



NEW URBAN ARTS

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NEW URBAN ARTS TO RECEIVE COMING UP TALLER AWARD IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

*FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA TO PRESENT PROVIDENCE-BASED ARTS ORGANIZATION WITH
AWARD RECOGNIZING THEM AS NATIONAL MODEL*

NOVEMBER 4, 2009 (WASHINGTON, D.C./PROVIDENCE, RI) --New Urban Arts, an interdisciplinary arts studio and gallery for high school students and emerging artists in Providence, Rhode Island that empowers young artists to explore the visual, performing, and literary arts through yearlong free out-of-school programs, is being nationally recognized as one of 15 youth arts and humanities programs to receive the prestigious 2009 *Coming Up Taller Award*. Youth and adult representatives of the program will travel to Washington, D.C., for a White House ceremony at 2:30 p.m. on November 4, 2009, where they will accept the award from First Lady Michelle Obama.

Coming Up Taller is a national initiative that recognizes and supports outstanding out-of-school and after-school arts and humanities programs for children, especially those with great potential, but limited outlets for creative expression. A project of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH), in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), Coming Up Taller Awards honor programs that offer exceptional learning experiences in the arts and the humanities and that have a tangible effect on the lives of young people as evidenced through improved academic scores, enhanced life skills, and positive relationships with peers and adults.

New Urban Arts is a nationally recognized arts studio and gallery for high school students and emerging artists in Providence, Rhode Island. Its mission is to build a vital community that empowers young people as artists and leaders to develop a creative practice they can sustain throughout their lives. The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities has named New Urban Arts one of the nation's top 50 youth arts programs six times. Founded in 1997, New Urban Arts serves over 300 high school students, 20 emerging artists and over 2,000 visitors through free youth programs, professional development, artist residencies and public performances, workshops and exhibitions each year.

"New Urban Arts is a shining example of how the arts nurture the social, emotional, and long term development of our nation's youth. It gives me great pleasure to know the organization is being recognized nationally and brings me great pride to know that our city is the home of this exceptional model program," stated Providence Mayor David N. Cicilline. "Our youth are the future of our global society and my administration has made it a priority to give our young people quality learning opportunities, particularly in the after school hours. New Urban Arts plays a major role in guaranteeing that our city's youth will be productive, creative thinkers in the future."

New Urban Arts recruits and train artists from a range of backgrounds to mentor high school students in free after-school and summer programs. Artists and young people work together not following a script. Everything that comes out of their studio is the result of artists and youth working as collaborators and peers. Three-quarters of their students are low-income and over half live in neighborhoods where the poverty rate is four times the national rate. Despite these challenges, over 90% of their seniors graduate high school and get into college.

"We are honored to be recognized as one of the nation's best arts and youth programs as a Coming Up Taller award winner," said Jason Yoon, executive director of New Urban Arts. "This award is a testament to all of the amazing people that have contributed to our community over the past 13 years, particularly the incredible artists and young people who are our foundation. Tyler Denmead, while a college senior, founded New Urban Arts with a bold vision for youth development that encouraged emerging artists and young people to work together as collaborators and peers. This incredible recognition affirms his vision and will help us share what we have learned about the role that artists can play as community resources, helping all young people succeed."

"Arts and humanities activities have a wonderful way of enabling young people to discover their unique talents and Coming Up Taller programs help light the fires of curiosity and creativity in young people, using the discipline that arts and humanities require to learn about themselves and explore the world around them interests while forging a path to success in school and life," said Adair Margo, Chairman of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities bridges the interests of federal agencies and the private sector, supports special projects that increase participation, and helps incorporate the humanities and the arts into White House objectives. The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education. Because democracy demands wisdom, the National Endowment for the Humanities serves and strengthens our Republic by promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history to all Americans. The Institute of Museum and Library Services is an independent federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners.

New Urban Arts is supported locally by the RI Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center Program, The Rhode Island Foundation, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, Citizens Bank, The Champlin Foundations, the City of Providence, The Amgen Foundation, Textron Charitable Trust, Ocean State Charities Trust, Hasbro Children's Fund, Vilmain Inc., and the Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island.

For more information please visit the following Web sites:

New Urban Arts: www.newurbanarts.org

Coming Up Taller: www.cominguptaller.org

President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities: www.pcah.gov

National Endowment for the Arts: www.arts.gov

National Endowment for the Humanities: www.neh.gov

Institute of Museum and Library Services: www.ims.gov

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