

The Center for Great Neighborhoods'
Creative Community Grant Program

As a part of The Center's mission to empower resident-led groups to complete community improvement projects, the Creative Community Grant pool of funds is being made available to artists who propose creative solutions to a specific community-identified issue. The issue selection process is informed by neighborhood surveys, resident-led community groups, and existing neighborhood plans and small area studies. Awards are handed out by a panel, made up of two Covington residents, two professionals in arts-related fields, and one staff person. Grant periods last for six months; Round 1 awards that were announced in January are currently wrapping up and Round 2 is just kicking off, as recipients were announced at the beginning of July.

Creative Community Grant Summaries Round 1 – Safety Theme

Pike Street Art Wall

Recipient: Christopher J. Meyer

Amount: \$5,000

The 216 Pike Art Wall project is a new wall across an open lot at 216 Pike Street that is being used as a public art display area. The wall includes flower boxes, night time lighting, and an overhang to shelter people and the artwork. Chris Meyer, who is employed as an architect but does metal work in his spare time, along with his family own both the vacant lot and the neighboring properties. Chris designed the wall to be congruent in design and feel with the neighboring properties to create a feeling of continuity in the streetscape. Chris is curating the art featured on the wall, soliciting work from local artists and rotating the display on a monthly basis. The Art Wall will prevent non-resident access to the vacant lot, eliminating a space that in the past has been a pass-through and a hideout for nuisance activities.



Analematic Sundial & Solar Light

Recipient: David Rice

Amount: \$5,000

David envisions his project as using the sun's rays to address safety in the Westside neighborhood in two different ways. First, the interactive sundial will be a half-circle, 12 feet by 6 feet, where a person uses their body to provide the shadow-casting object that will be used to tell time. The sundial will attract people to an otherwise vacant space and allow them to interact with the sculpture. The second part of the project is a solar light that will be placed on top of a metal sculpture to illuminate the sundial at night, thus creating a more safe and inviting space for residents and visitors. David is an experienced sculptor with pieces appearing around Covington and Cincinnati where he has worked with organizations like the Art Museum, Cincinnati Museum Center, Artworks, and Visionaries and Voices. This project experienced some delays in getting permission from the City who owns the property where it was thought that the sundial would have the most impact, but has recently received approval and is expected to be complete in the next month.

Art on 12th

Recipient: Julia Martin

Amount: \$4,342.25

Julia installed lighted artwork on boarded up windows of empty buildings around the Westside neighborhood. These pieces are all original works of art created by Julia, and feature an animal that corresponds with a prompt on a chalkboard that encourages passersby to interact with the piece. Julia also worked with the neighborhood to hold a community art making event where she provided small wooden tiles, a color palette, and stencils for participants to create pieces that she will tessellate together to create one big piece for the Hellmann Lumber Mill. The event drew dozens of participants and featured an evening Art Walk, to view the pieces and effectively create safety through occupation of space and community interaction.



Goats in Goebel

Recipient: Gus Wolf & Lauren VanDyke Wolff

Amount: \$5,000

Goats in Goebel brought goats to the hillside in Goebel Park to eat and eliminate overgrowth and invasive species. The dense foliage on the hillside and in the lower portion of the park creates an unsafe and unused area in what is Covington's largest concentration of greenspace in the urban core. The hillside is a haven for homeless and drug related activity due to its poor visibility and isolation from the rest of the park. The intention of this project was to take a sustainable and inexpensive approach to clearing out the brush and making a space more appealing and usable for park patrons, but has inadvertently become a draw to the park itself for people that want to see the goats in action. The Goats in Goebel team has an army of volunteers who have assignments ranging from Goat Checkers, who check on the goats daily to ensure their safety and wellbeing, to Goat Feeders who keep the goats hydrated, and Goat Movers who periodically move the fencing to new areas to continue the process of clearing the hillside. The project is empowering residents to have an active role in their neighborhood while working to create a more safe and usable greenspace.



Orchard Park Swing

Recipient: Lauren DiFulvio Wolf

Amount: \$5,000

The funds awarded for this project went entirely to the purchase of a group swing to be permanently placed in the vacant lots known as Orchard Park in the Westside neighborhood. The lots and the houses that once stood there were at one time the centerpiece to a neighborhood that was overrun with crime and disinvestment. As The Center worked with the neighborhood, the City, and the police to slowly move the crime out, the houses were torn down because of their continually deteriorating condition. In the last year, the neighborhood has laid claim to the City-owned lots and puts them to use as a neighborhood greenspace, gathering ground, and community garden. This project aimed to further solidify the neighborhood's definition of Orchard Park, by creating a place for youth to play and families to gather. Photographer, Lauren DiFulvio Wolf, donated her skills to hold a session, open to the community where anyone was welcome to have portraits taken at no cost as individuals, of their children, or as a whole family.

The residents working on the projects in this area have also made it part of their mission to reach out to everyone in their neighborhood, including those that are hard to reach or not traditionally connected. The flyers for their photography event were printed in English on one side and in Spanish on the other, and were distributed door to door and posted in various local restaurants and at the Latino corner store, Gutierrez Deli. This project was paired with a \$250 Nano Grant, to pay for the cost of printing 8x10 portraits to be distributed back to the subjects as keepsakes, and consequently provide an invaluable opportunity for families who wouldn't normally have the resources to spend on quality professional family photos. The event was extremely successful, with about 80 people in attendance, many of whom had never previously attended a Westside event. The neighborhood was very pleased with the diversity of ages, races, income levels and backgrounds at the event and has continued a similar marketing strategy for subsequent block parties and gatherings. Many of these folks have come back to other events, hopefully proving that they feel like a welcome and valued part of the community.



CYC Crosswalk Campaign

Recipient: Covington Youth Commission

Amount: \$3,175

The Covington Youth Commission (CYC) will address safety for children and other pedestrians on the sidewalks around John G. Carlisle Elementary School by installing artwork on the sidewalks that surround the school. The CYC is working with artist and local high school teacher, Donny Roundtree, and youth leaders in the BLOCK program (an after school program run by The Center) to design and paint the pavement that makes up the crosswalks. The CYC students came up with the idea when brainstorming strategies for addressing the safety issue of cars failing to come to a complete stop at intersections and originally envisioned the artwork to be featured in the crosswalks on the public streets surrounding the school. This idea was shut down by the City, citing an ordinance from the State of Kentucky, and was consequently moved to the sidewalks that surround the school and cross over four vehicle entrances to the school's parking lot. This project had to be put on hold while school is out for the summer, but will be completed in September when students and the BLOCK program return.

Pones In Public

Recipient: Pones Inc.

Amount: \$3,500

Pones Inc. have used their unique brand of public dance to enliven spaces and create a sense of belonging with music and dancing in a variety of genres. This grant funded eight Pones In Public performances that had the goal of encouraging families, groups, and strangers to engage in a shared experience, express their creativity, and have fun! Pones designed their programs to create a vibrancy and excitement around public spaces and a perceived narrative of safety themes like knowing your neighbors, feeling safe in your own skin, food access, and finding a personal calm. This grant award was the biggest stretch for the panel and The Center in terms of being able to visualize an end product and outcomes based on the descriptions of what would be created. The project was selected because of the reputation of the organization to create quality experiences with a relatively low investment risk. During the implementation of this grant, Pones challenged our expectations and sometimes fell short of the level of product that was anticipated, but still created a smaller number of really positive experiences for some of our residents that are most difficult to engage with. One such event was a series of workshops with youth from a low-income, subsidized housing development who were able to spend a few hours over the course of several weeks learning and creating dances that helped them to express themselves and engage with their neighborhood. The Pones performances fell short of the initial expectations, but they were generally featured in conjunction with existing community activities and were typically successful at adding another level of vibrancy and interaction.



B Visible: See and B Seen

Recipient: Kenton County Library

Amount: \$4,595

The Coder and Maker Group from the Kenton County Library hosted workshops for Covington residents and students to modify and create artistic garments and bike accessories that will increase their safety as pedestrians and cyclists. The workshops were held over the course of three months both after school at Holmes Middle School and at the library. Holmes Middle School is the only public middle school in Covington so it draws a diverse group of students, many of whom come from a background of poverty and limited arts-related opportunities. While the library workshops were moderately successful, with a turnout of 5-10 participants per workshop, the Holmes Middle School opportunities were a much larger draw with about 15-25 students in each after-school workshop, about half of whom were male. Participants were taught basic sewing techniques and were provided with small LED lights and other materials that were bright or reflective to create items that would make them more visible to vehicular traffic. The project culminated with a fashion show to celebrate Bike Month in May where participants could show off their creations and receive free bike helmets donated by a local bike shop.

Creative Community Grant Summaries Round 2 – Bicentennial Theme

Bicentennial Time Capsule

Recipient: CVG Made - Steven Sander, Cov200

Amount: \$5,000

For Covington's 200th Birthday COV200, the local organization charged with celebrating all things bicentennial, is partnering with local maker Steven Sander to create a memorable time capsule constructed of local/Covington-inspired material to be installed in the Hellmann Lumber Mill in Covington's Westside. Steven will develop time capsule designs inspired by Covington materials (i.e. the Roebling Bridge, Stewart Iron Works, etc.) to be voted on by the community. City-wide participation via surveying and polling will be encouraged with regards to the contents of the capsule. In late September/early October COV200 will host a proclamation ceremony presenting the time capsule and its contents to the public before locking it up for the next 100 years.

Past & Future Fashion

Recipient: Annie Brown

Amount: \$5,000

The B Visible team returns to Holmes Middle School to expand the sewing capabilities of the students and reach out to others who were not able to join the first program. They will also offer the same program to Prince of Peace School, where during a 6 week session students will combine needle crafts of the past with technology of the future to create wearable art for themselves. The program will end with a fashion show, potentially at an up and coming local shared space for artists. The items the students create will also be on display at Holmes Middle School, Prince of Peace School, and the Covington Library.

Try Together Fly Together

Recipient: Jim Guthrie

Amount: \$5,000

In partnership with Savannah, Georgia based artist Matt Hebermehl, a large scale mural will be created and installed that celebrates Covington's 200th birthday and expresses optimism in its future. Matt and Jim will host a public discussion regarding a public mural strategy/process. Matt will discuss his experience in Savannah with SeeSAW and how public murals can be de-mystified and be used as a tool in creative placemaking and community building. The community will gather to assist Matt in the creation of the mural, which will most likely be featured on a local elementary school and contain inspiration from students who will be asked to participate.

AJOYO

Recipient: Baoku Moses

Amount: \$4,000

In the spirit of the 200th year celebration of the city of Covington, AJOYO will focus on creating a series of community celebrations in the style of African musical celebrations. Whether it is by the tap of the foot, nod of the head, or a full blown participation in African drumming or dance, neighbors will have no choice but to celebrate as a community. Baoku looks forward to bridge the thousands of miles between Covington and Africa by partnering with existing organizations, events, and programs to bring Africa to Covington in AJOYO "A -Community Celebration".

Covington Story Project

Recipient: Covington Youth Commission

Amount: \$4,000

The Covington Youth Commission (CYC) will celebrate the bicentennial by collecting stories from youth reflecting on their past, describing their present, and looking to their future in the context of growing up and living in Covington. They will also use the art of photography to supplement their stories in the city. They will work with a local writing instructor, Roger Auge, and a professional photographer, Katie Woodring, to learn style tips and techniques for creating their stories. The written pieces and photographs will be displayed on posters at various locations and will also be made into a booklet.

Community xChange

Recipient: Julia Keister

Amount: \$5,000

Community xChange is an opportunity for Covington to become a leader in social equality in its 200th year. This unique initiative will bring recognition to Covington by establishing an arts and nature focused internship network for local individuals that society labels as having a 'disability'. Community xChange will provide visibility to both people that are often denied access as well as Covington's diverse community of people, businesses, and organizations dedicated to the arts and nature. Julia is already in the process of placing two interns, one with a local online newspaper and another with a local graphic design and branding firm. Through this program, Covington will become a pioneer in community integration and simultaneously strengthen its art and nature notoriety.

Welcome to the Westside

Recipient: BLDG

Amount: \$5,000

This Westside gateway mural will depict an inviting, celebratory message for residents and visitors to the Westside Neighborhood. It will utilize the brand guidelines developed in The Center's new Creative Facades Look Book. The verbiage will include "Welcome to the Westside" with a tagline below indicating "Covington's Bicentennial 1815-2015". Residents will be invited to participate in the selection of mural designs as well as in an unveiling ceremony.

Dougherty Claywork Architectural Ceramics

Recipient: Patrick Dougherty

Amount: \$5,000

Patrick has proposed a number of possibilities for creating a piece of ceramic art that will combine influences from the Westside neighborhood's history and present direction. His extensive experience working as a ceramicist (including a stint at Rookwood Pottery) will inform the creation of a project that may end up being a relief mural, a ceramic clad concrete bench, signage, or other piece of public art. Patrick will work with the community in every step of his project, from selection of project type, content, and location, to actually creating alongside him in his studio, to installation and unveiling.