



**Economic Development Board
Creative Sonoma Update
March 2024**

PUBLIC ART

Fire Memorial

Staff is scheduled to present the recommended sites for the project to the Board of Supervisors on March 26. The recommended action is for the Board to select a principle and alternative site from the list evaluated and prioritized by the Fire Memorial Task Force.

Public Art Plan

A revised draft will be ready for review in early April to gather stakeholder feedback. The presentation of the plan to the Board of Supervisors is currently scheduled for July 16.

ARTS EDUCATION

Poetry Out Loud

On March 18 in Sacramento, Riley O'Hara, Sonoma Valley USD student, won the state finals of the Poetry Out Loud competition. He performed "1969" by Alex Dimitrov and "We Are Not Responsible" by Harryette Mullen. Riley's bio:

I have always had a strong passion for creating things, especially things that can make others happy. In the future, I would like to work on general self-improvement such as exercise, maintaining mental health, etc. Poetry Out Loud has shown me that I'm able to go places I didn't think I could, like how I did not expect to make it this far in the competition.

Riley will compete in Washington, DC on April 30-May 2 for the national time. Prizes for the national competition total \$50,000.

Workforce Development Committee

An Arts Educators Workforce Action & Implementation Committee will begin meeting in mid-April to develop a plan to increase the number of arts educators in Sonoma County. A plan will provide action steps to: utilize the potential of Prop 28 funding, provide more job opportunities for the creative community, and support more access to college eligibility with increased visual and performing arts (VAPA) courses to fulfill the A-G requirements.

Artful Conversations – A Community Engagement Project

Developed by the AEA Steering Committee, Artful Conversations will be focused on a foundational (and exciting) literary work called YOUR BRAIN ON ART: How the Arts Transform Us by Susan Magsamen and Ivy Ross. In addition, "Artful Experiences" are being planned that complement references to the book and encourage the community to engage with the arts.

Sonoma County Arts Educator of the Year

A Peer Review Panel has identified the recipient and honorable mentions of the Sonoma County Arts Educator of the Year Award. LBC and Creative Sonoma have teamed up to present this 1st ever award to individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of arts education over an

extended period of time. The award recipients will receive \$500 honoraria and \$500 gift card for classroom supplies. Acknowledgements of these winners will be made at the AEA Mixer on March 27 and at a SCOE Art Open House on April 4.

Networking

An AEA Mix and Mingle will be held on March 27 at Mitote Food Park. School art teachers are highly encouraged to attend and network with other art teachers. A presentation will be made to the recipient of the Sonoma County Arts Educator of the Year.

GRANT MAKING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2024 Arts Impact Grants for Organizations

Thirty-five arts organizations received grants from this program totaling \$150,000, from Creative Sonoma's regular budget for community grants. This grant program requires applicants to denote whether their program or service has a community-wide impact, neighborhood impact, or youth impact. 17 organizations were awarded a total of \$72,000 in the combined county-wide and neighborhood impact areas, and 18 organizations were awarded a total of \$78,000 in the youth impact area.

2023 Arts and Cultural Equity Grants

The 2023 Grantees have each received their one-on-one consultation with Favianna Rodriguez on sustainable financial practices for artists and cultural workers. The grantees are currently in process of submitting brief reports on how they utilized their grant and professional development funding. Announcement of the 2024 program will occur in late March.

Professional Development Partners

Sebastopol Center for the Arts and Raizes Collective are partnering with Creative Sonoma to present professional development series for individual artists and creatives. Sebastopol Center for the Arts has launched their artist entrepreneur incubator; 7 artists were selected in February and will receive 3 months of mentorship, professional development and studio space.

Learning Cohorts

Amy Kveskin of Artsightful is the trainer for a six-session series for our Community-Based Arts Centers for them to explore strategic planning tools and methods to create (or refresh or explore) sustainable business models. The 6-session series is taking place February 29 – May 9, 2024. Participants include Petaluma Arts Center, Sebastopol Center for the Arts, Healdsburg Center for the Arts, Sonoma Community Center, and Cloverdale Arts Alliance.