

# COLLECTIVE IMPACT REPORT CARD 2020

ART =  
OPPORTUNITY



College is for Me  
day with President  
Dr. Ellen J. Neufeldt





**brilliantspectrumart** Great work!! Art is more important than ever nowadays, and can have such a powerful impact. Thank you for sharing your passion with others! 🙌👍❤️👏👏👏

**jennykins\_89** You're all heroes! Way to continue pushing STEAM in education, especially during this time!! Bravo!!!! 🙌👍❤️👏👏👏



Art matters more than ever when we are engaged in change – and what a year of change it has been! In this year marked by a presidential election, COVID-19, and the Black Lives Matter movement, one thing stayed true: art was an opportunity for bringing students and communities together. At **ART=OPPORTUNITY**, we persisted, resisted, and created.

I am so ever grateful to the many individuals who made 2020 one of the most exciting years ever. Before Covid, we launched our College and Career Pathway program with the Creative Youth Development Network of San Diego. The cover of this year's report shows youth coming to CSUSM for College is for Me day. We held our fourth annual Literacy Residency in partnership with the Writing Project. Following these two events, we went into pivot mode due to Covid, but we were unstoppable! Our website is full of ideas and resources for the community. The College and Career Pathway team held three super Zoom sessions for youth to help them develop an awareness and community for college as a pathway. We held three workshops for teachers and parents; our **STEAM Ambassadors** created curriculum and handed out 500 STEAM art kits to teachers and parents. CSUSM students developed intriguingly creative presentations for the tons of research in arts education and arts integration. **Arts Amplifying Youth! (AAY!)** went above and beyond and created a summit that was both virtual and socially distant in-person. Our own Nancy Meza won the Presidential Award for Diversity and Inclusion in part because of her work with **ART=OPPORTUNITY**.

There is nothing like the arts to inspire, to create community, and to help us think outside the box. More than ever, the arts give us an entry to empathy, and it is in that spirit that we paved the way through 2020. Our thanks goes to the generous support of **Stuart Foundation, Panta Rhea Foundation, Clarence E. Heller Foundation, California Arts Council, Clare Rose Foundation**, the many, many volunteers and student teachers, as well as the administration of **CSUSM** for making it all possible!

Merryl Goldberg, Ed.D., Director of Center ARTES, California State University San Marcos

## ART=OPPORTUNITY Leadership Team

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Merryl Goldberg, Ed.D.</b><br>Director, Center ARTES, CSUSM,<br>Director, Art=Opportunity  | <b>Joe Landon*</b><br>Recently Retired Executive<br>Director, California Alliance for Arts<br>Education                |
| <b>Martha Barnette*</b><br>Co-host, A Way with Words  | <b>Emy Medina</b><br>Executive Assistant to the AVP,<br>SASS   |
| <b>Julia Cuppy</b><br>Director of Education and<br>Outreach, La Jolla Playhouse               | <b>Nancy Meza</b><br>Campaign Assistant,<br>Art=Opportunity  |
| <b>Matt D'Arrigo</b><br>Director, Clare Rose Foundation                                       | <b>Kristin Moss</b><br>Associate Professor of Visual Arts/<br>Visual Cultures, CSUSM                                   |
| <b>Lisa DeMarco</b><br>Owner, DeMarco Design  | <b>Ivonne Chand O'Neal, Ph.D.</b><br>Senior Research Strategist,<br>Art=Opportunity, Principal, MUSE<br>Research       |
| <b>Leah Goodwin</b><br>Owner, Leah Goodwin Creations  | <b>Dr. Rajnandini Pillai</b><br>Professor of Management and<br>Leadership, CSUSM College of<br>Business Administration |
| <b>Tara Graviss</b><br>Executive Director, Arts for<br>Learning San Diego                     | <b>Toni Robin*</b><br>TR/PR Marketing and Public<br>Relations  |
| <b>Brenda Hall</b><br>Director, Southern California<br>Professional Development<br>Federation | <b>Laura Smyth</b><br>Why Art Card Guru,<br>Art=Opportunity  |
| <b>Catalina Huggins</b><br>Staff Support Lead,<br>Art=Opportunity                             | <b>Lucy HG Solomon</b><br>Associate Professor of Art, Media<br>and Design, CSUSM                                       |
| <b>Dairrick Hodges</b><br>Director, SOULcial Workers  | <b>Laurie Stowell</b><br>Professor of Literacy, CSUSM  |
| <b>Ron Jesse</b><br>Director of Development,<br>Art=Opportunity                               | <b>Dr. Christiane Wood</b><br>Associate Professor of Literacy<br>Education, CSUSM School of<br>Education (SoE)         |
| <b>Tomoko Kuta</b><br>Deputy Museum Director, The<br>New Children's Museum                    |  |

\*Honorary Member & Founding Leader











## Developing a Partnership with the Creative Youth Development Network

by Emy Medina, Executive Assistant, SASS

In 2020, Center ARTES Creative Youth Development (CYD) housed at Cal State San Marcos partnered with the San Diego Creative Youth Development Network (SDCYDN) to develop a formal pathway to college specifically designed for youth in the arts. This network comprises many non-profit arts organizations focusing on serving kids from underrepresented communities, in foster care, or who were formerly incarcerated or homeless, along with kids from more capable contexts. Recognizing the arts organizations of the SDCYDN do remarkable work in supporting youth and finding ways to realize their potential, we sought their support to encourage students to envision a future beyond high school and into college.

Student Academic Support Services (SASS) invited the SDCYDN to the College Is for Me conference hosted by the Early Assessment Program (EAP) at CSUSM. This conference consisted of three sessions designed to demystify the inaccessibility of higher education for members of marginalized populations and to shine a light on the possibilities the future could hold. The first session featured a Q&A with a panel made up of California State University San Marcos students/alumni and others who attended college somewhere else. Attendees were able to hear about different college experiences and the struggles these students overcame. After a series of thoughtful questions were asked, the attendees reported feeling more confident about pursuing higher education.



## San Diego Creative Youth Development Network



The second session focused on the importance of a college education and financial considerations. Dr. Geoffrey Gilmore, CSUSM's Associate Vice President of SASS, explained how the world has evolved after all these years and how it will continue to do so. He detailed the advantages a higher education provides and how it can allow one's future to flourish. Julie Lindenmeier, CSUSM's EMS Financial Aid and Scholarships Director, outlined the financial aid application process and shared tips and tricks to help students optimize their application.

The final session was presented by Academic Manager at A Step Beyond, Ivan Corona, Program Coordinator & Teaching Artist at transcDANCE Youth Arts Project, Paula Perez Costas, and me. We had a lively discussion about the RIASEC test and how students could figure out their career interests, discover their gifts, and learn to apply them.

I am honored by the opportunity to join the CYD Cohort Lead Connection and work alongside others who share common goals in supporting youth. Moving forward, we will attend network meetings, make plans for youth to visit the campus, and partner SDCYDN youth with CSUSM college students as mentors. Both SASS and Center ARTES have committed to developing a model program that is scalable to other communities and university settings throughout the state and beyond.



**March 2020: ART=OPPORTUNITY** and CSUSM partnered with the SDCYDN to create the CYD College Pathways program for all youth being served in the network. Over 30 attendees were able to attend College is for Me day with the support of the Clare Rose Foundation.

**Post-COVID Shutdown:** Support and encouragement for the youth continues online with regular network meetings.





Our own Nancy Meza was recognized as one of two recipients of the CSUSM President's Student Champion Award for Inclusive Excellence and Diversity.

Nancy knows how vital teachers are to a student's success. It's what inspired her to pursue teaching as a career. Knowing firsthand the impact a teacher can have on a child made it all the more special for Nancy as Cal State San Marcos President Ellen Neufeldt highlighted a handful of Nancy's long list of accomplishments while children whom she works with as a student teacher at Conway Elementary School in Escondido watched the celebration online.

Nancy's passion for fostering diversity and inclusiveness largely stems from her time with ACE Scholars Services, which supports former foster youth at CSUSM, and her involvement with **ART=OPPORTUNITY** and Center ARTES.

Merryl Goldberg credits Nancy for being an integral part of the success of numerous arts activities and programs, including the College and Career Pathway program in which Nancy worked with the Creative Youth Development Network to provide workshops for youth in after school programs. Goldberg also lauded Nancy for taking the initiative on trainings related to Black Lives Matter, inclusion and diversity. Along with another student, Nancy even assisted on the sixth edition of Goldberg's book on arts integration in multicultural settings, helping to find ways to improve examples of diversity and to include nonbinary gendered individuals and stories of foster youth and unsheltered people.

"Nancy is truly a student who exudes inclusive excellence, lives diversity and is thoroughly deserving of every accolade imaginable," Goldberg said. "She is really someone special, and I am so lucky to be able to work with her and learn from her – on a daily basis."

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The delivery method may have looked different, but we continue to ensure the strength of the field through a series of virtual workshops. The **FREE** workshops were very well received by participants and furthered our mission to provide leadership training, including providing professional development opportunities for education and arts administrators, teachers, arts partners, university partners, teaching artists, art teachers and parents. Our thanks goes to Dr. Christiane Wood and Brenda Hall for their dedication to curating these creative offerings!

"So many ideas that were engaging for students and connected with other subjects - I loved the resources about integrating music."

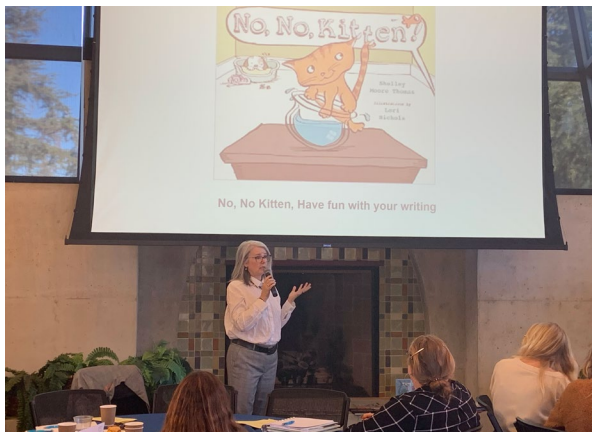
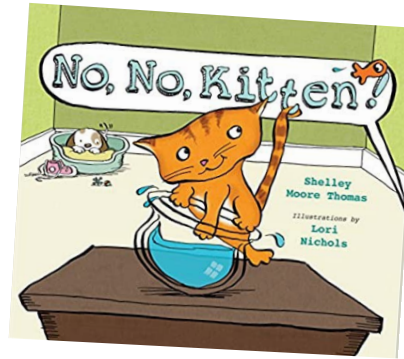
"Very informative and provided great ideas for students to get thinking deeply while having fun!"

"There was lots of new information I didn't know about. Learning about the Edit Master tool was amazing!"



## LITERACY RESIDENCY

**February 2020:** In conjunction with the San Marcos Writing Project (SMWP), **ART-OPPORTUNITY** welcomed author and storyteller Shelley Moore Thomas, who led a full-day workshop sharing various lessons. Workshop attendees actively participated and explored their new understanding of literacy. The day was designed to engage K-12 educators, promote the value arts integration has for student learning, and empower educators to integrate the arts into their daily classroom instruction.

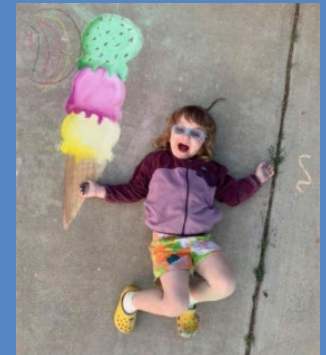


## QUARANTINE MASTERPIECES

Early into quarantine, there was a burst of creativity worldwide – we got in on the action with a [Facebook page](#) devoted to Quarantine Masterpiece challenges. In addition, we posted a slew of [COVID-19 Arts Ed. Resources](#) for teachers and students to stay creative during a difficult time. Time and time again the arts have proven to be essential to the growth and continuance of human development.



**GETTY MUSEUM CHALLENGE WINNER**  
Sarah Bush's artwork recreated *Young Woman With Cat* by Amy Hill (2018)



**SIDEWALK CHALK CHALLENGE WINNER**  
Cassie Wanda Mich submitted artwork featuring her daughter!

## NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF ALL INVENTION .... AND CREATIVITY!

By mid-March, the full scope of the emerging COVID-19 pandemic had become clear, and our team had no choice but to take a deep breath and re-invent all the professional development workshops and activities planned for 2020. Who better to think outside the box than a group of professional creatives? In a surprising twist, the attendance of the online offerings exceeded our typical in-person workshops, and the silver lining is that all of the virtual workshop offerings held last year are available [online to view](#) at any time!



**ART=OPPORTUNITY's** STEAM ambassadors are a group of students who are working to implement STEAM curriculum in local K 12 schools under the direction of Lucy HG Solomon, CSUSM professor of art, media and design. "The students are so creative, imaginative, dedicated and invested in what they do," said Solomon.

#### **Gia Provencio**

It is most important that in what we do, in-person or virtually, we let the kids know that a life in STEAM is definitely a possibility for them.



#### **Amy Brunolli**

I think it is so important for children, especially young girls, to see that they can be involved in STEAM and create amazing things.

#### **Kodie Gerritsen**

I believe increasing public scientific literacy will play a vital role in the path toward social and environmental improvement, and STEAM is an important part of that movement.



#### **Leah Amparan**

Being a STEAM ambassador has made me aware of how many students go without basic art and science instruction, especially now with the Covid pandemic.

#### **Raelene Pellos**

Inspiring others to create art is like creating an opening to understand the world and other people on a different level.



#### **Tarah Durham**

So many students are taught to shy away from STEAM, but we know that teaching it can help students understand themselves and others.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### **STEAM Ambassadors Meld Art, Science for Community Children** by Brian Hiro, CSUSM // NewCenter

For two hours on a Saturday morning in mid-October, cars streamed on to a Cal State San Marcos campus that had been eerily quiet for months because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The cars were filled with parents, with schoolchildren, with teachers. One by one, they pulled into Craven Circle, stopped in front of stations that had been set up for the occasion, and picked up brown paper bags. The bags were arts kits packed with materials and projects to help kids, many of them from underserved schools, get the art fix that largely had vanished from their lives in this new world of remote education. During the two-hour period, about 500 kits were handed out to people from the community at no charge.

The art kit distribution served as the kickoff event for a new program at CSUSM called STEAM Ambassadors. STEAM is the common educational acronym STEM – science, technology, engineering and math – sandwiched around the word "art," and the term has gained currency in recent years as research accumulates on the importance of integrating art into the highly popular STEM disciplines.

*"The STEAM ambassadors are inventing new ways for kids to connect art and science, at a time when teachers and parents are struggling to do the basics, and those subjects are not necessarily foregrounded. Supported by the Clarence E. Heller Foundation, with partners like the New Children's Museum, the STEAM ambassadors' mission is ambitious - to plant the seeds of confidence, empathy and ingenuity in bright young minds."*

**Lucy HG Solomon**

*Associate Professor of Art, Media and Design, CSUSM*

"Through this project, we are trying to encourage students to see themselves as both a scientist and an artist," said Leah Amparan, who graduated from CSUSM in the spring with a bachelor's degree in liberal studies and is now in the multiple subject credential cohort. "Being a STEAM ambassador is a great way to connect with other like-minded people and be able to share our knowledge and love for the arts and sciences with other students."

The genesis of the STEAM initiative was last spring when music professor Merryll Goldberg decided to let several of her students become arts ambassadors as part of an independent study assignment through her **ART=OPPORTUNITY** program. Embedded at the Vista Academy of Visual & Performing Arts, the students would report to the school one day a week and either assist teachers with their art classes or teach a lesson on their own.







CSUSM students and STEAM ambassadors Tarah Durham (left) and Leah Amparan hand out arts kits as part of a free distribution event last month. Photo by Andrew Reed



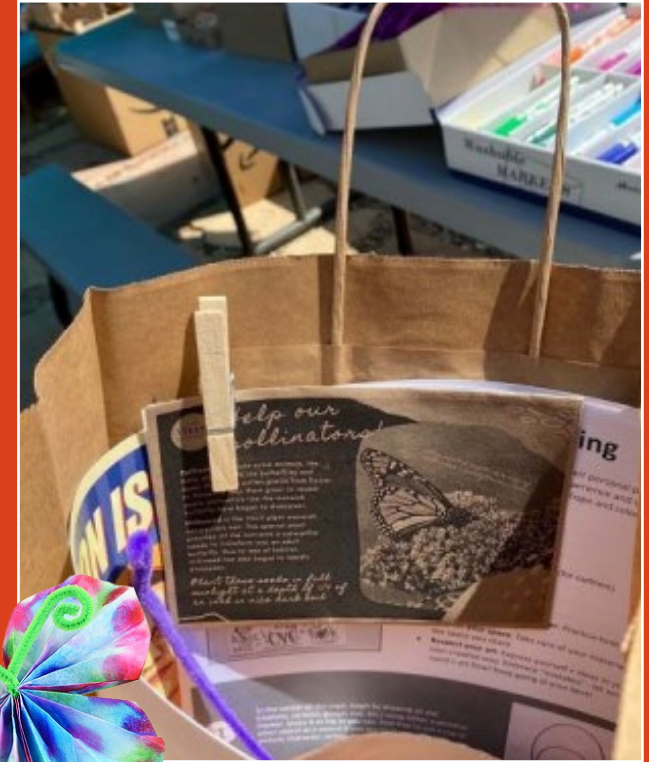
The STEAM ambassadors formed an assembly line to prepare 500 arts kits with lesson plans, markers, and craft supplies.

When COVID-19 shut down the school in March, the arts ambassadors shifted online, creating a public Facebook group dedicated to sharing art for students and their families. Every week or two, they would post a new challenge topic and select an artist to showcase on the **ART=OPPORTUNITY** website.

Around the same time, in May, the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation in San Francisco awarded Goldberg a \$25,000 grant to expand the fledgling program and incorporate science into the curriculum. Thus did the arts ambassadors morph into STEAM ambassadors.

“There are a lot of folks who believe that the arts are fluff,” Goldberg said. “But the research clearly shows the importance of arts in terms of creating empathy, imaginative thinkers, people who work well with each other, people who can solve problems. The arts give students those skills, and we want parents to understand that this is a pathway, this is a career, this is a lifelong marker that’s going to help their kids.” While the STEAM ambassadors were devising social media challenges last spring, Goldberg and Wood – who facilitates professional development for **ART=OPPORTUNITY** – began to brainstorm other ways they could help the local community amid the pandemic. They eventually partnered with the New Children’s Museum in San Diego on the arts kit concept, borrowing lesson plans from the museum and enlisting the STEAM ambassadors to build the science component. Lucy HG Solomon came on board in the fall as the faculty coordinator, and she oversaw the process of the students turning nascent thoughts into reality in a matter of weeks.

“They are this lightning storm of ideas,” Solomon said. “You can see how they cross-pollinate with one another when they’re trying to come up with ways to allow kids to access their own creativity and confidence in art and science.”

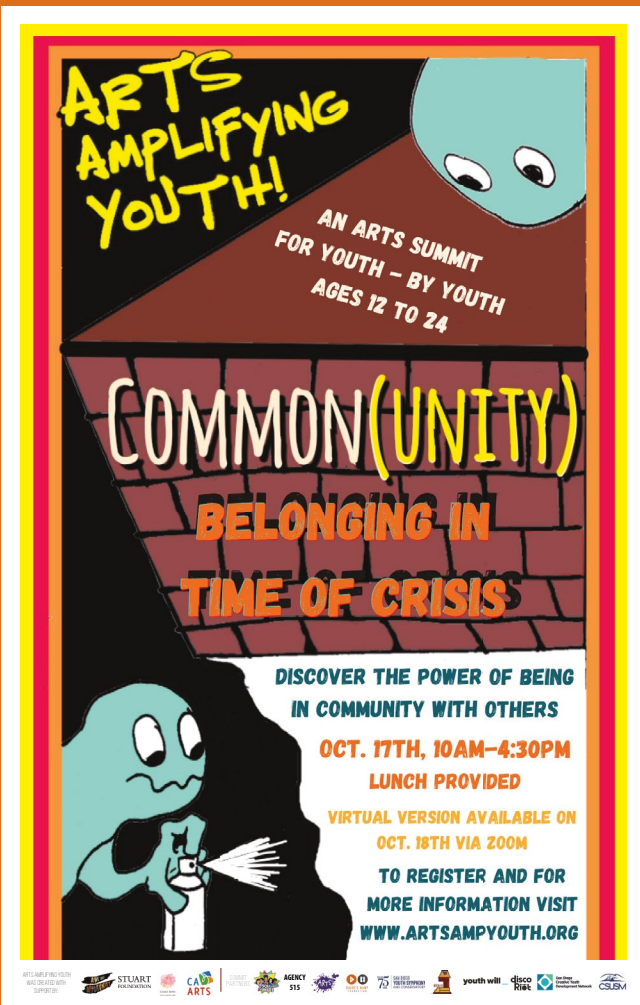


As an example, one of the projects in the arts kit involves making a butterfly out of household materials. Graft a science element on to that, the STEAM ambassadors came up with information and a series of activities about pollinators and habitats, and included in the bag seeds of wildflowers and milkweed. And in a sign of how sustainability is foundational to CSUSM’s mission, the students even made a bookmark with instructions for how to craft an origami bat (which is also a pollinator) out of the paper bag itself.

**CLICK to access more lesson plans from our STEAM ambassadors.**







We are again very proud of our San Diego youth leaders who organized, planned and implemented the 2020 **AAY! Summit: Arts Amplifying Youth**. This year's theme was "CommonUnity" (Community), which the collective chose very early in our process. The teens connected through shared experiences of seeking community for themselves and discovered a common interest in addressing the barriers to connection and belonging for all youth. They spent weeks unpacking the theme, creating artworks and engaging in rich conversations with partners and peers about its true meaning.

## AAY!: ARTS AMPLIFYING YOUTH *by Dairrick Hodges, AAY! Mentor*

2020 began with a vision: a collective of 15 young leaders, three mentoring accomplices, and a plan to make the third annual **Arts Amplifying Youth!** summit an experience like no other. We gathered in January for a day-long retreat at our home base, ARTS (A Reason To Survive) in National City. Our returning collective members co-designed and led a day of activities to welcome our incoming leaders, and we wasted no time before jumping into collaboration and creativity. We danced, we sang, we played games. We debated and shared the various passions that informed our art. The group began to form connections quickly in the room, and by lunch the teens were already partnering up to brainstorm workshop and event ideas. The vision was coming to life beautifully. Leaving the retreat that day, it was clear that this group, this year, was going to be something special.

Each year we host an open house event to share our themework and pitch workshop ideas to our community, and this year we scheduled ours for the second week in March. We were gathered for our final rehearsal together when we heard the news that our open house along with our entire city was being shut down.

When our world turned virtual, we were confronted with our themework on a whole new level. **Arts Amplifying Youth!** practices the core values of creative youth development, which include racial equity, social justice, and youth voice. We watched as the pandemic peeled back the layers of our society and amplified issues in just about every area of our values. As a collective, we were deeply impacted. Our event now hung in the balance, and

many members of our collective felt called onto the front lines of activism, and some stepped into other community leadership roles. Some led by activating spaces for dialogue and community support. Some worked on systems changes, serving on panels and consulting with civic leaders to advocate for youth dignity and inclusion.

The experience also invited us to be more intentional about the community we were building in our own room every week. Having to navigate so many compound uncertainties, we needed to make sure our theme was first embodied in the ways that we engaged with and held one another through this experience. This helped to deepen our work and focus our ideas on real-time ways the arts could support people to find belonging in a time of crisis. In October, after a whirlwind year, we were finally granted the opportunity to invite a special audience of youth to an intimate in-person engagement at the Arts Park in Southeast San Diego known as "The Writerz Blok." The amazing outdoor venue offered the perfect backdrop for our summit, and we were so excited to make it happen.

On the day of the summit, we arrived early to transform the space into our home for the day. We welcomed our community around 9 am, and even behind masks, it was easy to detect smiles and refreshing to hear the laughter from young people fill the space. Our event included six workshops crafted by our leaders with creative activities, from theater role play to culinary art – covering a range of critical topics, from race and identity to mental and emotional wellness. Participants enjoyed music and performances, **Arts Amplifying Youth!** swag bags, candy, and so much



more. The leaders fostered important relationships and offered young people a much-needed reprieve and release from a year that filled us with so much unrest. We got an opportunity to speak face-to-face with young people about their experiences and also exchange tips on staying motivated, safe, and connected during the current crisis.

The following day, we offered a virtual version of our summit to extend access to those unable to join us in person. It was powerful to see that the workshop activities and conversation topics still maintained impact even online. The following week, the collective came together to debrief and celebrate. We sat around a fire to enjoy a meal prepared by one of our young artists and digested all that the collective had accomplished. We revisited our idea of community – we took a moment to remember where we started at this year’s retreat, to look around at the community we built together as a team and reflect on everything the leaders had cultivated within the larger community this year. It felt full circle – this year was truly like no other. Through it all, we had truly realized our original vision.

This year helped to clarify and reinforce for us that absolutely everyone is on a journey seeking community and belonging. That when a community is truly found, it becomes a place where we are both sheltered and freed simultaneously. We learned that freedom is actually something that is nurtured in a community. That when we find the people and places that usher us into authenticity, that support us to stand strongly in the truths we discover and excite us to explore

and expand on those truths, then freedom is truly possible. Most importantly, we were reminded that love is the foundation and the through line of it all. That love is our most natural resource and our most obvious commonality. It is the thing that unifies us. Even when everything is virtually stripped from us and we are separated from all that we know, love is the only thing powerful enough to bridge the distance.

In my sophomore year as director of **AAY!** I am most proud of the love that we practiced this year. Witnessing this group of young people navigate so many challenges with such grit and grace was truly transformative. I am grateful for the bravery and the beauty of all of the youth who collaborated with us this year. I owe a great deal of gratitude to the tremendous care and leadership of my partners and fellow mentors in the space, Zack and Nhu, for their love truly carried us. I am also thankful for the love we receive from our partners at the **Clare Rose Foundation** and **ART=OPPORTUNITY**. It is your love that our collective is built on. I echo this gratitude to the **Stewart Foundation, SDCYDN, Youth Will**, and all of the incredible people that make up our community and support us in amplifying the leadership of our youth. Congratulations to our stunning 2020 collective.

We look forward with renewed vision to the journey ahead.



Stay Tuned:  
Our AAY!  
Summit is  
already in  
the works  
for 2021.



## ART=OPPORTUNITY PROJECT AND PARTNERS

Thanks to generous funding from the Stuart Foundation, California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) launched a San Diego County-wide campaign focused on providing access for all children to a better education by improving literacy in and through the arts. **ART=OPPORTUNITY** is now also supported with funding from the Panta Rhea Foundation and CSUSM.

**ART=OPPORTUNITY** is a research-based collective impact model with its home base at California State University San Marcos, engaging faculty, students and staff in multiple colleges. Through ever-building partnerships, including the County Office of Education, school districts, arts non-profits and the community, we seek to ensure that each and every child has the opportunities that arts bring to successful careers and lives. Our work is also used statewide through organizations such as CREATE CA, California Alliance for Arts Education, and the California Arts Council.

For more information, research and downloads, please visit: [csusm.edu/artopp](http://csusm.edu/artopp)



### ABOUT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SAN MARCOS (CSUSM)

Building on an innovative 29-year history, California State University San Marcos is a forward-focused institution, dedicated to preparing future leaders, building great communities and solving critical issues. It is the only public four year comprehensive university serving North San Diego, Southwest Riverside and South Orange Counties.

The University enrolls over 17,000 students. With approximately 2,000 employees, the institution is a Great College to Work For® (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*). As a recipient of the annual HEED Award since 2014 – a national honor recognizing U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion – CSUSM is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment.

### STUART FOUNDATION ABOUT THE STUART FOUNDATION

The Stuart Foundation is dedicated to improving life outcomes for young people through education. We work to ensure that public education systems in California and Washington provide opportunities for students to learn, achieve and thrive. Our guiding principle, or North Star, is an education system that values the Whole Child by strengthening the relationships between students, educators, families and communities. As a result, students will have greater opportunities to be self-reliant, succeed in education and careers, and engage meaningfully in their communities.

#### ABOUT THE PANTA RHEA FOUNDATION

The Panta Rhea Foundation was established in 2001 as a private foundation devoted to supporting organizations committed to building a more just and sustainable world.

