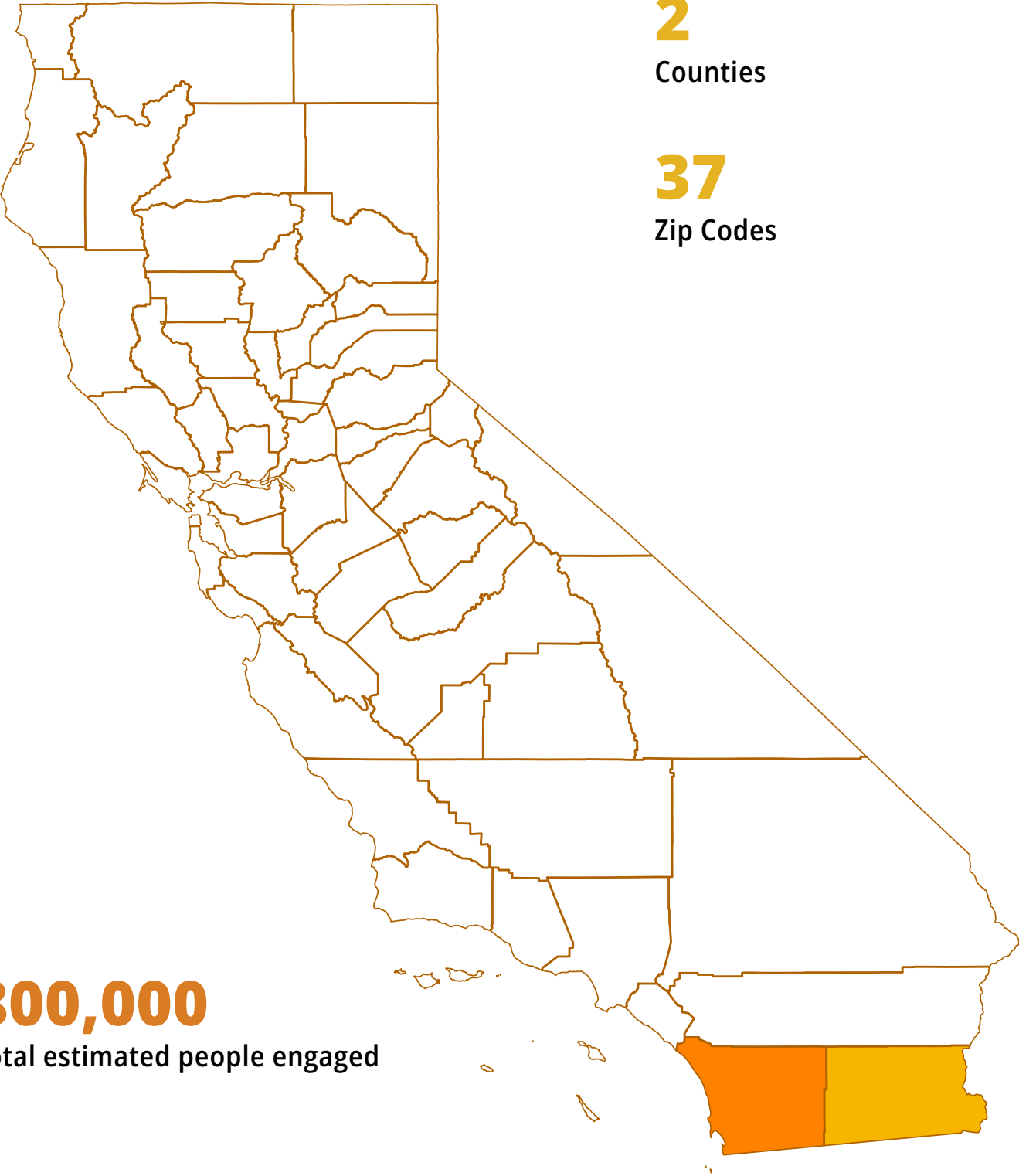


REGIONAL IMPACT

2  
Counties

37  
Zip Codes

800,000  
Total estimated people engaged



Building a More Vibrant and Interconnected Region

Investing in the arts workforce extends beyond economic benefits. It's about investing in the unique power of artists to address and shape our understanding of complex issues, amplify existing efforts, and uplift historically less resourced areas. These artists and cultural practitioners did not just create art; they built community power and achieved transformational change. Through Far South/Border North, artists and cultural practitioners reduced barriers to health and improving well-being in the communities with the highest level of need in San Diego and Imperial counties, as identified by the California HPI.

- Campaigns reached individuals and communities across 37 zip codes in the lowest quartile of the HPI in San Diego and Imperial counties.
- More than 70 campaigns with 17 distinct campaigns were implemented in Imperial County, 52 distinct campaigns were implemented in San Diego County, and two campaigns were carried out in both counties.

As a program funded by the California Creative Corps, Far South/Border North concentrated on the communities most in need in San Diego and Imperial counties, particularly those in the lowest quartile of the California HPI.

The HPI, developed by the Public Health Alliance of Southern California, aims to promote health equity by providing accessible data. Using validated information, it offers community leaders and policymakers the tools to identify inequities, prioritize investments and elevate community voices.

Health equity means that everyone has a fair opportunity to achieve optimal health. This outcome requires addressing injustices and eliminating health disparities. Research indicates that well-being and life expectancy are closely tied to neighborhood environments and community conditions. Access to education, job opportunities and healthy food varies significantly from one neighborhood to another.

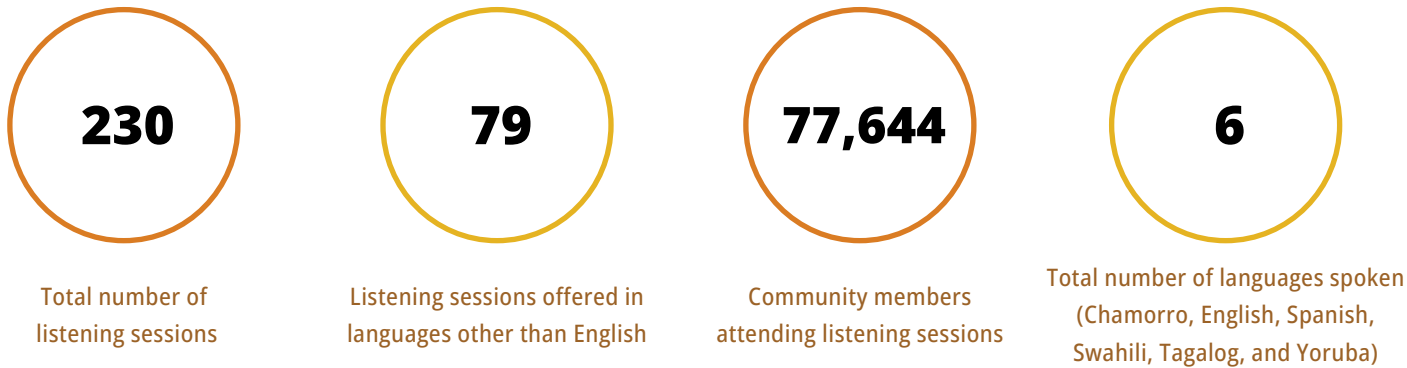




# COMMUNITY BUILDING

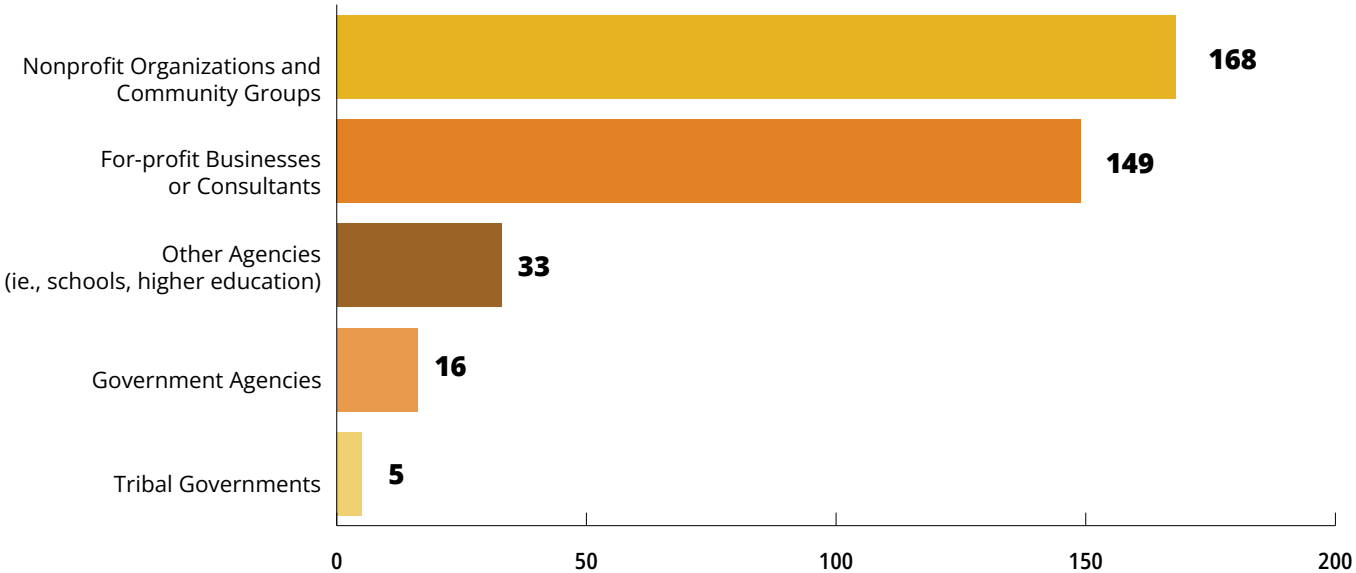
## Community Listening Sessions

Grantees in the Far South service region facilitated 230 community sessions to promote campaigns. These were attended by 77,644 participants, and many campaigns expanded language access by offering listening sessions in alternate formats and languages.



## Partnership Engagement

371 professional campaign partnerships were created by grantees in the Far South service region, including:



## Community Outreach



Far South/Border North achieved an impressive 3.33 million impressions and reached nearly 3.79 million viewers through impactful social media content. The campaigns effectively utilized various channels, including Instagram, Facebook, X and YouTube to engage targeted audiences and maximize reach.



The City's Cultural Affairs collaborated with The David's Harp Foundation, a leading organization dedicated to creative youth development, in conjunction with Mixte Communications, to promote the Far South/Border North program through storytelling. This initiative provided an opportunity for transitional-age youths, aged 18 to 21, to contribute their talents in videography. They were involved in developing video assets and advertisements for YouTube and produced scripted videos that aligned with the program's goals: social justice, public health, climate, and civic engagement. They also created a brief program video and documented the Far South/ Border North Public Impact Day, showcasing the collective impact of these efforts.





# FAR SOUTH/BORDER NORTH ARTISTS AND CULTURAL PRACTITIONERS

Artists, cultural practitioners and organizations have developed and implemented powerful public messaging campaigns aligning with one or more Far South/Border North goals. The campaigns listed below are categorized by their primary goal, yet many effectively tackle multiple objectives, showcasing their versatility and impact.

## Public Health

### A Mindful Journey in the Imperial Valley

ANGEL ESPARZA

Angel Esparza's campaign encompassed a comprehensive approach to promoting mindfulness, reducing stress and expanding self-awareness to address the mental health disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through research and engagement, the objective was to create a book and events to equip people with tools and practices in mindfulness that would help improve mental health in communities of Imperial Valley. Robust outreach centered on promotion and community involvement in a Taste of Mindfulness event featuring well-being practitioners and workshops, collaborative mural-making with artist Sergio Ojeda and book distribution in English and Spanish, partnering with local businesses, libraries, community centers and schools.



### Children's Alzheimer's Reading Education (C.A.R.E.)

ELSA ALVAREZ

Elsa Alvarez's campaign raised awareness of the pandemic's effect on vulnerable populations in Imperial County. This campaign recognized the emotional, psychological and practical challenges faced by children, grandchildren, spouses and caregivers of those living with such illnesses. Children's Alzheimer's Reading Education supported the education and engagement of the youth and provided the information to recognize and address these disparities and the unique challenges faced by individuals living with Alzheimer's Disease during the pandemic in Imperial County. Online and in-person approaches maximized reach and engagement, including social media, webinars, local workshops, support group meetings and material distribution at local schools, libraries and community centers. By addressing possible adverse childhood experiences associated with these conditions and providing positive, empowering tools and existing resources through a children's interactive narrative coloring book for the youth, the campaign sought to inform and improve the well-being of affected families and communities, ultimately contributing to a healthier, more resilient society.



### My cancer journey: Navigating the thorns, cultivating roses and relinquishing these treacherous titties in the journey of healing

BERENICE BADILLO

Berenice Badillo was recently diagnosed with invasive breast cancer and underwent a double mastectomy. Her campaign raised awareness of associated diseases like breast cancer, highlighting the health disparities affecting survival rates for Black women and women of color, particularly worsened by COVID-19's impact on diagnosis and treatment. It addressed issues like stigma, resource shortages, misdiagnosis and the psychological effects of breast cancer diagnosis. Through multimedia platforms, the campaign helped to inform targeted communities of cancer risks, the need for mammograms and advocating for more preventive care. The first phase of the campaign focused on documenting the artist's cancer journey through the creation of personal art making. Within this process, the documentation and research of art therapy interventions for cancer patients, as well as other methods of alleviating symptoms of depression and anxiety, include meditation, biofeedback, guided imagery and journaling. A TikTok channel documented topics that included psychological reactions and processes of having breast cancer, encouraging discussions and providing resources from a lived experience. It also followed Badillo's work on a mural for Chicano Park. The campaign emphasized how the pandemic has delayed cancer diagnoses, featuring interviews with cancer influencers, survivors, and healthcare workers.



### Mobile Healing Art Studio

ANA RUTH CASTILLO

Ana Ruth Castillo's campaign offered an immersive, participant-driven experience focused on enhancing holistic well-being in the communities of Santa Ysabel and Julian. Inherently collaborative, the studio allowed for content and context flexibility and adaptability. Through therapeutic art directives and materials, participants engaged in process-oriented creative activities, fostering social interaction. The chosen art projects addressed mental, emotional and physical health, sparking ecological discussions on holistic well-being. Participants embraced an intuitive, artistic process, prioritizing the journey over the final product, leading to creative flow, nervous system regulation and collective homeostasis. The studio concluded with a reflective session where participants shared their art, process and insights, revealing cognitive and behavioral changes resulting from the healing power of the arts. This campaign encouraged healthy behaviors and empowered individuals to find well-being through creativity.







## Imperial Valley Arts and Health

EDUARDO KINTERO

Eduardo Kintero's campaign used the visual arts as a means of communication and expression to improve the health, emotional and social well-being of the Imperial Valley community after the pandemic. The artist resides in one of the places with the most cases of COVID-19 per capita in California. Calexico does not have a hospital, so vulnerable groups - such as seniors and people with disabilities - participated and engaged in unique art workshops, collective murals and art exhibitions. The workshops took place in a pleasant environment of respect to positively impact the participants in their personal and social development, which translated into improved quality of life and mental health. The campaign aimed to generate transformation through artistic activities that used painting to allow specific groups in the community to benefit from creating art.

## Please Log Out

RYAN PEREZ

Ryan Perez's campaign targeted and brought awareness to those forced to rely on technology and social media, causing long-term addiction even post-pandemic lockdowns in communities of the Imperial Valley. The campaign took the form of a captivating documentary. There are intriguing connections between technology addiction, the pandemic lockdown and mental health. Striking a healthy balance in people's digital lives becomes even more crucial in these challenging times. Multi-channel platforms promoted the campaign, and a premiere event featured the full documentary and a live Q&A session with attendees and the filmmaker. The aim was to reach a broad audience by distributing it online, leveraging social media's power and explicitly targeting teens. By making it accessible and shareable, Perez spread awareness about the adverse effects of excessive technology use on mental health.



## Feel Better Art: Using Art as a Tool for Self-Care and Mental Health

ALMA SILVA

Alma Silva's campaign addressed the mental health crisis associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign, which combined digital content, distribution of informational materials and presentations, supported greater awareness of the mental health crisis post-pandemic and offered community knowledge exchange and tools for self-care and mental health. Digital content included information about therapeutic art, exercises for mental health (tutorials, materials, etc.), links to resources and professional help books on the topic and downloadable coloring pages. A booklet, including digital content (tips, COVID-19 and its relationship to mental health issues, therapeutic art, etc.), was distributed to local health, partner organizations and elderly care institutions. Inspired by the artist's personal story of caring for the health and well-being of her family member, a high-risk individual during the pandemic who found peace and relaxation through artmaking, the campaign also promoted creative expression at local events through information sharing and coloring books.

## Food for Life - Health & Wellness Equity Through Culinary Arts

ASIAN CULTURE AND MEDIA ALLIANCE

Asian Culture and Media Alliance's campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Cathlyn Choi and supporting artists/practitioners Eric Michelson, Danielle Sharesse, Eddie Gochicoa, Ron Oliver and Larry Edmonds, promoted health equity among youth by teaching essential cooking skills, encouraging healthier eating habits and improving access to nutritional resources. This project tackled health disparities in communities impacted by diet-related illnesses, aiming to mitigate the long-term effects of COVID-19. It promoted health equity for youth by teaching healthier eating habits and cooking skills while improving access to nutritional resources. A six-part video series documented the campaign. The videos are available online, providing a platform for expanding their reach as a lasting educational resource. The pandemic exposed the significant impact of chronic health conditions in underserved communities. This campaign provided schools and families in the lowest quartile of the California HPI with tools to make informed dietary choices, highlighting the importance of personal habits for overall health. Beyond education, Food for Life promoted community and self-empowerment by providing hands-on learning experiences in urban farms and teaching kitchens at various high schools. Through interactive cooking classes and field trips, participants gained insights into food production and conservation, linking access to healthy food with the skills to prepare it.







## Bayanihan Tour + Blood Drive

### MARAYA PERFORMING ARTS COLLECTIVE

Maraya Performing Arts Collective's campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Anjanette Maraya-Ramey and supporting artist/practitioner Candice Custodio-Tan, increased civic engagement for Filipino and diverse ethnic blood donors in the South Bay region. The campaign centered on producing a traveling dance theatre musical called Bayanihan (the Tagalog word for the communal accomplishment of a common goal). In support of continuing advocacy work for San Diego Blood Bank, the campaign united Filipino American artists to raise awareness about the importance of blood donation in the lowest quartile California HPI communities where they live, work and create. The show featured multigenerational, multi-ability performers ages 7-77, including professional artists, youth academy students and seniors from the Filipino American Women's Club Dancers of South Bay Terraces. The campaign culminated in the summer with an arts festival and blood drive.

## CONNECTEDvoces

### MEDIA ARTS CENTER SAN DIEGO

Media Arts Center San Diego's campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Amada Torruella and supporting artists/practitioners Edwin Cruz, Melissa Franco and Seth Gadsden, addressed the public health crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic and how it has affected the mental health of youths throughout San Diego County, specifically in the lowest quartile California HPI communities in Vista, Fallbrook and San Diego's Encanto and City Heights. Through three 12 week production cycles, students from the targeted communities were paid a stipend to participate in and produce film and media projects addressing public health, focusing on evaluating mental health trends in youths in a post-COVID-19 landscape and the resources available to them in their communities. Each short documentary highlighted a mental health trend and featured interviews with resource providers. Participants were encouraged to critically evaluate healthcare access inequalities in their community, providing a platform to inspire them to serve their community in artistic ways.



## Mind Body & Spirit

### SAN DIEGO URBAN WARRIORS

San Diego Urban Warriors' campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Dajahn A Blevins and supporting artists/practitioners Mr. Black Culture Art & Talent San Diego, Cheryl Sapp, Pam Smith, Maisha Lewis, Debbie Washington, Lori Guillory and James Guillory, increased public health knowledge and empowered the community to stop the spread of COVID-19, highlighting the health disparities that address pre-existing conditions. Through creativity, the campaign messages supported lifting up the youth, families and community to be active and fit in mind, body and spirit. Activities, newly created support systems and ongoing events promoted healthy lifestyles, neighborhood pride and vitality. All events were open to the public and accessible to people of all ages and abilities.







Somos Aire

JOHNNY BEAR CONTRERAS AND MABELLE REYNOSO

Johnny Bear Contreras and Mabelle Reynoso’s collaborative campaign increased awareness about air pollution and potential responses drawn from youth wisdom and environmental justice experts through theatrical performance, visual art (including comics) and interactive student workshops in San Ysidro and the South Bay. The campaign included Young Teatristas workshops that included a partnership with two juvenile community court schools and San Ysidro youth from an after-school program to help shape the play. The play was set in San Ysidro and explored the community’s air quality and environmental justice through the eyes of a young woman who returns to her hometown in search of a cure that will save her sister and her community. Following the interactive workshops, the campaign produced community performances of the play featuring set pieces, costumes, sound design and comic book adaptation to share with the participating schools and communities and beyond to memorialize the campaign.

Mobile Bio Art Lab

ARMANDO DE LA TORRE

Armando de la Torre’s campaign exposed young people to art and science through inquiry-based experiential learning. Through a series of engagements, students learned about their local environment and frog habitats undergoing destruction due to global warming. A terrarium constructed in the mobile lab reproduced the Lake Cuyamaca frog habitat, along with actual field audio recordings, video and photographs, to support the authenticity of a natural habitat. With this biological art installation, de la Torre facilitated conversations about global warming, identity through the representation of flora and fauna, and human encroachment on local habitats through multimedia and interactive art and science activities. The Mobile Bio Art Lab doubled as a community, civic and public engagement project with local schools, libraries, cultural centers and pop-up events. For Far South/Border North, de la Torre collaborated with artist Ana Ruth Castillo and the Mobile Healing Art Studio. Both mobile studios convened at specific sites to encourage exploring and contemplating ecological and climatic themes as an integral aspect of holistic well-being.



The Nocturnal Imperial Valley

FERNANDO “FRO” REZA

Fernando “Fro” Reza’s campaign re-contextualized climate change, public health disparity and society’s role in finding a solution-based path forward through communicating the existential threat of climate calamities uniquely and creatively in the impacted California HPI communities in Imperial County. Reza crafted a fantasy parallel history in which Imperial Valley “goes nocturnal” for the summer months to survive the extreme heat, becoming the first nocturnal city out of necessity. Every year, the imaginary Valley holds a massive celebration as it transitions into a night city. Schools, banks and workplaces all operate at night, and people sleep through the day. This fantasy event goes back decades. The first part of the campaign, which communicated the lore and fantasy archival footage and photographs, was displayed in an exhibition. An online component featured archival footage to share the fantasy history of the tradition - an art exhibition showcasing melted sculptures, melted paintings, light installations and other artworks based around climate change. A blacklight-poster group art show and a culminating exhibition of the works created excitement and awareness with informational displays detailing climate change causes, preparedness, and calls to action.



Our River, Our Water

OSCAR J. ROMO

Oscar J. Romo’s campaign engaged and educated community members so they could get a better understanding of the multiple issues surrounding the Tijuana River Valley in South San Diego city and county, some of which are beneficial in terms of the environmental services only found in that space. Still, others are detrimental to human and ecological health. Information targeted the lowest quartile California HPI communities most impacted by the current conditions of the Tijuana River and surrounding areas. As part of the campaign, sculptures displayed at various locations highlighted the reasons for the frequent wastewater spills and the opportunities to engage in alternative solutions. The campaign provided supporting data, historical references, progress made and opportunities to promote improvement through public participation.



“Haawka!” May the Fire in Your Heart Burn Bright!

ALICIA SIU

Alicia Siu’s campaign raised awareness, lifted up environmental justice issues and inspired community involvement and participation in environmental campaigns. In collaboration with the Environmental Health Coalition, the campaign visually showcased, celebrated and informed the public about the Environmental Health Coalition’s community training programs, activism, actions, vision and plans for environmental justice. The artist conducted community workshops to create the content and design. The resulting design addressed the poor air quality of Barrio Logan due to toxic emissions from various commercial businesses and vehicles in the area, celebrated past historic gains such as the closing of the chrome plating industry next to residential areas, recent efforts in updating the community plan for more green spaces, community access to the bay, emission-free vehicles, and bicycle lanes. The mural also included a vision of green spaces, the creation of the Chicano Park herbal garden, community activism, and honoring Kumeyaay’s presence as original environmental stewards. Through creating a community mural, the artist and collaborator engaged the community in a content dialogue to collectively create and complete a mural to serve as a platform for community voices and inspire the next generation of environmental justice activists.



Civic Engagement



To Stand as One Black Woman

YOLANDA MARIE FRANKLIN

Yolanda Marie Franklin’s campaign used theatrical performance to tell the story of Black women running for office. This one-woman show, performed, written and directed by Franklin, portrays the artist as a woman who runs for the office of the district attorney. The play highlighted one African American woman’s political journey from a successful defense attorney career to her consideration to run for district attorney. Through multiple present-day and historical characters, the play explores the protagonist’s desire to make more significant changes in the criminal justice system and her people’s history, expectations and pressure to fight inequitable governmental systems. As she ventures on this next big step, she is aware of her ancestors’ contributions and how this is not just a career move but a step forward in civil rights. The campaign engaged communities, revealing the untold history and supporting civic engagement today.

We the People, Sing Our Song

NEIL KENDRICKS

Neil Kendrick’s campaign encouraged greater civic engagement within San Diego’s racially, ethnically and culturally diverse populations as active participants in the nation’s democracy. The interactive comics campaign followed multiple subjects - native-born and naturalized American citizens - in the San Diego region. The subjects shared their honest, candid thoughts in a multimedia “town square” captured in podcast-style audio recordings linked with analog and digital drawings, illustrating key moments in their anecdotal stories. The campaign promoted election participation in communities as a necessity for sustaining a healthy and resilient democracy on both the national and local levels by chronicling the stories of first-time voters. The audio interviews shaped into soundscapes chronicled the participants’ stories, ranging from 18-year-old, first-time voters to one long-time voter in her early 90s. Together, they shared and articulated anecdotal stories about their respective observations on a collective moral obligation to participate in the voting process. The campaign premise was that democracy is not a spectator sport; people must get involved. We all have “skin in the game,” as they say. The stakes could not be higher in this post-pandemic environment and the nation’s divided political landscape.





## Rehearsing the Peace

BERNARDO MAZÓN DAHER

Bernardo Mazón Daher's campaign objective was to enhance efforts to attract communities into conversations about legislation and voter-based initiatives, provide space for people to practice thinking critically and creatively about solutions to injustice, and build political momentum in communities. The campaign design was to provide opportunities to assemble constituents for public performances and forums where the Legislative Theatre would occur. The methodology of Legislative Theatre was first to dramatize and encapsulate issues of oppression and injustice for constituents, and then have the audience converse with the artists, advocates and experts who created the play to share perspectives. This campaign aim was to foster a fully participating voter culture, strengthen networks and galvanize neighbors into taking action long-term.

## Move American

DISCO RIOT

DISCO RIOT's campaign, in collaboration with producing artist Alyssa Rose and supporting artists Aisha Reddick, Blindspot Collective, Briele Melahn Edrian Pangilinan, Emily Jane, Giovanna Francisco, Greta Nuñez, Jenna Wu-Cardona, Karina Wilson, Marcella Torres-Sánchez, Megan Curet, Odessa Mae Uno, Patrick Li, Monarch School Chrysalis and Sam Marcial, registered, motivated, and inspired potential voters in the lowest quartile of the California HPI communities. The campaign included 10 dance films that shed light on social issues and ideas, initiating contemplations of how people can become more civically engaged. In these films, local San Diego movement-artists challenge viewpoints, investigate how people can become collectively healthier, and dream into a world where all humans are considered with dignity, both in policy and culture. The campaign moved with the ethos that art has the powerful potential to inspire important social movements. Throughout the campaign, artists urged individuals and communities to take action and embrace their roles as civilians in a democratic country. The artists hoped to inspire San Diego to move to the polls and take additional actions that can cultivate change.



## VIVA Maze Civic Engagement Arts Project

LOS AMIGOS DE LA COMUNIDAD INC.

Los Amigos de la Comunidad Inc.'s campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Roy Dorantes and supporting artists/practitioners Maicol Lopez, Vania Monroe, Elizabeth Mehalik Ibarra, Bill Hodge, Don Scoville, The Cosplayers (Ajalee Hood), America Reyes, David Hiraes, Eder Flores, Angel Esparza, Dulce Saucedo, Karla Gloria, Luisa Moran, Diego Ceja and Maria Dominguez, created awareness of the importance of civic engagement, including voting, through a civic participatory incorporating various methods of art and performance art to reach the community in a unique and engaging format. The components of a performative traveling maze drew on the community to understand the importance of voting and civic engagement. Within the installation, a series of activities focused on lessons of civic engagement and performances, such as a theater presentation in which actors played out historical figures and dates related to civic engagement and its importance, and art displays by local students. Working in the communities of Imperial County, the campaign highlighted the importance of civic engagement and how voting is essential to communities to reach their potential, which is inclusive of all communities.





Social Justice



The Beyond Words: Amplifying Asian Women’s Voices

TRIXI AGIAO

Trixi Agiao’s campaign addressed mental health challenges within Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities through dance and theater. It emphasized social justice, health disparities and civic engagement. Anchoring the campaign was a podcast series that featured candid discussions, personal narratives and expert insights on mental health and intergenerational trauma. The podcast format allowed for in-depth exploration of these topics in a conversational and accessible manner. Complementing the podcast was a dance performance choreographed and staged to convey the emotional depth of the experiences shared in the podcast. The campaign included community engagement events such as workshops, discussions and post-performance talks to encourage dialogue, empathy and the sharing of coping techniques tailored to the needs of the AAPI communities within multiple lowest-quartile California HPI areas. The campaign encouraged active participation and a sense of belonging within the community by creating open dialogue around mental health, recognizing mental health as a social justice concern to promote empathy and understanding, and making this work more accessible to a broader audience.

PÁSALE PÁSALE: Immersive Theatre and Social Justice

MARIA PATRICE AMON

Maria Patrice Amon’s campaign increased civic engagement through theatrical performance. This campaign invited audiences to step up and engage with artists through scenes centering on the lives of swap meet vendors to introduce the decolonial SARP Methodology (Survival, Adaptation, Resistance, Persistence). The vendor characters were residents of the South Bay who were familiar with the region’s history, including The Lemon Grove Incident, the Founding of Chicano Park and local activism. In the play, the swap meet property owner increases the stall fees for all sellers and exploits the labor of the swap meet DJ. The community offers a successful alternative to the property owner through community town halls, shared resistance, collective action and voting procedures. By observing the characters’ resistance to economic oppression, the performance guided audience members to examine their relationships to community resources and civic engagement. The impacted audience left the show with a knowledge of civic engagement tools and an increased appreciation for the efficacy of community organizing in lowest quartile California HPI communities in San Diego.



Porque Nosotros? / Why Us?

EVAN APODACA

Evan Apodaca’s call to action campaign builds upon the intersection between the historic demilitarization and environmental justice movements in San Diego. The campaign included educating the public on environmental racism and intersectionality between struggles against environmental racism and impunity of militarism in San Diego, and it informed the public on the ecological health impacts caused by fumes and gases that are released into the nearby environments of the neighborhoods by shipyard activities like welding and painting of navy ships. The creation of a three-minute video projection served as a visualization of the hazardous chemicals released into the environment (PM2.5- particulate matter from various metals, carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrous gases and VOCs- volatile organic compounds) by the naval shipyards immediately adjacent to the neighborhoods of Barrio Logan and National City. The waves converge and divide at intervals to reveal a cacophony of animated sculptural busts that speak about the fatal effects of the shipyards upon the shipyard workers’ health, like cancer and other neurological and pulmonary problems, and their impact on the community.

De la Torre Brothers - Artists on the Line

ISAAC ARTENSTEIN

Isaac Artenstein’s campaign promoted dialogue and action in immigrant rights, environmental justice, cross-cultural dialogue, and freedom of expression in the lowest quartile of California HPI communities in San Diego, including Barrio Logan. The campaign consisted of live screenings of the work-in-progress documentary about the de la Torre brothers and a discussion with Director Isaac Artenstein, Einar and Jamex de la Torre, and the audiences. The context was enhanced by the cinematic presentation of the studios of the brothers as they create their artistic work and in the drone shots of the exteriors depicting geographic areas where their studios are located and, coincidentally, where the campaign presentations took place. The resulting presentations promoted engagement, inspiring people to act on social justice issues. In turn, the resulting dialogue and feedback from the audience inspired the filmmaker and artists to optimize the film’s content before presenting to public television audiences in Spanish and English versions.







## Diaspora Kitchen Forum

MR BARNADAS

MR Barnadas' campaign was an intergenerational storytelling, food-sharing event and local migration archive featuring nine families from diverse cultural backgrounds. These families shared their unique recipes, culinary traditions and cultural adaptations since relocating to San Diego. These interactions brought their stories into focus and enhanced the understanding of San Diego's diversity. To honor the families and their contributions, the artist designed custom tablecloths for a publication and the event as a gesture of thanks to each family. These tablecloths were crafted to highlight the cultural vibrancy of each family, incorporating either traditional textile patterns or newly created cultural montages that reflected their unique stories. The event in City Heights addressed the pressing issue of food justice, emphasizing the need to identify food deserts within culturally specific immigrant communities. It shed light on the challenges of cultural competence in food access, aiming to spark a conversation and drive change. This campaign was developed in partnership with Noun Abdelaziz, a community organizer and health researcher, and Amina Sheik Mohamed, director and founder of the UCSD Refugee Health Unit, in collaboration with artist MR Barnadas.

## With These Hands I Can: Community Cultural Wealth Toolkits

SANDRA CARMONA, KENDRICK "MR. LYRICAL GROOVE" DIAL AND ENRIQUE "CHIKLE" LUGO

Sandra Carmon, Kendrick "Mr Lyrical Groove" and Enrique "Chikle" Lugo co-created a tailored toolkit that focuses on the mechanism of change involved in producing communal cultural wealth. This toolkit is a living document designed by specific target groups (Latinx parents, African Americans, AAPI, farmworkers, women and more) in various communities. The support groups utilized Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and art processing to encourage a growth mindset and community engagement. Within this group process, community members supported each other, found solutions to communal challenges, and, most importantly, created empathy for each other and their community. The creation of empathy allowed individuals to care about important issues that impact their community and empathize with other people. Having emotional intelligence encouraged self-determination, community involvement and ownership. Utilizing art and dialogue as a regular method of ritualization and healing supported the creation of community communal wealth. The information gleaned from the pilot groups resulted in a cross-pollination campaign in which the artists disseminated the information through written, social media and various other creative mediums.



## The Big Dream Energy: Utilizing Radical Imagination as an Intervention for Social Justice

KELSEY DANIELS

Kelsey Daniels' campaign promoted dreamwork as a transformative practice to address social issues, foster community building and generate transformative art. The core of this campaign revolved around a series of three "dream tanks," unique activations designed to support generative dialogue, artistic expression and community building in third spaces, which are locations distinct from people's homes and workplaces. These spaces offered a neutral ground where people could connect comfortably. Each dream tank included setting community norms, ancestral wellness grounding, collective brainstorming on social justice issues, generative artmaking, mutual aid premier and sharing. The campaign culminated in a one-person show, which Daniels presented, exploring themes similar to those in the dream tank, followed by a community talkback. The event also featured vendors and community resource tables.

## Cultivating JOY

THELMA VIRATA DE CASTRO

Thelma Virata de Castro's campaign empowered participants and audiences through writing as they explored their relationship with nature in the lowest quartile California HPI communities of Southeast San Diego and National City. Partnering with San Diego Writers Ink, de Castro led multiple writing workshops in area libraries. Participants reflected upon the power of writing, nature's impact on their lives and how nature embodies transformation. Participants built community, developed sustainable writing practices and read their work in public events. De Castro modeled her practice by workshoping a one-act play based on interviews with urban gardeners and farmers. She commissioned youth from A Reason To Survive (ARTS) to design and build a soundscape and puppets embodying nature's cycles, from seed to seedling, growth and decay, and back to seed. The culminating play, "Where We Lay Our Sorrows Down," was produced by Asian Story Theater and performed in the communities that inspired it. The play's content about death, grief and healing through nature drew inspiration from the community gardeners, neighborhoods, cultures, and experiences. After the performances, the cast, artists and resource groups participated in conversations with the audience to further connect the community with the healing power of nature and the arts.







## Dancing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

MARCOS DURAN

Marcos Duran's campaign focused on educating high school communities about the International Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The initiative included creating an educational dance theater show that highlighted the 30 articles of the UDHR and digital content centered on the theme of dignity. As part of the campaign, dance students at a high school in South Bay engaged in the process for their school production. An hour-long performance was also produced and presented in City Heights, San Diego, in response to the UDHR. This original live performance aimed to promote civic engagement, encourage election participation, and advocate for social justice within San Diego communities.

## Generative Border Notations: A social justice campaign using electronic art to address the digital divide

JUAN MANUEL ESCALANTE

Juan Manuel Escalante's campaign used electronic art to address the digital divide and aimed to promote access and critical use of technology in disadvantaged communities and raise awareness of the digital divide through the lens of artistic exploration in the lowest quartile HPI communities in San Ysidro. The campaign used electronic and digital arts throughout the four workshops to convey contemporary testimonies and experiences of social justice, creative life, immigration and social justice in the borderlands. Secondly, the campaign created spaces to share introductory programming topics for the arts with young and emerging creative individuals and provided space and mentorship. Escalante documented and published the work generated during the campaign in print and digital publications to reach a wider audience.



## Little Saigon Stories: Year of the Dragon and Community Mural Pop-Up during May AAPI Month

THAO FRENCH

Thao French's campaign used public art as a form of social justice by creating visibility and representation for the Vietnamese and immigrant community, highlighting culture through the art of storytelling, photography, food and music. "Little Saigon Stories: Year of the Dragon" is a mural installation and activation that used public art to celebrate the Vietnamese people and culture in the heart of Little Saigon. The unveiling of the mural and community event occurred during Tet or the Lunar New Year, the most prominent Vietnamese holiday celebrated globally and across multiple Asian American Pacific Islander communities. Through an additional community mural pop-up during Islander (AAPI) communities month, families painted their own dragon with the artist and painting apprentice while learning about the significance of the Year of the Dragon. The aim was to amplify the message that these communities exist and encourage people to learn about the culture and celebrate new possibilities together. It addressed how Vietnamese people are perceived by rewriting their narratives and inviting the masses to come and celebrate their culture, holidays and stories together.

## Younify

LISSBETH GARCIA

Lissbeth Garcia's campaign helped raise public awareness and promoted social change among communities impacted by the separation of families by fostering unity through self-discovery and strengthening family and community bonds through art workshops and reflective experiences while building vital bridges to essential services for those affected by family separation. The campaign included a series of workshops designed to foster connection, integration and resilience. Participants engaged in art expressions to explore personal experiences, emotions, aspirations and collaborative artmaking to encourage unity and family bonds, as well as guided storytelling circles to share their stories about family separation and integration. Collaborations with local community organizations and support services encouraged wellness practices and provided resources and information on family reunification and more.





Dignity in Play

SARAH GARCIA

Sarah Garcia’s campaign objective was to expand awareness of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) through creative play and promote human dignity as a starting point for community engagement, civic engagement, social justice and environmental appreciation. Students at Porter Elementary and Balboa Elementary, between the ages of five and 12 years old, engaged in five weeks of clay-based workshops approaching discussions of dignity through foundational understandings of care, respect, empathy and responsibility. Using clay as a practical and metaphorical tool, students investigated and discussed ideas of self-awareness and self-expression, safe and thriving environments, homes and community, relationships and social systems, freedom in learning and creating, and individual and collaborative imagining and problem-solving. Projects centered on explorations of care, respect, collaboration, connection, and empathy while allowing students to approach the material from their perspectives and interests in investigations.



Health n Harmony

MALIK “POTNT CHILD” GLASGOW, DARREON “D-STATS” AND ERIC “EV93” VARGAS

Malik “Potnt Child” Glasgow, Darreon “D-Stats” Staton and Eric “EV93” Vargas’ collaborative campaign utilized a series of interviews, podcasts and songs in the lowest quartile California HPI communities of the Imperial Valley to raise public awareness about positive ways to express social justice experiences through community engagement. A campaign platform was the central hub for all content describing locally based social justice experiences through community engagement opportunities, featuring diverse multimedia content, including videos, articles and infographics. Targeted social media highlighted key social justice issues and encouraged community involvement by sharing local social justice-related stories and experiences. The campaign also included a podcast series featuring interviews with local activists, community organizers and individuals impacted by social justice issues and the development of a short film exploring urgent social justice issues in the Imperial Valley with a spotlight on environmental justice and climate change.



V.I.L.L.A.G.E (Visionaries, Inspiring, Learning, Local, Action, Generational, Empowerment)

AMBER GREEN

Amber Green’s campaign bolstered social engagement in the California HPI communities of Imperial, El Centro and Calexico. The artist believes that enhancing social interaction leads to a stronger sense of community and paves the way for greater social justice. This engagement, in turn, drove transformative change across the board. The foundation of social justice lies in the strength of social interactions. The crux of the campaign revolved around an innovative and immersive social engagement event featuring a mural that served as an interactive portal via QR codes. These held the keys to numerous community oral narratives and histories highlighting the struggles, triumphs and lessons of yesteryears while emphasizing the shared experiences of today’s communities. Accompanying conversations and talks delved deep into the importance of present day community cohesion, drawing from historical and contemporary perspectives. The campaign aspired to be a movement,a catalyst that drove home the importance of community engagement.

[AR]INK & Mobile Creative Center

ERNESTO “PISADO” GONZALEZ

Ernesto “Pisado” Gonzalez’s campaign aimed to bridge the digital divide in impacted communities in South Bay San Diego and Imperial County (San Ysidro, Calexico), where a tenth of minority residents do not have access to a computer. The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected low-income communities, highlighting the digital divide and creating lifelong impacts on learning loss and economic well-being. Through two hands-on workshops that traveled with a mobile art exhibition, the campaign intended to survey community members before/after workshops to gauge qualitative impact. As part of the community outreach component, [AR]INK gave community members access to the latest augmented reality and virtual reality technology in the market and allowed community members to engage with the technology and learn about app development, artificial intelligence, computer coding and the creation of 3D spaces. The campaign also featured an art exhibition in the Mobile Gallery, composed of work submitted by local artists through a call-to-artists for works related to social and environmental justice, civic engagement and new media art. The art exhibition component of the campaign featured artwork that brought awareness to civic engagement and voting, environmental justice about vehicular border crossings, and enhanced the community’s understanding of new technology in the arts.







## A Voice's Home

CIARA DOMINIQUE GUTIERREZ

Ciara Dominique Gutierrez's campaign objective was to document a shifting of power through the means of expression and creativity while building out a community radio station in the disproportionately impacted California HPI communities in Oceanside. Shooting multiple episodes with radio show hosts for the up-and-coming community radio station, Dominique addressed the topics of social justice, climate mitigation, health disparities and civic engagement through the episodes. She arranged multiple screenings of the individual episodes with a final screening of all the episodes combined to bring people together to support community engagement and raise awareness.

## Colors of Inclusion

HAYDEE "BETTY BANGS" JUAREZ

Haydee "Betty Bangs" Juarez's campaign highlighted the history, art and stories of LGBTQ+ BIPOC communities across the region, specifically in Imperial Valley and the South Bay. Centering on the artist's experience as a queer Chicana artist, the campaign engaged QTPOC (Queer TransPeople of Color) through an oral history component in collaboration with Lambda Archives to collect and share the histories of the mentioned community. The campaign included community art-making workshops and a Queer Fashion + Art Show blending elements of Queer art, activism and history of the LGBTQ+ community, featuring local Imperial Valley artists and performers, was presented in collaboration with Imperial Valley LGBTQ+ Resource Center and Lambda Archives of San Diego.



## Romans III

DEBBY KLINE

Debby Kline's campaign sought to energize voters and fight the rising tide of authoritarianism and fascism in American politics, a purpose shared by Alliance San Diego. This campaign was an exercise in civic engagement, focusing on election participation and social justice. The campaign was a collaborative project by Debby Kline and her collaborators Larry Kline and Eleanor Antin, who had recently been poring over the texts of the great Roman historians Sallust, Livy and Tacitus, who witnessed the fall of Rome nearly two thousand years ago, finding dozens of excerpts that could have come from today's (or tomorrow's) news feed. Using these as a springboard, the artists created a script for a short video from the viewpoint of Diana (goddess of the hunt and the moon), Echo (a nymph punished for falling for the wrong man) and Satyr (a mischievous goat/boy), who assess our crumbling society through the words of these ancient historians. Public showings of the work became immersive environments with Roman-like ceramic towers to engage audiences in multiple lowest quartile California HPI communities by creating a call to action, encouraging viewers to vote and recognize the importance of their vote at this pivotal moment.

## Community-Scored Cinema

OMAR LOPEX

Omar Lopex's campaign provided a series of in-depth afterschool workshops for students with limited access to arts enrichment (ages K-12, without economic privilege) focusing on DIY instrument making and cinematic music scoring, leading up to a public performance where participants live-scored cartoons. By concluding the campaign with a chance for participating students to showcase their talents within these newly discovered concepts (in the form of public performance), their efforts and experiences were validated and provided a platform for artistic equity. For the campaign, Lopex was collaborating with Teresa Diaz de Cossio.







## If This World were Mine?

MAXX MOSES

Maxx Moses' campaign aimed to create a series of workshops designed to provoke playful disorientation, self-expression, involuntary collaboration and wordplay. The campaign utilized these interactive, creative practices to shift the mental paradigm while instilling the ideal that "Every Human is an Artist." Documenting the process through participant interviews was a crucial component of the campaign. Simple drawing exercises guided by music, infused with physical limitations, imposed time constraints, were where what the artist calls playful disorientation began. These sessions focused on dislodging the mental mindset of programmed responses, expectations and predetermined outcomes. The second phase started with an introduction to the artist and his experiences. Then, participants explored self-expression through dialogue and art-making. The third phase integrated self-expression and playful disorientation into an involuntary collaboration to engage with each other's art, aiming to inspire individualism, detachment and cooperation. Guest artists supported the workshops. This campaign demonstrated the transformative power of the hearts and minds of individuals through the creative process while looking at how these processes foster a deeper level of understanding, connection and empowerment on an individual and communal level.

## The Lift Every Voice: Venerating Seniors and Empowering Our Next Generation of Activists through Art, Creative Writing and Storytelling

JOHNNIERENEE NELSON

Johnnierenee Nelson's campaign was charged with mitigating the underrepresentation of the body of work of marginalized community members by amplifying their voices. The campaign advanced literary social justice through creative writing workshops, followed by exhibiting, publishing and sharing the voices of youths and seniors. The campaign involved partnering with schools to conduct multiple creative writing/storytelling classroom workshops and collaborating with the organization A Reason To Survive (ARTS) at open house events to exhibit poetry broadsides and to disseminate bookmarks and poetry postcards to attendees. Additionally, the campaign engaged people from lowest quartile communities at senior and community sites through creative writing residencies and poetry readings. The campaign culminated with a published anthology.



## Better to Light a Candle, Than to Curse the Darkness

SERGIO "TAKITO" OJEDA

Sergio "Takito" Ojeda's campaign educated and raised awareness on critical local issues by beautifying the lowest quartile California HPI communities in Imperial County through mural-making. Imperial Valley is struggling with disparities; it is among the hardest-hit communities regarding public health, water and energy conservation, and social justice. The campaign murals focused on general and mental health to combat stigma and negative narratives in the community. In particular, murals involved themes such as public health disparities and their devastating consequences, pollution impacts, the infamous Salton Sea and celebrating linguistic diversity and agricultural workers. Through the campaign, the artist intended to light the candle of hope and curiosity by focusing on the optimism that can and will provide for impacted communities.

## I AM SAN DIEGO

CAT CHIU PHILLIPS

Cat Chiu Phillips' campaign brought awareness to San Diego's diverse population while offering opportunities for visibility and presence for today's underrepresented youth. The campaign is a citywide art installation that transformed 30 San Diego Metropolitan Transit System transit bus shelters into vibrant galleries showcasing the creative works of San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) students. This also served as a platform for social awareness, emphasizing the power of representation and visibility in public spaces. This campaign advocated for equity in the arts by transforming transit shelters into vibrant galleries, ensuring that the city recognizes and celebrates diverse narratives and cultural identities. Through their digital doodles, students asserted their presence, fostering a dialogue about belonging, inclusion and the role of civic engagement in shaping a more just and connected community. The artist collaborated with the SDUSD UTK-12 Visual Arts Teachers and students, which was an opportunity to celebrate the community, highlighting San Diego's youth through public art.







**Dear City of Oceanside**

DINAH POELLNITZ

Dinah Poellnitz’s campaign objective was an in-community art practice project with a focus on social justice and engagement to create a public safety program that is an inclusive and empowering platform for artistic expression that challenges traditional art spaces to be a solution for public safety and workforce skills. The campaign facilitated conversations about pressing social justice and civic issues through exhibitions, workshops, discussions and collaborative projects. Raising awareness and promoting informed dialogue inspired individuals to become active agents of change and create an environment where artists from diverse backgrounds could collaborate and co-create art that reflected the complex realities of their communities. By fostering a collaborative environment that bridged the gap between artists, communities, social justice and civic causes in communities within Oceanside, the campaign’s ultimate goal was to drive tangible and lasting social impact and contribute to a more just and equitable society, evolving into an ongoing advocacy collective for the arts, fostering a civically engaged artist community in Oceanside.

**Pacific Islander Education and Empowerment through the Arts**

OLIVIA QUINTANILLA

Olivia Quintanilla’s campaign advanced voter awareness, education, engagement, empowerment and inclusive participation through ethnic studies and the arts in the lowest quartile California HPI communities across San Diego County, including Oceanside. The campaign strategy included relationship building and research by inviting Pacific Islander people and election education stakeholders to meet and exchange knowledge, ideas and needs at multiple community workshops. Quintanilla collaborated with Pacific Island artists and educators to create and design promotional materials and short video to promote voter awareness and engagement.



**Cuéntame**

YVETTE ROMAN AND NATALIA VENTURA

Yvette Roman and natalia ventura’s collaborative campaign strengthened borderland consciousness and ancestral wisdom through intergenerational relationship-building, storytelling and art-making in San Ysidro. The campaign centered on building intergenerational relationships in the local transborder community. In collaboration with young regional artists, the artists engaged with elders living in senior housing through art workshops and storytelling sessions, providing a platform for the elders to preserve their memories and share their wisdom. The whole campaign was preserved through a podcast series and unique artwork designed by each participating artist, creating an immersive archive of local stories about migration, family, love, identity, ancestry and culture. It was shared with the community through an exhibition and an accompanying catalog. Connecting these two populations and generations produced a meaningful cultural exchange that strengthened wisdom and collective borderland consciousness. It also enhanced a communal vision for the future of the San Diego border community, offering a model for artistic archiving that brings generational healing.

**The PomPom Project**

KATIE RUIZ

Katie Ruiz’s campaign supported social justice and engagement by hosting free pom-pom-making classes with a lesson on Craftivism to bring people together to engage in the creative process and make yarn pom-poms for larger art installations. The pom-pom workshops took place at various San Diego locations. The free pom-pom classes had a “Craftivist” theme and lessons built into the program. Craftivism is a way to create social change through art. Community participants learned about craftivism and how the artist uses it to share about causes, inspiring them to express their passion and work collaboratively on a community art installation. The artwork is a living example of a community working together for a common good. The experience of coming together with one’s hands and working toward a shared goal promotes investment and pride in the community and shared space. Participants learned about Craftivism and using craft as a tool for social change. They engaged in communal art-making and contributed to shared artwork representing collective action for the greater good. The campaign culminated with three colorful installations.







## Town Hall

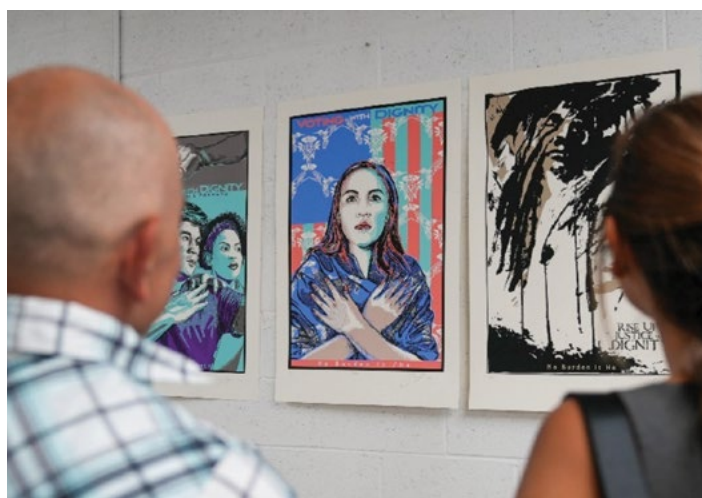
ZAQUIA MAHLER SALINAS

Zaquia Mahler Salinas' campaign objective was gathering, reflecting, amplifying, documenting and holding individual stories within the community that speak to the Far South/Border North focus areas. The goal was to demonstrate the power of personal and collective narratives and their role in supporting a healthier dance ecology in San Diego. The campaign aimed to collect stories, bring people together and gather resources through a three-part process. This included collecting and processing stories, hosting a Town Hall event that featured sharing, reflection, dialogue, movement and action plan development, followed by an action and accountability phase. This approach sought to illuminate and archive the stories of local movement artists, dancers, choreographers, administrators and community members. It aimed to identify the triumphs and challenges of the current local dance ecology and design a path forward to activate and interconnect the community. Ultimately, the campaign intended to engage and collaborate with the community to revive interest in developing the local dance ecology.

## No Burden is He/We/They/She; Start with Dignity

ANTHONY SIGALA

Anthony Sigala's campaign raised awareness, empathy, solidarity and social justice opportunities in California HPI communities such as Brawley, El Centro, Calexico, Chula Vista, National City and Logan Heights through creating and illustrating a series of seven posters, each digitally printed as a limited-edition serigraph. Each image included typography and imagery to reflect the themes of justice, housing, voting, immigration and civic engagement. The visuals symbolized human dignity, community responsibility to help one another in solidarity and empathy and to treat each other as part of a community. Through the art and campaign, people rediscovered hope, renewal, compassion and inspiration. For Far South/Border North, Sigala collaborated with Alliance San Diego.



## Roots of Resilience: Confronting Diabetes in Native American Communities

RUTH-ANN THORN

Ruth-Ann Thorn's campaign educated the public on how diabetes came to be one of the number one killers of Native Americans and how it's easily preventable. The core campaign component involved the development of a short documentary film on the disproportionate impact of diabetes on Native Americans to raise awareness and engage the target audience effectively. Through the presentation of in-depth interviews, personal stories and statistical data to shed light on the issue, the film explored the historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors contributing to the higher prevalence of diabetes among Native Americans. It highlighted the experiences of individuals and communities affected by the disease, their challenges and potential solutions. Moreover, it emphasized the importance of understanding cultural context and addressing systemic inequalities. In addition to the film, the campaign included disseminating educational materials for further information and actionable steps for viewers to get involved and support the cause.



## Olongapo Disco Presents Dreaming Joy Across the Diaspora

ANGELICA "BABAY L. ANGLES" TOLENTINO

Angelica "Babay L. Angles" Tolentino's campaign transmuted intergenerational trauma into collective wellness and joy in the lowest quartile California HPI communities of Southeast San Diego and National City. The campaign centered on building a community procession to create hope, joy, imagination and cross-cultural solidarity within the communities and beyond. Intergenerational workshops explored myths and creatures used within the diaspora to solve community problems, ultimately constructing a creature and choreographing its movements within a four-block distance. Engagement included a community clean day and acknowledgment community land listening day before the culminating performance procession ritual. Local organizations were invited to participate and showcase their ancestral or new joy technology in the communal procession. Through public workshops, local artists, activists and community members created a community sculpture/creature that transmutes intergenerational grief into healing and joy. The campaign created multiple avenues for healing in the community by providing wellness-centered art education and connection. It empowered residents to see themselves as knowledge holders as they centered their ancestral joy archives and future dreams.



## Imperial Valley Mariachi Academy

CARLOS URIBE

Carlos Uribe's campaign harnessed the power of mariachi music as a dynamic tool for raising awareness of social justice while celebrating its history within the Mexican culture. Through the campaign, the artist organized mariachi workshops for youth, creating a platform to engage with this rich cultural tradition and explore its impact on social justice. Mariachi music is not just about melodies and rhythms; it has been a driving force behind positive social change. By incorporating these workshops, the campaign highlighted its multifaceted role in pursuing social justice. These workshops served as a vital means of cultural preservation and identity, allowing young people to connect with the Mexican culture in the disproportionately impacted California HPI communities of Brawley, Imperial, El Centro and Calexico.



## La Carpa De La Frontera, Stories of the Invisible

SAMUEL VALDEZ

Samuel Valdez's campaign wrote community stories reflecting the hardships of the most vulnerable people in the San Diego border region. These hardships focused on issues such as health, labor, immigration and the border. The stories reflecting these issues were created and written by interviewing community members through specific social gatherings and town hall events organized by Valdez. These events included special performances leading to feedback at the end, community gatherings creating a focused dialogue addressing the issues, and offering creative workshops where conversations occurred through art-making. The information gathered was transcribed into scripted form and presented as live performances in front of the same communities. The audience communicated openly with the performers during the performances by commenting on what they saw. At the end, the audience participated in talkbacks. The campaign brought hope and healing to the people who need it the most, demonstrating that there are people who care about the prevalent issues communities are facing and their well-being.

## Toxic Paradise

PAUL VALDIVIA

Paul Valdivia's campaign highlighted the ongoing ecological issues at the Salton Sea and its impact on both the environment and the residents of Imperial County. The campaign also encouraged residents to engage in meaningful discussions about the Salton Sea's future and to make informed choices when voting for representatives in the lowest quartile California HPI communities of Imperial County. Central to the campaign was a documentary delving into Imperial County's heart. This film wasn't merely a visual representation; it was a heartfelt exploration of the community's challenges, dreams and aspirations. The campaign addressed environmental issues, how to mitigate their detrimental effects and social issues that arise in the face of these environmental issues. Through in-depth interviews, personal stories and factual data, the campaign wove a narrative that captured the essence of the county's spirit. The artist organized social media and a community screening event to enhance the documentary's reach.



## BlaQspace: Black Queer Womxn Claiming Space

MIKI VALE

Miki Vale's campaign supported social justice and community engagement objectives focusing on Black queer, female-identifying community members claiming space in the lowest quartile California HPI communities of Southeastern San Diego. In a 10-week playwriting workshop, participants explored the theme of claiming space and joined community play-writing activities. The campaign culminated with a two-part public reading series at Libelula Books. In this queer-owned bookstore, professional actors read and performed the workshop participants' plays, followed by a moderated community talkback centered on the theme of Black queer womxn claiming space in San Diego and the dissemination of a selection of the plays through radio.



## Homefront Expressions: Unveiling Humanity through Art

JORDAN VERDIN

Jordan Verdin’s campaign elevated people’s awareness and empowered them to advocate for change within their communities. It mainly focused on strengthening support for individuals experiencing homelessness while increasing the community’s social consciousness. This objective focused on three impactful public interventions featuring modular displays strategically placed in prominent public spaces in the lowest quartile California HPI communities in Escondido, Vista and Oceanside. These displays artfully presented photographs and personal stories of individuals experiencing homelessness, fostering a profound connection between the audience and the subjects.



## The Last Black Man in Barrio Logan

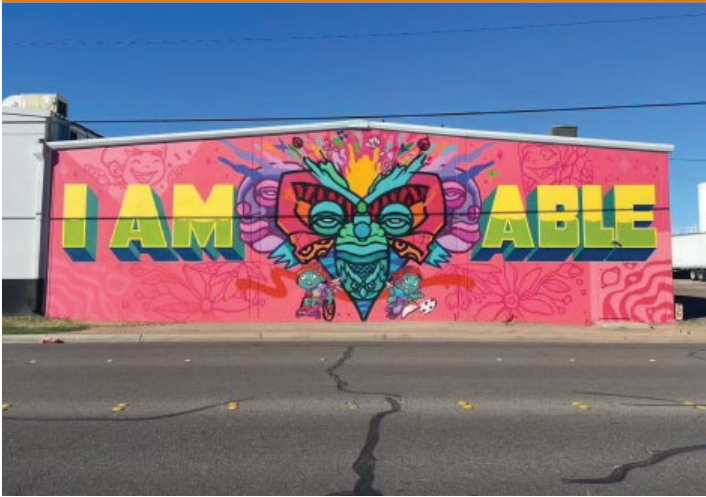
RAMEL WALLACE

Ramel Wallace’s campaign exposed people to an exhibition titled The Last Black Man in Barrio Logan, curated collaboratively by Ramel Wallace in collaboration with David Colon, within the lowest quartile California HPI communities in Barrio Logan and South Bay. The South Bay region exemplifies the influence of cross-border dynamics, with 120,000 people traversing the border and the combined effects impacting 7.1 million individuals in Tijuana and San Diego. It’s where the far south and the northern border converge significantly, and this exhibit served as one of those poignant intersections. This thin line that intersects community narratives is one marked by displacement and asylum-seeking. The campaign included community events, workshops and educational programs to foster connections and leverage digital platforms to reach a broader online audience. Engaging multimedia content featured video interviews, and the campaign incorporated the voices of residents, artists and activists who have been instrumental in shaping the cultural identity of Barrio Logan. Their personal stories and testimonials added authenticity to the campaign within the broader context of Barrio Logan’s rich history rolling into the South Bay, its current challenges and the significance of cultural preservation. It acknowledged the area’s environmental and socioeconomic dynamics and its role as a cultural hub.

## I Am Able

BEST S.T.E.P. FORWARD

Best S.T.E.P. Forward’s (Calipatria Police Activities League Inc.) campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/cultural practitioner Jacqueline B Riddell and supporting artists/practitioners Etilberto Aguilar and Alex Tamayo, targeted the special needs community to empower, uplift and support a community often forgotten and excluded. Through mural-making, the objective was to bring light to the art of need and support by being the voice of those who have gone unheard for being born with a disability. Inspire, support and encourage that with community support, understanding, and inclusivity, the special needs community served is Able and can positively impact when given a platform to shine. The mural content focused primarily on the campaign’s mission of inclusion and triumph while dispelling the stigma of limits placed on individuals with unique needs, disabilities or any physical/mental condition or hardship. The mural achieved this objective by displaying the statement, “I AM ABLE,” in large, bold letters. Accompanying this powerful statement was an ensemble of visual elements, clearly identifiable and creatively hidden, to have onlookers discover new aspects with every glance. Ultimately, the cornucopia of visuals tied in the campaign’s theme, Best S.T.E.P Forward’s program objectives and activities, and several distinctly local visuals, resulting in a mural to bring awareness to all.





# The Environmental Justice and the Chicano Movement: Barrio Graphic Arts activating Revolution

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COALITION

Environmental Health Coalition's campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Sarah Bella Mondragon and supporting artists/practitioners Mario Acevedo Torero, Nayeli Gutierrez, Kim Phillips-Pea, Semilla Luna, Daniel Dentlock, Angeles Luis Anahuac Sandez, San Diego Writers, Pablo Aztlan, Carmen Kahlo, Samantha Chavez, Herbert Siguenza, Carlos Callejom, Anna Siqueros, Rupert Garcia and Strive Silkscreen, empowered local citizens, residents and community members to adopt a new sense of personal agency, attitudes, consciousness and perspectives on what it means to be a social justice advocate fighting for the health and healthy being of neighborhood environments. This entailed learning about the struggles of local and regional artist/activists past and present of Chicano Graphic and Mural Arts movements 1960-present, and residents designing their posters, mural concepts, t-shirts, calendars, hats and chocolate candy wrappers. The campaign involved robust programming, beginning with a living history documentation of local activists for poster imagery and gatherings for community input to inform mural concepts. Subsequent cloth painting sessions provided opportunities to listen to activists share their stories, and for community workshops to explore printing on paper, cloth and clothing, as well as practical herbalism and cacao. The campaign culminated with a protest art exhibition and fashion show exhibition with participants' art pieces in shirts, clothing, jeans, hats and posters.



## Indigenous Voices, the Decolonization Movement

IMPERIAL VALLEY DESERT MUSEUM SOCIETY

Imperial Valley Desert Museum Society's campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/cultural practitioner Victor Pardo and supporting artists/practitioners Melissa Govea, River Garza and Amy Redfeather, increased awareness of issues facing Indigenous communities in the Imperial Valley, cultivated a sense of community and encouraged pride and ownership. The multichannel approach supported messaging to promote representation, empowerment, cultural preservation, land rights recognition, education and dialogue. Through collaboration with Indigenous artists and cultural practitioners, the various events and programming provided insights into their backgrounds, artistic journeys and cultural influences, highlighting the importance of art in addressing significant issues within Indigenous communities. The campaign focused on the lowest quartile California HPI communities of the Imperial Valley tribal communities.

## Kumeyaay Cultural and Humanities Series

KUMEYAAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Kumeyaay Community College's campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Stanley Rodriguez and supporting artist/practitioner Martha Rodriguez, brought awareness to the rich diversity of language, culture and history of the Kumeyaay Nation to the broader community, focusing on the lowest quartile California HPI communities of Native Nations, including La Posta, Santa Ysabel and Mesa Grande. The campaign consisted of monthly events at various locations that celebrated the rich cultural history, traditional knowledge and language of the Kumeyaay Nation. Activities by Kumeyaay artists and cultural practitioners highlighted dance, song, storytelling, art and Kumeyaay language preservation, changing monthly with the season. Quarterly activities focused on the Solstice or Equinox, an essential feature of Kumeyaay cosmology.



## Lens of Liberation

OUTSIDE THE LENS

Outside the Lens' campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Alexandra Uzarraga and supporting artists/practitioners Magdalena Ramirez, Lorain K. Rihan, Ines Nefzi, Raquel Esquivias and Youth Brigade Artists, supported the growth and self-determination of Chicanx youth by equipping them to take ownership of the curriculum of the campaign, ensuring it was representative of their culture, lived experiences and their fight for liberation and equity. Through workshops focused on various art forms, youth participants developed a deeper understanding of their own voices and the power of art to spark meaningful dialogue and impact positive change. The multimedia campaign offered diverse courses and events, each tailored to engage youth in exploring their cultural identity and heritage, and it engaged the community through specific media arts, including painting and mixed media exploring themes of environmental justice and gentrification, filmmaking supporting youth activism, photography evoking themes of Chicanismo and printmaking and social justice. The campaign's primary objective was to raise awareness among the broader community about current topics related to Chicanx youth, particularly in the lowest quartile California HPI communities in Barrio Logan. The work of youth participants served as a testament to the importance of uplifting young people's voices and preserving the Chicano community's cultural legacy.





Pioneering Justice

PIONEERS' MUSEUM

Pioneers’ Museum’s (Imperial County Historical Society) campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Marcie Landeros and supporting artists/practitioners Elizabeth Ibarra, Susana Martinez, Alyssa Montes, Alejandra Matus, Esteban Ojedam, Nissim Ouzan and Annaka Smith, promoted social justice and built community pride by showcasing the stories of influential figures from Imperial County’s past in the lowest quartile California HPI communities of Imperial, El Centro, Brawley and Holtville. Through research and fact-gathering, the lead and collaborating artists identified historical figures, drafted visual elements, and they fabricated plans to create eight quilts. During events at the museum and throughout the county, the campaign engaged people at informational booths to share more about the Pioneering Justice project, in-progress work on the quilts and a hands-on activity. Artists and museum educators developed curriculum materials to support the campaign in Imperial, El Centro, Brawley and Holtville public schools. Alongside the education work, the campaign conducted classroom visits to promote social justice and share more about the campaign, including in-progress quilts, short lessons on the social justice figures highlighted in the quilts and a hands-on activity. Additionally, free public activities were available in the summer at the museum.



Artists Everywhere

PLAYWRIGHTS PROJECT

Playwrights Project’s campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Chris Boyd, aimed to raise public awareness that there are formerly incarcerated people - now returned citizens - among them who are ready and capable of making an artistic contribution to the community. Through short plays transformed into short films and exhibited as an art installation, these returned citizen writers explored topics of social justice and community engagement to bring their own experiences as artists into the consciousness of their communities. The primary outcome of the campaign was a video art installation for exhibition in multiple spaces and galleries, showcasing all five unique films in a unique setting. Social events included talkbacks, discussions and in-person meetings between the formerly incarcerated artists who crafted the project and the general public of the target communities. Leading up to the installation event, social media and other marketing campaigns in the San Diego area promoted the campaign, shared behind-the-scenes images of the making-of process of the film production, and called people to the in-person events. The campaign raised awareness of the artistic contributions of formerly incarcerated people in the lowest quartile California HPI communities in San Diego.



SD Black Arts + Culture District Campaign for Community Engagement / Activating the San Diego Black Arts and Culture District through a Celebration of African American Music

SAN DIEGO AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM OF FINE ART

San Diego African American Museum of Fine Art’s campaign, in collaboration with lead artists/practitioners Kamau Kenyatta and Rose Sanchez, highlighted Blacks’ contributions to arts and culture in San Diego. The San Diego Black Arts + Culture District is a recently designated cultural district created to cultivate appreciation and growth of Black Arts + Culture. With the district as the backdrop, the campaign implemented a series of activities employing emerging and established artists who ignited interest in the district with a goal of long-term involvement in the lowest quartile communities in the surrounding areas. Activities included engaging the poetry and spoken word community with the district and uplifting individuals by supporting cultural expressions that are uniquely African American. Additional activities included introducing Black filmmakers to the district and surrounding communities and a music festival featuring performances from the Black Diaspora with a diverse lineup of performers. Arts and culture are among the most powerful tools to share pro-Blackness representations, messages and stories, and they are valuable tools for engaging the community around social equity topics and supporting transformative learning. The campaign messaging supported a vibrant district and the need for people to become more involved in this impactf–ul addition to the community.



Food, Water & Energy Nexus in the Imperial Valley

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUNDATION

San Diego State University Research Foundation on behalf of Imperial Valley Campus’ campaign, in collaboration with lead artists/practitioners Luis G. Hernandez and Jesus Alfonso Corral with supporting artists/practitioners Kimberly Alfaro Massey, Esteban Ojeda and Nissim Ouzan, had the objective of educating, engaging, increasing awareness, and inspire positive change and action in social justice on food, water and energy in the lowest quartile California HPI agricultural and border communities of Calexico, El Centro and Brawley. This multidisciplinary public awareness campaign consisted of thought-provoking and emotionally resonant visual and artistic content in photographs, videos, mosaic portable murals, film, a food pantry, multimedia installations and handmade and digital illustrations in the public space. In addition, the San Diego State University - Imperial Valley Stepling Art Gallery hosted a one-month exhibition with a reception open to the community. Concurrently, workshops imparted by a food pantry and a one-day seminar co-organized with the San Diego State University - Imperial Valley Sustainable Energy Center facilitated dialogue, educated the public, and encouraged active participation and engagement. The intent was to foster a connection between San Diego State University - Imperial Valley and Imperial County concerning critical well-being and sustainability issues and community engagement to captivate and engage audiences emotionally, increasing awareness, meaningful action and positive change.



Way Outside the Lines Present Destination Joy!

THE URBAN COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

The Urban Collaborative Project’s campaign, in collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Khalil Bleux and supporting artists/ practitioners Janice Luna Reynoso, Kim Philips-Pea and Jasmine Garcia, inspired the use of public transportation in low-income communities, which supported the goals of climate mitigation, civic engagement, social justice, community engagement, and health and well-being in the lowest quartile California HPI communities in Southeast San Diego, Chula Vista, National City and San Ysidro. It was a beautiful exchange and fusion of health and the arts, connected by our region’s public transportation. Through multiple platforms of creative engagement between local artists, trolley commuters and the associated neighborhoods, the campaign centered around MTS’s trolley system. It embraced the ideals of sustainable transportation, climate mitigation and artistic excellence. The campaign engaged and organized local partners within each community to identify artists, musicians and poets to focus on spreading public awareness of their community’s realities that would reach a global audience. Through this collaboration, the campaign harnessed art’s transformative power and shaped a more inclusive, equitable and resilient future centered around civic engagement, health disparity elimination and environmental justice. The vision for Way Outside the Lines is global, and 2024’s campaign introduced the value of communities exchanging art and ideas as essential to the health and well-being of the world.



Somos La Voz: A Celebration of Chicano and Mexican Youth Activism, Art, and Cultural Legacy in San Diego

VIA INTERNATIONAL

Via International’s campaign, in collaboration with lead artists/practitioners Lucas Cruz and Patricia Cruz with supporting artists/practitioners Jorge Castillo Vincent Quitugua, Giovanni Cerda, Rigo Reyes, Juan Carlos Lozano, Joni Nuñez, Maira Meza and Natalia Ventura provided free social justice and art classes to Chicano and Mexican American youth in San Diego and celebrated the unique cultural and artistic legacy of Chicanos and Mexicans through free pop-up events open to the public in the lowest quartile California HPI communities of Logan Heights. Through the deep-dive workshops taught by local Chicano and Mexican teaching artists, the youth connected with their unique cultural roots and identity and had the opportunity to present their art to the public through the pop-up events showcasing the art of participating youth.



Photo: Vito di Stefano





# ART (AND SYSTEMS-LEVEL CHANGE) IN ACTION

342 Impacts Across 20 Sectors by Far South/Border North Campaigns

Far South/Border North campaigns elevated important cross-sector work and creativity as core drivers of how all communities can thrive.

- ART
  - FILM AND MEDIA
  - FINANCIAL LITERACY
  - HEALTH AND WELLNESS
  - HOMELESS
  - LITERARY
  - CONSTRUCTION
  - DETENTION FACILITIES
  - RETAIL TRADE
  - ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES
  - TRANSPORTATION
- ENERGY
  - MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS
  - HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE
  - ENVIRONMENT
  - INFORMATION
  - MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
  - EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
  - EMERGENCY SERVICES
  - ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

## SHIFTS IN ATTITUDE AND READINESS OF INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

Artists and cultural practitioners utilized their creativity to design and implement public awareness campaigns that led to changes in attitudes and readiness among individuals and communities. The outcomes reported from these campaigns include increased civic engagement, improved mental and physical health and positive shifts in attitudes toward addressing challenges within specific communities.

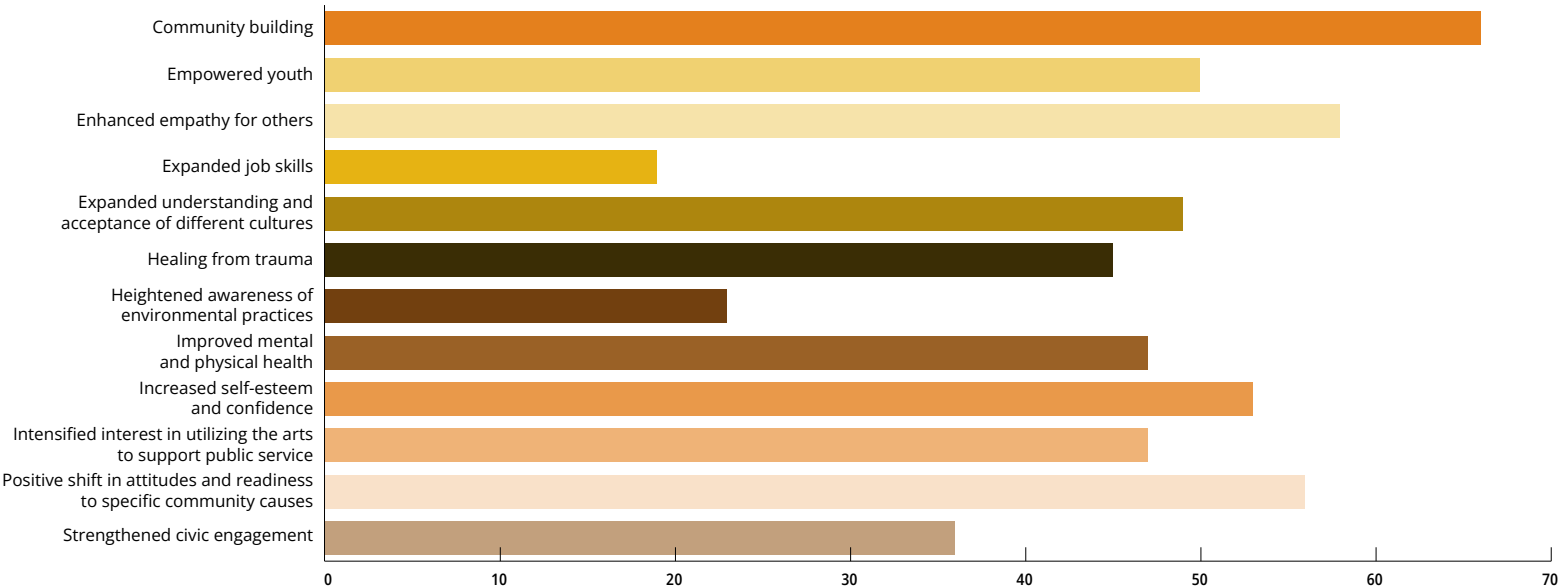
### Community Impacts Observed Through Campaigns

Aligned with the Far South/Border North goals of raising awareness about public health, civic engagement, climate issues and social justice, the following 550 community impacts were observed by grantees through their campaign engagement:

“There is now a heightened awareness and openness toward mindfulness practices, which was less prevalent before. I’m seeing community members engaging in conversations about mental health and showing a willingness to do these practices that can help alleviate stress and promote well-being. Even if it’s something as simple as being present and taking a breath. This growing readiness to embrace mindfulness indicates a positive shift toward addressing and mitigating the mental health challenges intensified by the pandemic.”

- Angel Esperanza, Artist

Community Impacts By the Numbers





Likelihood of the targeted communities to take action or adjust their behavior regarding campaign focus.

	Very Likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Before Campaign	17.7%	30.3%	31.4%	17.7%	2.9%
After Campaign	66.9%	30.9%	1.7%	0.6%	0.0%

Grantees observed a significant positive change in the attitudes and willingness of community members to engage in healthy behaviors or participate in activities related to the program’s four goals. Notably, before the campaigns, only 17.7% of the targeted communities were very likely to take action or change their behavior regarding the primary focus. After the campaigns, this percentage increased dramatically to 66.9%, indicating a strong likelihood of action or behavioral adjustments in these communities.



“One of the most remarkable outcomes of “Pásale Pásale” was awakening civic consciousness among participants and audiences. Community surveys revealed a notable increase in the willingness of residents to engage in civic actions. A participant shared, The song that described prior protests in San Diego was deeply moving and made me tear up.’ The play made them realize the importance of being involved in my community. This statement encapsulates the shift in mindset from passive observation to active participation.”

- Maria Patrice Amon, Artist



“I noticed a significant shift in how people engaged with environmental topics. Participants, who might have previously viewed environmental justice as a distant or abstract concept, began to relate more personally to the issues presented. The AR technology made the problems more tangible and immediate, which fostered a deeper understanding and a stronger emotional connection. The feedback and conversations I had with community members reflected a growing readiness to address and engage with environmental justice issues in their own lives and communities.”

- Ernesto Gonzalez, Artist



# AMPLIFYING COMMUNITY VOICES AND PERSPECTIVES

Grantees actively collected essential insights from local communities and participants involved in campaign activities. This initiative aimed to deepen understanding of the changes in awareness surrounding the campaign’s goals and objectives. Feedback from respondents revealed a significant rise in their awareness of issues linked to the program goals, coupled with an increased readiness to engage and take action directly influenced by the campaigns.

## Social Justice

“I walked by these streets my whole life, but today, for the first time, I felt like I truly saw the people who live here. Before, I would try not to look at people on the street, but now, after this, I will make an active effort to look at people and pay more attention to what’s going on at City Hall.”

– Community participant in the Homefront Expressions: Unveiling Humanity through Art campaign

## Civic Engagement

“I think it’s great that they’re bringing awareness, that we have a mural and activities for the community to be a part of something that is so important such as voting. It brings awareness to a very just cause. I think everyone should be aware of the importance of voting. I think that young people should be very excited to be in the know-how and take part in activities such as these. Parents, encourage your children and talk about the voting process and how important it is to assert your rights.”

– Community participant in the VIVA Maze Civic Engagement Arts Project campaign

## Social Justice

“Participating in the ‘Dear City of Oceanside’ campaign was a transformative experience for me as a local artist and resident. This campaign didn’t just advocate for public art funding; it brought our community together in a way I’ve never seen before. The town halls were more than meetings—they were spaces where our voices were heard and valued. I felt empowered to speak up about the need for arts in our city and was amazed to see how our collective efforts influenced the city council to increase the art budget. This campaign made me realize the power of community and the impact we can have when we come together for a common cause. Thanks to this movement, I’m more committed than ever to supporting and contributing to the arts in Oceanside.”

– Community participant in Dear City of Oceanside campaign

## Climate

“The mural is of a superlative quality, and it inspires us to connect ourselves more with our local communities and our own bodies. It empowers us to visible the struggles, problems on our daily life and to be able to achieve important changes in the face of social and environmental injustices.”

– Community participant in the “Haawka!” May the Fire in Your Heart Burn Bright! campaign

“El mural es de una calidad superlativa y nos inspira a conectarnos más con las comunidades locales y nuestros propios cuerpos. Mostrar los testimonios en el mural nos empodera hacia querer visibilizar más las luchas, los problemas cotidianos, y poder lograr cambios importantes frente a las injusticias sociales y ambientales.”

## Public Health

“The thing that surprised me the most was just how much our Valley was struggling with food insecurity. I grew up in a food insecure home; however, it always seemed like my neighbors and kids I went to school with could afford the good stuff. I had a small bias in thinking that there weren’t too many food-insecure families. As sad as it was, learning about Food Security/Insecurity and its impact on individuals and communities such as Imperial Valley is what was most significant to me. My own experiences definitely helped my experience with this. It was fun working with my partners and planning out the zine project and seeing how my research differed from theirs. I liked seeing how it all came together in the end. It really impacted me knowing that there were other food-insecure individuals in the class, it made me feel not so alone.”

– Community Participant in the Food, Water & Energy Nexus in the Imperial Valley campaign



“Dedicating so much time and effort to such a campaign felt next to impossible in such a disinvested county as Imperial, where most of us live paycheck to paycheck and a lack of basic resources. Being part of a group of artists funded by a statewide program gave me the confidence and credibility to work with different city governments when it came to navigating permissions and public art policies around Imperial County.”

- Sergio “Takito” Ojeda, Artist

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTFUL ACTIONS

Far South/Border North artists, cultural practitioners and organizations stand out for their remarkable contributions. The program’s transformative efforts, innovative creativity, and significant outcomes from each campaign powerfully demonstrate the role of arts and culture in driving meaningful change. These outcomes are evident during the program’s activity period and pave the way for unlocking future potential. Examples include:

### Transformative and Unexpected Outcomes

- The Far South/Border North program has made a remarkable impact by promoting creativity-based public awareness and driving cross-sector engagement and change. This initiative has ushered in a transformative era for both counties, resulting in the most significant direct investment in bi-county artists and cultural practitioners ever seen.
- Grantees have reported that the Far South/Border North program has created invaluable networking opportunities and exchanges for artists, cultural practitioners and organizations in San Diego and Imperial counties.
- Many of the grantees have reported positive outcomes stemming from this program, including the establishment of new arts and culture infrastructure in San Diego County and Imperial County. This initiative has brought together various artists, cultural practitioners, organizations, government agencies and partners to collaboratively devise solutions and

programs aimed at addressing shared disparities, thereby initiating comprehensive efforts to tackle inequality across the region

- The majority of grantees—86% of whom were first-time recipients of state funds—reported feeling a strong sense of purpose and fulfillment from their funding. This support enabled them to fully engage in their artistic and cultural practices and make meaningful contributions to their communities. As a result, there is now a more confident and connected arts workforce in the Far South Region.
- Numerous grant recipients expressed that this funding allowed them to broaden their creative practices into new media, positively alter their paths as artists and cultural practitioners and assume the role of facilitators for the first time.
- Several grantees have developed a robust business infrastructure for their practices, and one grantee successfully established a nonprofit organization.
- Many grantees reported that, as a result of the funding, they could pay artists a livable wage for their involvement and expand the scale and impact of their work.
- Several grantees have reported that their campaigns created new opportunities for them to host solo exhibitions and participate in group exhibitions at local galleries and spaces during the grant period. These experiences are recognized as significant milestones in their artistic development.
- Many grantees shared heartfelt stories about how their campaigns have opened new opportunities for individuals and communities that often feel excluded and unrepresented. They expressed a deep sense of recognition and value, enabling them to embrace their identities without fear or hesitation.
- Strategic timing played a crucial role in many of the campaigns. For example, through the efforts of one grantee, policy recommendations were presented to the City of Oceanside to establish a Civic Art Fund within the annual Measure X allocation, which focuses on public safety and improving public infrastructure. This initiative proposed setting aside 1% of the yearly allocation for civic art, creating a sustainable and predictable fund dedicated to beautification and public inspiration related to the City’s municipal infrastructure. Additionally, civic engagement contributed to an increase in the City of Oceanside’s annual art budget.
- Several social impact hubs for the Far South/Border North program surpassed their expected roles by hosting grant activity events. For example, the Imperial Valley Food Bank organized an Art Fair at the Fair to celebrate local artists involved in the program. This event showcased their artwork in a weekend exhibition and helped connect the communities of Imperial County.

- Grantees maximized their resources, often going above and beyond their original campaign scope by seeking matching funds and engaging community volunteers, driving an even more significant impact.
- Unexpected outcomes from campaigns also came through active campaign engagement; for example, through the efforts of a grantee, San Diego’s inaugural Chamorro Language Immersion Program secured funding and the program’s housing at California State University San Marcos.
- Multiple grantees have indicated that the funding they received enabled them to improve mentorship programs and offer stipends to students who participated.
- Opportunity youth participating in The David’s Harp Foundation Biz Pod Program have developed essential skills in entrepreneurship, content creation and video production, empowering them to succeed in the creative economy. They have successfully produced Far South/Border North videos, enhancing their work portfolios.



“The Far South/Border North grant in Imperial County has been transformational for the arts community here and an overwhelming force for good. This community faces many barriers for arts and arts education access due to socioeconomic factors. To be able to participate in this grant project and witness the transformation of attitudes towards pride in our local history has been an inspiring experience for our institution and has forever changed our approach to our community programs and educational curriculum.”

- Pioneers’ Museum

“This partnership among philanthropy, public agencies, nonprofits and individuals gives us a glimpse into what an ecosystem approach looks like. By building relationships that combine the experience and initiative of communities with the capacity and resources of larger institutions, we see a growth in funding for our region in a way that respects and builds on the strengths of the people who live and work here.”

- Megan Thomas, Catalyst of San Diego & Imperial Counties



“I would like to emphasize the critical importance of grants like the Far South/Border North grant that bridge the social needs of the most vulnerable local populations with platforms that provide visibility and meaningful connections. These grants empower artists, especially those from underrepresented communities, to create impactful work that resonates with and uplifts the voices of those who are often overlooked. The support provided by this grant has enabled me and others to connect deeply with our communities, fostering relationships that are essential for driving positive change.”

- MR Barnadas, Artist

Unlocking Potential: Moving Beyond the Campaign Activity Period

- Numerous grantees are leveraging the success of their campaigns by extending their initiatives beyond the original campaign activity period. Many have actively pursued additional funding opportunities and, in some instances, have already secured future financial support.
- There have been many examples of grantees continuing to work with fellow Far South/Border North grantees beyond the duration of the grant activities. This collaboration aims to create and enhance collective strategies, initiatives and networks.
- Several social impact hubs within the Far South/Border North program have successfully launched spin-off initiatives to enhance their collaboration with artists. For example, RISE San Diego’s “RISE Artists” program aims to nurture, advocate for, and amplify the intersection of arts and social justice in San Diego. This program supports artists and emerging organizations with roots in communities of color.
- The San Diego City College Art Gallery hosted an exhibition showcasing 24 campaigns from the Far South/Border North program. This event aimed to highlight the significant contributions of artists and cultural practitioners, providing an opportunity for community college students and the general public to engage with impactful works.

- Two grantees from Far South/Border North successfully led a panel at Comic-Con International, an event drawing over 135,000 attendees from across the globe. Their participation significantly elevated awareness about air pollution as a pressing issue along the U.S.-Mexico border, especially in San Ysidro.
- Several grantees are participating in conferences on public health, climate and sustainability, and social justice to discuss their Far South/Border North campaign methodologies and outcomes. These informative sessions strengthen collaboration between artists, cultural practitioners, and other sectors to enhance community health and well-being and bring greater awareness of the arts as a driver for change and creative solutions.
- Several grantees continue to showcase their videos and films beyond the initial implementation period through various media outlets, screenings, and festivals. For example, one grantee secured airtime for their documentary series on Channel TVK, available through Spectrum and Cox, reaching an estimated 100,000 households throughout San Diego. This coverage ensures that the campaign’s health and wellness equity message continue to get out to the public. Additionally, another grantee earned a prestigious spot in the lineup for the acclaimed La Jolla Playhouse WOW Festival, continuing to raise social justice awareness.
- Many grantees actively distribute printed materials beyond the campaign activity period, such as postcards, bookmarks, and publications. Some are even developing new books aligned with their campaign goals to raise awareness. For instance, one grantee reported a second print run of a poetry book for dissemination to newly diagnosed cancer patients at a local hospital. Meanwhile, another grantee plans to design and print additional coloring books and collaborate with other organizations across the state to enhance campaign awareness about mental health.



Far South/Border North Impact Report

“The intention behind our projects was to create something sustainable that would be more than a one-time thing/ experience. The Link Up meets group has become a safe space for men that meets monthly and has been very consistent. We held our first Art Show in June featuring 24 men presenting pieces highlighting the importance of the group and men’s mental health. We will continue meeting every month, hosting an annual celebration show, AND have started doing a monthly community group art show featuring Local Artists on our two mobile art walls!”

- Enrique “Chikle” Lugo, Artist

“As an implementation partner, we collectively [saw] this regional, open-call grant process as an opportunity to catalyze visionary artists and cultural practitioners in intersectional work that fuels positivity and contributes to health equity within our most disproportionately impacted communities.”

- Felicia Shaw, San Diego ART Matters



“Far South/Border North showcases how cities and regions can strategically harness the synergy between artists and community initiatives through intentional collaboration, partnership and investment. This collaboration, crucial to our success, has created new systems and infrastructure to support and amplify artists and cultural practitioners working in their communities for the public good. Artists and cultural practitioners leveraged their unique perspectives and ideas to break down complicated issues and elevate awareness in meaningful ways, driving essential community health equity, strengthening health outcomes, and proactively addressing disparities caused by pollution, gentrification, healthcare access, cultural identity, and a sense of belonging with unwavering determination.”

- Christine E. Jones,  
City of San Diego Cultural Affairs





# FAR SOUTH/BORDER NORTH RESOURCES



## Website

The Far South/Border North website contains a multitude of evergreen resources including a directory of the grant recipients and information about their campaign projects, and stories with links to articles and videos, social media, and an archive of Public Impact Day event supported by this grant program.

[farsouthbournorth.com](https://farsouthbournorth.com)



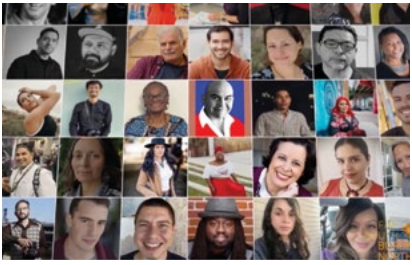
## Interactive Map

This interactive map highlights campaign projects through a spatial lens, accentuating the vastness and geographic diversity across San Diego and Imperial counties.



## Video Library

Visit @TheCityofSanDiego to view the Far South/Border North playlist and videos.



## Program Overview

This video highlights the program overall, showcasing artists and cultural practitioners working in service of the health and well-being of communities in San Diego and Imperial counties.



## Introducing Artists Leading the Charge in Public Health

This video highlights the program overall, showcasing artists and cultural practitioners working in service of the health and well-being of communities in San Diego and Imperial counties.



## Introducing Artists Leading the Charge in Social Justice

This video highlights the program overall, showcasing artists and cultural practitioners working in service of the health and well-being of communities in San Diego and Imperial counties.



## Introducing Artists Leading the Change in Civic Engagement

This video highlights some of the campaigns focusing on increasing public awareness related to civic engagement, including election participating.



## Introducing Artists Leading the Change in Environmental Conservation and Climate Mitigation

This video highlights a sampling campaign focusing on increasing public awareness related to the environment and climate change.



## Public Impact Day

This video documents the morning session of the Far South/Border North Public Impact Day held on Sept. 19, 2024. This convening brought people together to center artists and cultural practitioners who contribute to health equity work in our region, with the aim of elevating important cross-sector work and creativity as core drivers of how all communities can thrive, inspiring a brighter future.





# PUBLIC IMPACT DAY

## A powerful convening on arts and culture for change.

Public Impact Day, held on Sept. 19, 2024, in Balboa Park at two locations, was an immersive day of interactive programming to underscore the pivotal role of creativity in promoting community health and well-being. The free event provided a unique opportunity for the public to hear from industry leaders on applying arts and culture to health equity work. At the Museum of Photographic Arts at The San Diego Museum of Art, artist presenters shared their campaign stories, from design inception to implementation and the inspiring community outcomes, and attendees engaged in panel discussion Q&As, witnessed live performances, and networked at the expo featuring artists and cultural practitioners and the transdisciplinary work created through their campaigns. The expo

held at the Mingei International Museum was a place of exchange where artists and cultural practitioners shared their campaign stories and showcased props and materials relating to campaigns, from mobile pop-ups of stories and books to theatrical production props to interactive artmaking. An introduction to FSNB set creative work and artist-driven collaborations as key elements in tackling regional challenges. It highlighted the relationship between artists, communities and health equity. At the same time, the panel presentations and expo provided a platform for subgrantees to share their campaign stories from design to outcomes and how rethinking transdisciplinary work and the creative process raised critical consciousness and built community, providing measurable benefits to individual and collective health. This convening brought people together to center artists and cultural practitioners who contributed to health equity work in the region. Public Impact Day was part of the San Diego-Tijuana Design Capital World Design Experience, powered by San Diego Design Week.





# SAMPLE CAMPAIGN COLLATERAL

## Project samples incorporating film, video and audio



### Toxic Paradise

As part of the “Toxic Paradise” campaign, Paul Valdivia created a film, *Cahuilla: From Sacred Sand to Lithium Lands*, which explores the environmental crisis affecting the Salton Sea and highlights the urgent challenges Imperial County and its communities face.

[CAHUILLA DOCUMENTARY](#)



### Roots of Resilience: Confronting Diabetes in Native American Communities

Ruth-Ann Thorn’s campaign focused on creating a film titled “Roots of Resilience: Confronting Diabetes in Native American Communities”. The film explores the historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors contributing to the higher prevalence of diabetes among Native Americans.

[VIEW ON YOUTUBE](#)



### The Beyond Words: Amplifying Asian Women’s Voices

Trixi Agiao’s campaign, “Beyond Words: Amplifying Asian Women’s Voices”, featured the Golden Goddess Affirmations Podcast, highlighting the healing journeys and mental health experiences of diverse Asian women. The podcast explored the power of vulnerability and self-acceptance through open conversations, creating a supportive space for authentic dialogue and valuable insights.

[GOLDEN GODDESS AFFIRMATIONS](#)



### Artists Everywhere

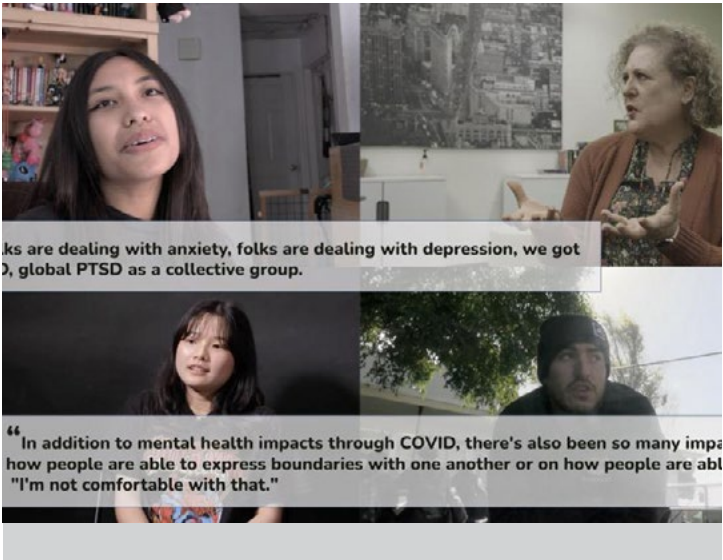
Playwrights Project’s campaign “Artist Everywhere” featured five plays written by local authors and adapted by artist and filmmaker Chris Boyd for the screen. These works, created by formerly incarcerated writers, delve into themes of social justice and community engagement, bringing their unique experiences as artists into the awareness of their communities. The short films included in the project are: “A Mother’s Promise”, “Homecoming, Criminal Adaptation”, “Red America”, and “Fate of Man”.

[VIEW ON YOUTUBE](#)

### Move American

DISCO RIOT’s “Move American” campaign featured ten dance films highlighting social issues and ideas, encouraging viewers to reflect on how individuals can become more engaged citizens. In these films, local movement artists from San Diego challenge perspectives and explore ways to promote collective health and civic awareness, challenge people’s viewpoints, and investigate ways to become collectively healthier and civically minded.

[MOVE AMERICAN](#)



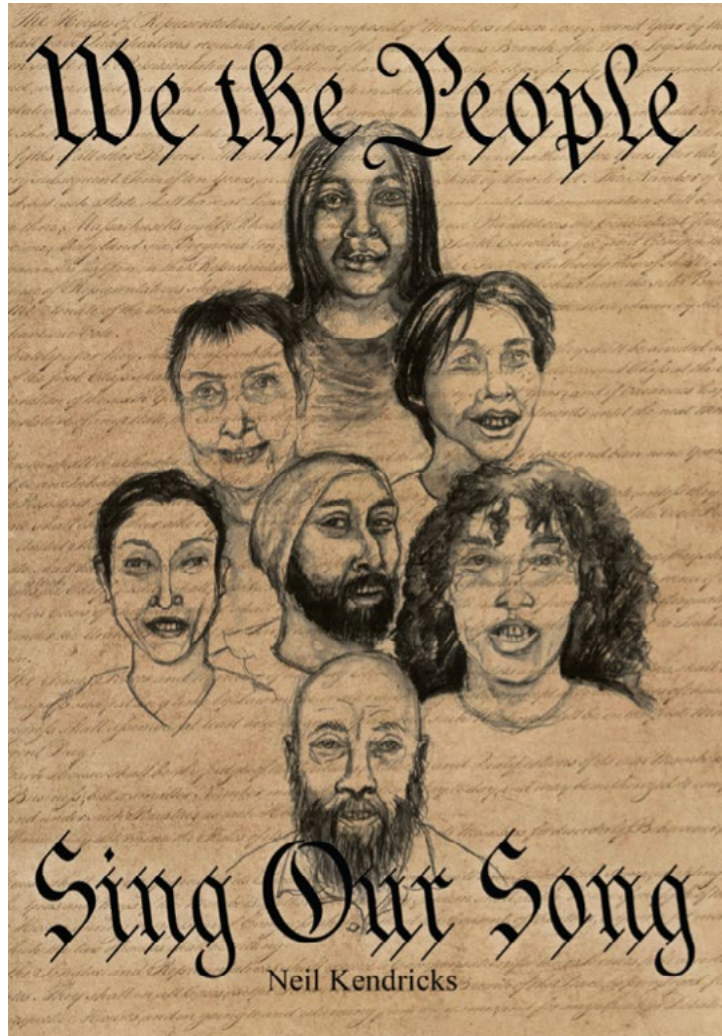
### CONNECTEDvoces

Young participants created a series of short documentaries as part of the “CONNECTEDvoces” campaign by the Media Arts Center San Diego, collaborating with Amada Torruella and supporting artists/practitioners Edwin Cruz, Melissa Franco, and Seth Gadsden. Each documentary focused on public health, specifically addressing mental health trends among youth in the post-COVID-19 landscape and highlighting the resources available to them in their communities.

[VIEW ON YOUTUBE](#)

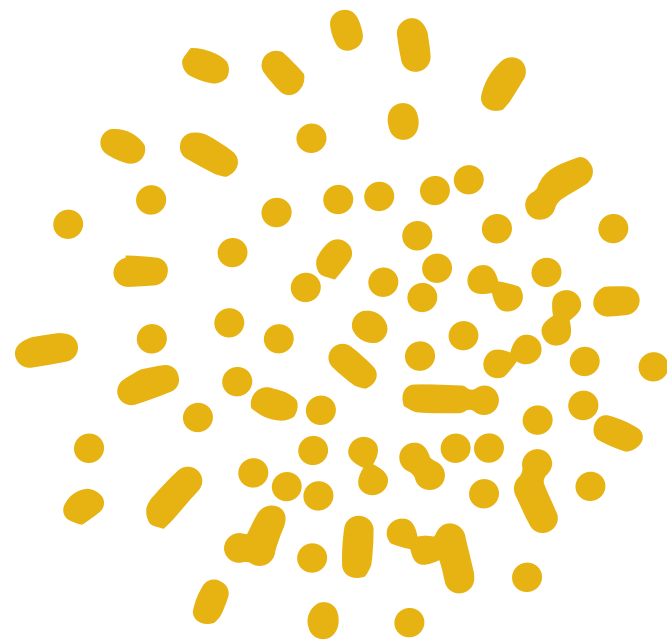


## Project samples incorporating printed materials



## We the People, Sing Our Song

Neil Kendricks launched an awareness campaign to increase civic engagement among San Diego's racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations, encouraging them to participate actively in our nation's democracy. The campaign featured an interactive "talking comic book" highlighting a diverse group of San Diego residents who are first-time voters and/or poll workers preparing to cast their ballots in the 2024 presidential election. Each participant was interviewed about their hopes, dreams, and concerns regarding the future of American democracy. Kendricks collaborated with composer, musician, and sound designer Mike Mare and graphic designer Tony Magpantay to develop the campaign.

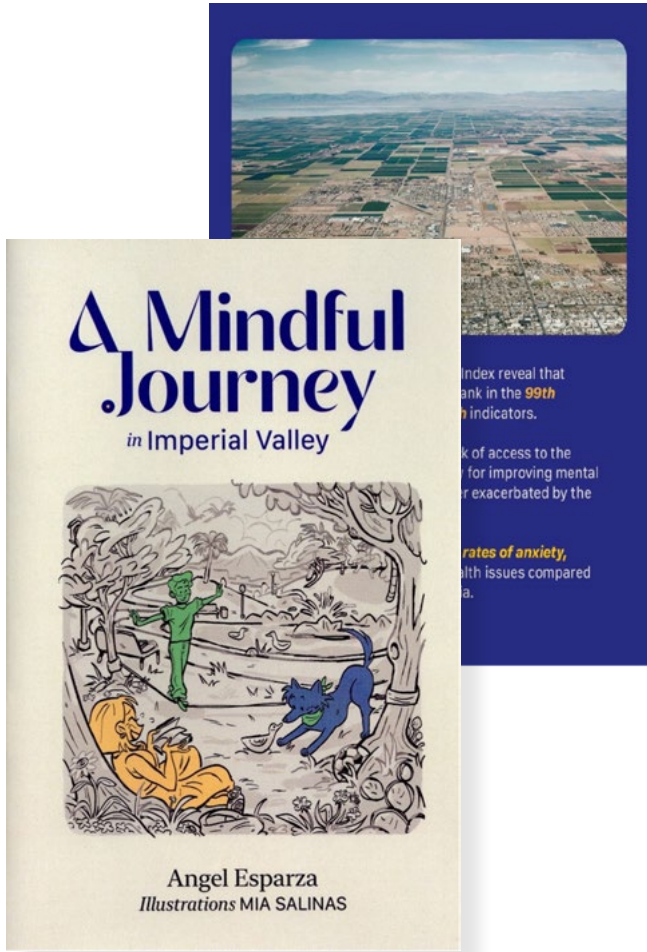


## Somos Aire

Johnny Bear Contreras and Mabelle Reynoso adapted their borderlands steampunk fairytale into a comic book to ensure that the Somos Aire campaign and story continue to resonate beyond their theatrical run. The narrative follows a young woman who returns to her hometown of San Ysidro, searching for a cure to save her sister and her community. This story addresses air quality and environmental justice themes, particularly relevant in San Ysidro, the busiest land border crossing, and other communities with heavy vehicular traffic. The artists believe sharing this important story in various forms is essential. Although air is invisible, the story invites us to pay attention and find a connection to what we cannot see. The artists collaborated with Zulema Reynoso who created the comic illustrations.







### A Mindful Journey in the Imperial Valley

Angel Esparza’s campaign created a book to provide mindfulness tools for improving mental health in the Imperial Valley communities. It highlights California Healthy Places Index findings showing that some areas in Imperial County rank in the 99th percentile for poor mental health, worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. The book guides personal growth and self-discovery, offering practices to reduce stress and cultivate compassion. The story follows Andy, a painter from Brawley, who, struggling with old habits, meets Val. Val shares new perspectives and practices to help Andy overcome his mental clutter. Alongside his loyal dog, Shanti, Andy explores his emotions and creative processes in search of balance and peace. Esparza worked with Mia Salinas for the book’s illustrations.



**Cuéntame**

Yvette Roman and natalia ventura’s campaign aimed to capture the oral histories of elders in the San Ysidro border community through collaborative art workshops and storytelling sessions. These stories are preserved in audio recordings, artwork, and the bilingual book “Cuéntame.” The artists hope to encourage engagement between people and the elders in their lives, connecting with ancestral wisdom for a better future. Roman and ventura collaborated on this project with artists Scarlett Baily, Anika Bull, Carlito Espudo, Natalie Gonzalez, celeste hernández, Andres Howard, and Dia Soto.

### Project samples incorporating social media

#### Why?

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a 25% increase in prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide.

One reason for the increase was the stress caused by social isolation as a result from the pandemic.

Loneliness, fear of infection, suffering and death for oneself and for loved ones, grief after bereavement and financial worries have also all been cited as stressors leading to anxiety and depression. - World Health Organization

The Feel Better Art Campaign is an effort to create awareness of the mental health crisis exacerbated by the pandemic. It's mission is to provide information, resources and share the benefits of art when it relates to self-care and

### Feel Better Art: Using Art as a Tool for Self-Care and Mental Health

Alma Silva’s campaign addressed the mental health crisis that arose from the COVID-19 pandemic. It leveraged social media to raise awareness and share resources related to mental health, therapeutic art, and access to professional assistance. Inspired by her personal experience of caring for a high-risk family member during the pandemic, the campaign emphasized creative expression as a valuable tool for improving mental health.

### Way Outside the Lines Present Destination Joy!

The Urban Collaborative Project’s campaign, collaboration with lead artist/practitioner Khalil Bleux and supporting artists/ practitioners Janice Luna Reynoso, Kim Philips-Pea, and Jasmine Garcia, promoted public transportation in low-income communities while supporting climate action, social justice, and community health. It utilized social media to showcase collaborators and an artistic event on San Diego MTS Trolley cars, raising awareness about sustainable transportation.

## RAISING AWARENESS.

**SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION. CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION. HEALTH & WELL-BEING.**

HPI Score (v3.0) Percentile Ranking: 0 25 50 75 100 Excluded

This project aims to unite the communities of Southeast San Diego, National City, Chula Vista, and San Ysidro.

According to the California Healthy Places Index (HPI), these communities fall within the bottom quartile of healthy community conditions. The HPI map uses data on

UCP seeks to unite our communities to allow us to tell our own narratives, spotlight our diverse cultures, uplift health

URBAN FARMER

### Food for Life - Health & Wellness Equity Through Culinary Arts

Asian Culture and Media Alliance, in collaboration with lead artist Cathlyn Choi and supporting artists, launched a campaign promoting health equity among youth. The initiative focused on teaching cooking skills, encouraging healthier eating habits, and improving access to nutritional resources. A key campaign component was using social media to emphasize the importance of nutritious food and personal health.



# CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cover	Angel Esparza, A Mindful Journey in the Imperial Valley; Angelica “Babay L. Angles” Tolentino, Olongapo Disco Presents Dreaming Joy Across the Diaspora; Yvette Roman and natalia ventura, Cuéntame
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Page 2	Photo: Pablo Mason
Page 6	Yvette Roman and natalia ventura, Cuéntame
Page 7	Ramel Wallace, The Last Black Man in Barrio Logan
Page 9	Maraya Performing Arts Collective, Bayanihan Tour + Blood Drive
Page 10	Sandra Carmona, Kendrick Mr. Lyrical Groove” Dial and Enrique “Chikle” Lugo, With These Hands I Can: Community Cultural Wealth Toolkits; The Urban Collaborative Project, Way Outside the Lines Present Destination Joy!, photo: Vito di Stefano
Page 12	Sergio “Takito” Ojeda, Better to Light a Candle, Than to Curse the Darkness; Via International, Somos La Voz: A Celebration of Chicano and Mexican Youth Activism, Art, and Cultural Legacy in San Diego
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Page 55	Maria Patrice Amon, PÁSALE PÁSALE: Immersive The-atre and Social Justice
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Page 63	Alicia Siu, “Haawka!” May the Fire in Your Heart Burn Bright!, photo: The David’s Harp Foundation; San Diego State University Research Foundation- Imperial Valley Campus, Food, Water & Energy Nexus in the Imperial Valley, Esteban Ojeda
Page 64	The David’s Harp Foundation
Page 65	Trixi Agiao, The Beyond Words: Amplifying Asian Women’s Voices, photo: Pablo Mason
Page 66	Ramel Wallace, The Last Black Man in Barrio Logan, photo: Pablo Mason; Jordan Verdin, Homefront Expressions: Unveiling Humanity through Art, photo Pablo Mason; San Diego African American Museum, Black Arts + Culture District Campaign for Community Engagement, photo: Pablo Mason; photo Pablo Mason
Pages 67-72	Photo credit is attributed to the grantee specified, unless noted otherwise.
Back Cover	Ramel Wallace, The Last Black Man in Barrio Logan; Angel Esparza, A Mindful Journey in the Imperial Valley; Angelica “Babay L. Angles” Tolentino, Olongapo Disco Presents Dreaming Joy Across the Diaspora



The City's Cultural Affairs advances and drives an equitable and inclusive creative economy and cultural ecosystem by investing in the work of artists and creatives and the institutions and systems that amplify creative work and experiences.

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## Far South/Border North Partners



Far South/Border North is proud to be recognized as an initiative within the Community Program of World Design Capital San Diego Tijuana 2024.



## Far South/Border North Support

Far South/Border North was funded through a California Creative Corps grant from California Arts Council, a state agency, with additional support from the Prebys Foundation.



The Far South/Border North Impact Report uses quantitative and qualitative data collected by Far South/Border North program partners during the activity period and from grantee's interim and final reports to analyze program goals and effectiveness. The data spans the period of Oct. 1, 2022 – Sept. 30, 2024.



