



## **Urban Arts Collaborative “nature is art - art is healing”.**

[www.urbanartscs.org](http://www.urbanartscs.org)

The Urban Arts Collaborative (UAC) is a cadre of young, diverse urban artists living in Salinas, who work together to create art and to engage in the positive transformation of their community through visual, healing-informed arts; to achieve community-led social transformation; to advocate for earth stewardship, youth equity and public arts; and create safe spaces for impactful creative expression, critical thinking, and individual and collective development.

UAC is currently working in community and art organization leaders, government officials, institutions, schools, and non-profit organizations to have an impact in the vision for Salinas arts community, the discourse of artists in urban visual arts and other art disciplines, to improve the quality of life for everyone in Salinas Valley and create equity opportunities for visual interdisciplinary artists.

### **More About UAC**

Although fundamentally an arts organization, UAC takes a multidisciplinary approach to teaching and creating art as a vehicle for advocating for critical community issues and Art expression.

For example; UAC works around community issues that range from Food Justice, equitable land use policies, youth leadership, wellness, Self Care with visual urban artists and formerly incarcerated youth, to interrupt the schools to prison pipeline and integrate healing informed art that include physical training, stress-relief breathing techniques, and relaxing meditation.

UAC engages youth in public spaces, schools from k through 12th grades; at other partners' sites, and in open public spaces where art is created.

UAC Programs:

### **Youth Leadership Development through Arts & Culture & Visual Interdisciplinary Arts**

UAC's Transformative Leadership is a uniquely innovative program that integrates extensive visual practical skills with deep self-reflection. The program prepares artists/ students to embody leadership and mobilize their creativity in many different ways, whether in organizations, social movements and schools, with a range of creative visual interdisciplinary activities requiring

personal initiative and dedication to making community-based art that makes a difference.

In this program participants range in ages from 5 years old, youth and adults; together they share the space to create a series of visual arts paintings and studies using different mediums such as watercolor, acrylic and mixed media.

UAC programs links arts education, youth leadership, community stewardship, youth artists contemporary issues, LGBTQ and public art, with the vision of creating pathways for emerging artists from Salinas as leaders and innovators. We provide youth with authentic learning experiences, led by experienced artists in painting, mixed media installations, live art, raw living foods mandalas and urban gardening, to engage their minds, hearts, and bodies, enhance their creativity, self-discipline, and skills necessary to meet the challenges they face.

- **Creative Inquiry, Visual Interdisciplinary Arts:** Explore different aspects of urban arts through critical analysis and hands-on arts education and visual practice; Workshop/class includes components of social, cultural, Ethnic studies, education, concept development, the environment, contemporary issues for artists, sketching/drawing, color analysis, painting, mural making and more.

## **Community-based arts for artists practitioners**

### **Overview**

We understand that artistic work has the potential to meaningfully impact human condition, that the arts in fact are vital and essential to human life, and that there is a continuum of art that exists from the fine galleries and grand theaters to far flung corners of the globe, remote rural areas, streets, town squares, and building sides. Profound, life-altering art is being created at all levels. Community-base Arts Practice is not about the artist working for the approval and reward of a disembodied marketplace of the elite; but the artist as an integral part of community life, working with and for ordinary people. How do we as artists render our gifts in service to community? How do we as activists and advocates interact meaningfully with our skill set and artistic access, allowing the voice of community to emerge?

- **Community-based Art Projects:** Explores real life art projects like “ What I love About Salinas” an art installation of recycle and garbage corrals painted by Urban Arts collaborative youth artists and urban planning that includes public arts in Old Town Salinas.
- Murals throughout the county.

### **About the programs:**

The programs consists of weekly meeting workshop/class on a rotating basis on a variety of themes, culminating in a series of community-based mixed media Action arts developments/projects such

collaborative art exhibits, live art happenings, youth convenings and city wide art developments art projects that intersect the nexus of creative expression, public health and public arts, youth equity and land use; the workshops and projects allow students to apply their own learning experience and test their theories and assumptions about leadership in real time. The lessons learned from these collaborative projects are often stepping stones for self-development, self esteem, artistic practice and life paths ways for our youth artists participants as they become professional artists.

### **Urban Arts Collaborative Wellness, Health and Selfcare program**

The UAC Wellness Program works across various areas and issues that range from food justice, sustainable food, self care, earth stewardship, land use and advocacy for green spaces, using art and nature as the catalyst for transformation; All of these areas are informed by families, youth and community-identified priorities and needs, and are implemented within a public health framework, focusing on social determinants of health, health inequities, and the impact and opportunities to support and promote wellness and equity at individual, interpersonal, community, organizational/institutional levels.

### **Current Program on Food Justice / Land use**

UAC supports the professional development and learning of UAC artists participants year-round through:

- Arts-based leadership workshops with a focus on connection to nature, the importance of public expression using non-conventional organic food;
- Series of dialogues and conversation around health equity issues impacting Salinas Youth and community at large
- Conversations and dialogue around the access of clean available water land use and earth stewardship as well as equitable land use policies that support organic farming and access to healthy food
- Access to organic farming workshops with focus on community stewardship, entrepreneurship and the creation of farmers market

### **Vision for the Future**

UAC's vision is to continue to be a small, but deeply impactful, influential and sustainable organization that supports leadership development through arts and culture; nature and sustainable organic farming; as such, it will continue to be a multi-disciplinary, socially conscious art organization, weaving interconnected issues of critical importance for the community, such as food justice, arts expression, equitable land use policies, and youth leadership. It will do its work through teaching, mentorship, hands on artistic projects, community-base meetings, convenings, community retreats, while activating the power of arts and creative expression in Salinas Valley.

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