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SEPTEMBER 12, 2018
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JUNE 29, 2018

Worcester art initiatives earn \$69K in grants

The Greater Worcester Community Foundation has awarded \$69,000 to artists and arts initiatives in Worcester as part of a program meant to spur connections between different voices in the community.

The foundation's Creative Worcester Initiative is in its pilot year, having launched in a partnership with the Barr Foundation and its Creative Commonwealth Initiative.

In all, 10 individuals or groups shared in the funding:

- Ansaar of Worcester: for support of cultural outings for disabled and low-income Arabic-speaking and Somali-speaking refugees to help them better integrate into American life.
- Crocodile River Music/African Arts in Education: for its African Music Series, a concert series that promotes African culture and seeks to engage & celebrate the city's African immigrant/refugee community.
- Eli Mateo, a musician: for his program KidsSTOMP, a summer-long Saturday morning music program in University Park for children to engage in interactive performances and learn about music and community.
- Future Focus Media Cooperative: for support of its Telling Our Stories program, a workshop series for teens from Main South area to learn video production and film-making, culminating in screenings at the Central Mass Film Festival.
- Girls Inc. of Worcester: for its indoor mural project inside its Worcester building, celebrating the organization's mission and designed by girls for the girls and their families who utilize the facility.
- Mass Leap, Inc.: for support of its Youth Spoken Word Leaders Program, aimed to develop teens as both artists and arts organizers through a training program and the presentation of regular youth poetry events.
- Music Worcester, Inc.: for its We Speak The Same Language Program, aimed at building cross-cultural connections, as well as providing financial support for performances and teaching opportunities for Milad Yousufi, an Afghanee refugee and musician who will be a year-long artist-in-residence.
- SAORI Worcester: for Weaving Bridges 2020, a public art display of multiple handwoven banners created by clients at a range of social service agencies to be hung from Elm Park bridges in 2020.
- Seven Hills Foundation: for support of its Creative Movement Dance Program, a creative movement program for adults living with intellectual & developmental disabilities, done in partnership with the Hanover Conservatory.
- Steven Schwartz, an artist: for his Learning Life Skills Thru Magic workshop series, intended for youth participants at several youth-serving agencies to teach respect, creativity and planning through the art of Magic.

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