

# RSF quarterly

WWW.RSFSOCIALFINANCE.ORG

1002 O'Reilly Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94129  
415.561.3900



Photo courtesy of Free Columbia

「What is  
the power of  
creativity?」

## ► IN THIS ISSUE

### 2 LETTER FROM DON

### 3 Creatively Financing the Arts

THE ARTS CAN SERVE THE HIGHEST INTENTIONS OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT. SO, HOW CAN RSF SERVE THE ARTS?

### 4 Expressive Arts Therapy

THE IMAGINATIVE AND CREATIVE PROCESS AS A DOORWAY TO INNER WORK AND SELF-EMPOWERMENT

### 6 More Than Murals

AN RSF GRANTEE USES CREATIVITY, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, AND HISTORY TO TRANSFORM PEOPLE AND PLACE

### 8 Building on a Shared Vision

HOW TWO RSF INVESTORS HAVE USED COMMUNITY TO CREATE NEW INITIATIVES THAT DEFY EXPECTATION

INVESTING, LENDING, AND GIVING | INSPIRED BY THE WORK OF RUDOLF STEINER

 FOOD & AGRICULTURE

 EDUCATION & THE ARTS

 ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP



LETTER FROM DON

## The Art of Finance

Dear Friends,

This quarter we are celebrating the importance of the arts as a healing process. Cultural activities play a vital role in everyone's lives, whether it is listening to music, reading a book, or dancing the night away. It is how we renew ourselves, learn to see other perspectives, test ourselves, and feel in many ways a part of a world that is interconnected.

Arts and education have been a core focus of RSF's work since our revitalization in 1984. We understand what makes schools work and what makes cultural organizations flourish, as well as the inherent challenges they face. Such organizations rely very heavily on the support communities they develop around themselves. The core of each of those communities forms around long-term relationships based on shared values.

Relationships are at the center of our work in finance as well. One could say we are changing the culture of money in the ways we bring our community together at convenings such as our pricing meetings, and through our approach to building transparency into our financial transactions. Along the way, we have learned valuable lessons from many of the cultural organizations we fund, in particular, understanding how people connect when there is

a shared mission, purpose, and ownership. We have also been witness to new frameworks for engagement, and seeing how transformative the experience of connecting investors, donors, and borrowers can be when each party's success depends on a meaningful and fair outcome. As we cultivate this level of shared understanding in a community, our hope is that our interdependence becomes visible and that each person feels a part of having created it. For us, the art of finance is how we build community.

In reading these articles, we hope you get a sense for the scope of our work in Education and the Arts.

And we hope you enjoyed a peaceful holiday with lights of the season and some time to reflect on all the good work going on in the world, which we are honored to be a part of in partnership with you. ☺

All the best,

Don Shaffer,  
President & CEO

### 2013 EDUCATION & ARTS HIGHLIGHTS\*

Number of Grants: 278

Grants in Dollars: \$4.3 million

Percentage of Total Grantmaking: 38%

Number of Loans: 9

Loans in Dollars: \$11.7 million

Percentage of Total Loans: 49%

\*Data based on year-end estimates. Stay tuned for the 2013 Annual Report for final results.



## Creatively Financing the Arts

By Reed Mayfield, Lending Associate

Can you recall a moment when a song, a painting, a dance, or a theatrical performance moved you deeply? If you can, perhaps the experience caused you to gain a new or different emotional awareness. The arts have a unique ability to transcend age, socio-economic status, geographic location, and ranges of personal experience. The arts can simultaneously facilitate an artist to produce their work and a patron to enjoy the experience, piece, or production; the arts can also create economic value. Art promotes creativity, expression, identity, innovation, and aesthetics. These things are what we typically associate with the arts. What is less understood, however, is the multidisciplinary impact the arts have on social development, learning, and the economy. These three aspects are at the heart of what RSF focuses on through its lending activity to arts organizations, and they are the indicators of RSF's values—the arts can serve the highest intentions of the human spirit.

Art takes many forms, and there are many types of organizations that foster the arts through their programs and services. RSF is committed to supporting those that promote creativity, spiritual awareness, and provide community to people of all backgrounds. Specifically, we fund organizations that contract directly with schools or community-based organizations; provide support systems for artists, or arts organizations; and facilitate the economic prosperity of the arts.

Non-profit arts organizations face several challenges to reaching financial sustainability. In particular, these organizations have historically relied heavily on foundation and individual giving. According to a

Art promotes creativity, expression, identity, innovation, and aesthetics.

These things are what we typically associate with the arts. What is less understood, however, is the multidisciplinary impact the arts have on social development, learning, and the economy.

2012 report from The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, the recent recession contributed to a 10.9 percent drop in individual giving between 2007 and 2010. Another financial issue art organizations face is the reimbursable grant format: an organization must incur the expenses related to the programming before a grant is awarded. This form of grantmaking can cause strain on the cash flow of an organization, and make it hard to

meet overhead responsibilities, let alone budget for program growth. Arts organizations also tend to have untraditional assets such as contracts, incoming grants, or pledges, which may limit access to credit for growth or operations.

With a strong history of supporting the arts and an understanding of how non-profits work, RSF is uniquely positioned to address these financial challenges. In particular,

RSF is able to provide critical financing for working capital, facilities renovations, construction projects, or acquisition of space—financing that arts organizations often could not receive from conventional lending institutions. RSF is able to do so by employing innovative financing structures. For example, for working capital needs, RSF is able to offer a Grants Receivable Line of Credit. This entails looking at a forward rolling year of confirmed grants and making funds available based on this total. This gives an organization access to capital when their cash flow may otherwise be strained by inconsistent funding and reimbursable grants. In other cases, some financing needs are addressed by Pledge or Guarantee Loans where the organization's community participates by providing the assets necessary to secure a loan. This creates a strong financial relationship that involves organizational leadership, beneficiaries or customers, and donors.

> Continued on page 10



 GUEST ESSAY

# Expressive Arts Therapy: Responding to Traumatic and Emotional Experiences

By Denise Boston

As a society, we have come a long way in the field of mental health over the past few decades. Improving the treatment and quality of life for individuals who live with serious mental illnesses as well as people who struggle with traumatic life events such as hunger and food insecurity, violence, cultural stigmatization, and social trauma, has been at the forefront of the work of many healing practitioners and therapists all over the world. The expressive arts therapy field specifically, has given increased attention to creative and liberatory approaches to health, wellness, and trauma intervention.

Expressive Arts Therapy (EXA) integrates a range of arts modalities in the service of mental health and self-actualization. EXA therapy practitioners have a wealth of aesthetic options to draw upon—music, visual arts, dance/movement, photography, creative writing, singing, storytelling, drama, poetry, and indigenous rituals. Through the creative process, clients and/or participants have the opportunity to explore and potentially transform emotional, social, and relational issues; identify patterns of personal success; and experience new and innovative insights.

Expressive arts therapists grounded in culturally sensitive and liberation psychological approaches—ones that aim to actively understand the psychology and social structures of oppressed communities—use the arts as a means of understanding and collaborating with children, youth, families, couples, and individuals dealing with varying degrees of threats that hinder self-actualization and a path to wholeness. Expressive arts processes in counseling and group therapy have been used in a variety of settings including, but not limited to, hospice, youth residential facilities, and homeless shelters.

The body, mind, and in some cases, spiritual experience allow participants to articulate their feelings aesthetically when words are inaccessible and inadequate.

One particular health challenge that therapists and counselors worldwide are currently being exposed to is emotional and psychological trauma. Environmental-contextual conditions such as chronic violence, bullying, human trafficking, abject poverty, war, and post-traumatic stress disorder, have necessitated an authentic and empathic therapeutic presence and practice with victimized populations and trauma survivors. An expressive arts-based approach has been effective in the treatment and intervention of

trauma recovery, because an imaginative and creative process is a doorway into self-reflective inner work and self-empowerment. The body, mind, and in some cases, spiritual experience allow participants to articulate their feelings aesthetically when words are inaccessible and inadequate.

Arts approaches used in the therapeutic setting are a powerful, sacred, and evocative tool for healing. The work of the therapist in this context is to increase hope and motivation, and create enough safety that the participants can become aware of their own agency and strengths.

In my work as an EXA educator and registered drama therapist, I have facilitated workshops and training sessions in collaboration with community-based service providers on the concept of arts, healing, and social consciousness. For more than a decade, my programmatic and research interests have been in the area of African American community mental health. African Americans are often at a socioeconomic disadvantage in terms of accessing mental health care and culturally sensitive counseling. Much of my work has been conducted collaboratively with community organizations and schools, and is aimed at promoting positive youth development by increasing cultural values and presenting an expressive

arts caring approach for traumatized children and adolescents of African descent. The cultural-based research in the African American community has incorporated the use of drama, storytelling, dance, spoken word, and drumming to redress the disparities defined by historical trauma and the systematic loss of culture and self-identity. The data gathered through these projects have provided an important glimpse into the vulnerable and alienated voices of young people and the outcomes has indicated the positive and healing effects of expressing one's truth.

A memorable moment, which demonstrates the power of arts-based intervention, is an experience I had with an 18-year-old African American man by the name of Kevin (not his real name), who had been trapped in the criminal justice system most of his life. He participated in an expressive arts workshop that I facilitated for males living in a residential group home in Arlington, VA. As they entered the arts room, the young men were welcomed to the setting with the music of Tupac Shakur, a famous rap artist at that time, as well large pieces of paper and an assortment of colorful art materials. I instructed the group to allow the lyrics and the rhythm of the music to inspire them to create a collage that represented their stories, thoughts, and dreams. At first, Kevin was reticent and skeptical of this unfamiliar situation and stood with his arms folded, disconnected from the group. I did not intercede, but kept an eye on him as I moved around the room checking on the progress of the other teens. He stood for a while listening to the music, and then something moved him. He picked up the large oil pastels and immersed himself in the creative process. Once he completed one collage he approached me and asked if he could do another. In the two and a half hour session, he had the opportunity to channel his anger, trauma, and loss into two powerful, provocative works that represented his story. At the conclusion of the session, Kevin rolled up his work and left the room a different person than who he was when he walked in. I stopped Kevin on his way out and shared with him how moved I was by his work. I wanted him to know "I see you". We both shared a special transitional moment—never to see each other again. It is moments such as this that demonstrate the transformative and healing potential of the arts.

As a little girl growing up in Baltimore, MD, I loved using dance, music, reading, and dramatic play to express myself. At the age of twelve, I was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. Bedridden with

my knees filled with fluid, swollen, and painful to touch, I spent months in the hospital unable to be the energetic and vibrant child I was known to be. What I owe my recovery to was a supportive family and community, and my creative resources. I used movement and dance as my physical therapy to strengthen my inflamed limbs; and music to heal the sad places deep inside. It was from this traumatic childhood experience that I found my calling and a path to the creative exploratory process. I uncovered something profound within my spirit, and my quest for optimal health and wellness strengthened my love and compassion for others dealing with various aspects of pain and suffering.

I am appreciative of my arts-based practice and journey and will continue to use the arts with people who live within intersectional situations; race, gender, class, and sexuality. This year, I have been invited to go back to my birthplace and to Washington, DC to promote the healing arts and provide training to mental health professionals working with children and families in traumatized environments. It is inspiring to connect with local people and plant the seeds of the arts in their promising communities and to imagine a thriving untraumatized world together. 🌀

### **DENISE BOSTON**

is an Associate Professor in the Expressive Arts Therapy Program at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS). Dr. Boston was an actor and served as a director and drama teacher prior to her career as a psychology educator. Her arts-based teaching experience spans working with children, youth, families, and individuals in marginalized communities as well as at cultural centers such as the Kennedy Center, Baltimore School for the Arts, and Arena Stage-Living Stage Theatre Company. Dr. Boston received her BFA in Drama from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, a MA in Counseling and Psychology from Goddard College, and a PhD in Counseling Psychology from Walden University. CIIS is an RSF borrower.



## IMPACT STORY

# More than Murals

By Megan Mendenhall, Communications Assistant

A decade and a half ago, four graduate students from the University of Texas started with a small idea: to use the arts to support youth development. From this inspiration, they created the Theater Action Project, an interactive violence prevention program that offered drama-based activities to help youth deal with social issues. In 2003, with the addition of now-Executive Director Karen LaShelle, a new team developed dozens of additional programs that incorporated more art forms and creative means—puppetry, parades, filmmaking, drumming, mural arts—and the organization was eventually reborn as Creative Action. Today, Creative Action is Central Texas' largest provider of afterschool programming, arts enrichment, and character education, serving 18,500 youth annually.

Since its founding, Creative Action has ignited and supported the academic, social, and emotional development of over 100,000 young people in Central Texas. By providing youth with hands-on programs that utilize art-making, team building, and creative problem solving, Creative Action offers a fun and engaging way to equip children and teens with important life skills.

“In the wake of rising incidents of school violence and bullying in the late 1990s, Creative Action was formed to help give young people opportunities to develop stronger social and emotional skills,” says LaShelle. “In order to succeed and thrive, students need an opportunity to develop what I call twenty-first century skills: empathy, creativity, appreciation of diversity, critical thinking, leadership, and job training.”

These skills help define what Creative Action calls “4C” students: creative artists, courageous allies, critical thinkers, and confident leaders. These transformative qualities are what drive the development of the organization’s programming as Creative Action continuously seeks to fully engage young people. Patrick Torres, Middle School and High School Program Director at Creative Action, explains, “For us, art is a pathway for personal development, and our mission to

empower young people to become 4C students is what informs Color Squad’s impact on both individuals and communities.”

Creative Action sets itself apart by creating programs with a dual mission: to inspire youth to become 4C students while also transforming the world around them. This past summer, the organization initiated Color Squad, a project that provides aspiring young artists with opportunities to work with professional artists to install murals that renew public spaces. Youth, ages 14-20, deeply engage with the city and its history, and build important social and emotional skills as they remake neglected spaces into places of beauty, reflection, and inspiration.



Color Squad partnered with local artist Todd Sanders to restore this iconic mural, originally painted in 1998.

Photo courtesy of Todd Sanders

“Color Squad is unique because of the way it uses the arts as a tool for both youth development and civic engagement,” notes Torres. “Not only does the program transform participants into 4C students, but it also transforms neighborhoods and communities. It shows how art can impact people and place.”

Creative Action's teaching artists guide and mentor a team of 25 teens over the course of a semester to install murals that elevate and illuminate historically underserved neighborhoods. At the beginning of the project, teens conduct extensive research to identify neglected spaces that could benefit from beautification and place-making. Through interviews with key players in the community, as well as library and online research, the team investigates the space with an emphasis on history, community aspirations, and current challenges.

"For Color Squad, painting a mural isn't just about creating a picture; it's about community engagement, creating a shared space, discovering oneself and one's city," Torres explains. "We see in-depth research and connecting with the community as vital to the artistic process."

Once the team has fully explored and understood the community, they design and construct a mural and a related public arts project. The project culminates with a public reception to celebrate the artwork, artists, and local community.

In May 2013, RSF Social Finance (RSF) gave a Seed Fund grant to Color Squad to provide 25 youth stipends for its first full year in operation. The intention of the Seed Fund is to support new initiatives with small, but catalytic grants. RSF received 160 applications for the 2013 cycle and Creative Action was one of eight organizations chosen to receive grant funding.

"Creative Action's Color Squad stood out amongst other applicants because of the community involvement component," explains Ellie Lanphier, Program Associate of Philanthropic Services at RSF. "This project includes co-creation and celebration with the local neighborhood, which showed a high level of dedication and willingness to dig deeper into the true needs of their community."

This past summer, Color Squad implemented their pilot program: creating signage for an East Austin food truck, Tony's Jamaican Food. The Color Squad team partnered with neon artist and professional sign-maker Todd Sanders of Austin's Roadhouse Relics. Sanders shared his professional expertise and taught the teens how to design and create their own signs. "The highly visible work has already been grabbing attention in the community," says Torres, "and other business owners have been asking about our services."

After the success of the pilot, Color Squad plans to implement two projects a year, engaging 30 youth each semester and providing guest lectures with 15 local artists, designers, and architects throughout the

year. In the fall of 2013, they revitalized and restored the beloved "Greetings From Austin" postcard mural, an iconic landmark of South Austin. Color Squad again teamed up with Sanders, as well as the Bouldin Creek Community, to help return the mural to its original splendor.

Next summer, Creative Action will get to work close to home. The non-profit will be relocating their headquarters to the Chestnut neighborhood of East Austin where an innovative redevelopment project is revitalizing this underserved region. This project is a

> Continued on page 10

## 2014 RSF SEED FUND

The RSF Seed Fund makes \$500 – \$5000 grants to projects that provide innovative solutions to further the field of social finance or to address issues in one of our three focus areas. Although the grants are small, they make a large impact on the projects they support by providing essential start-up capital.

The Seed Fund is RSF's only active discretionary grantmaking program. The fund is advised by a rotating group of RSF staff members who review the proposals and then decide which projects will receive grants. We have been able to make \$12,500 in grants annually thanks to contributions from RSF's donor community. To help RSF continue to operate the Seed Fund, you can make a donation by visiting:

[www.rsfsocialfinance.org/donate](http://www.rsfsocialfinance.org/donate)

We will be accepting applications for the 2014 grant cycle until March 15th. To review eligibility requirements and to apply for a grant from the Seed Fund, visit:

[www.rsfsocialfinance.org/seedfundapp](http://www.rsfsocialfinance.org/seedfundapp)



## CLIENTS IN CONVERSATION

# Building on a Shared Vision

Interview with Mark Herrera, Senior Manager, Client Development

Allegra Allesandri Pfeifer transformed a struggling school into the first public Waldorf high school in the nation. Laura Summer runs a successful year-long arts education program that is completely tuition-free. Both women have experience with the challenges of starting new initiatives that defy others notions of normal. In each case, strong communities played a vital role in their success.

**Mark:** Laura what are some of the successful practices you have used in building your community at Free Columbia?

**Laura:** Well, it depends on what you mean by community. We have a small community made up of our students and teachers. Then, there's our supporting community—the people that care about us. These people provide funding and participate in whatever way they can.

Building community in the two circles is different. In the smaller circle, we take between eight and ten full-time painting students and five to seven puppetry interns for a full-time program, all day long, four days a week. In that community, we're really working closely together. We do biography work. We do group observations of the artistic work. We have a meal together at least once a week. We sing together. We do eurythmy together. All of these things really help to build this core group and a feeling of community.

Our larger circle extends quite broadly. There's a circle of local people who are interested in the work. They send us donations. Sometimes, they come to a short course. But a lot of them just want this mission to work. And then there are people all across the country, and even in Europe, who are watching out for us. We also have larger public events including an end-of-the-year arts show, and puppet shows in all the public schools in our town. We hold these events to build our visibility and to give something back to our community.

**Mark:** Allegra, how have you been able to successfully build community at Washington Carver High School?

**Allegra:** It starts with having a successful practice. Having a clear vision and mission that is shared by people is what creates a community.

I stepped into a community where some of the leaders had grassroots experience and a shared idea of building a public Waldorf high school. My work began with clarifying what this high school would look like.

One of the communities I work with is the teachers. We meet weekly to do activities like singing, eurythmy, and storytelling so that we can practice elements of Waldorf education together and learn from and about each other. Building a strong working relationship as a faculty was essential so that we could communicate this vision to the larger community.

And more than half of our students and families aren't necessarily familiar with Waldorf methods. They are involved because Carver is small and safe, and they share the part of our vision that values relationships and human development.



Archery is one of several unique extracurricular programs offered at the George Washington Carver School of Arts & Science.

Photo courtesy of George Washington Carver School

We've done a lot of work in these last six years to build our community of parents and students by celebrating together. A common practice is getting together regularly for events where students perform so that families can live some of the educational experience that their students have had.



**Mark:** What are some of the challenges or obstacles that you've faced in building these communities?

**Laura:** Free Columbia is still a small initiative. It's interesting that people often come to the full-time program, and they don't really understand what this year's worth of artistic process is about. Some of them have no relationship with Rudolf Steiner's work at all, but they are searching for something, and that draws them here.

## Having a clear vision and mission that is shared by people is what creates community.

So it means that we have to be extremely specific about the expectations we have for the students. We don't have any set tuitions, we're not accredited, and we have this donation-based financial model—people think it's pretty crazy. But once they get involved, it becomes clear. It's just reaching that level of understanding within our community that is really challenging.

**Allegra:** One of the biggest obstacles that we had was inheriting a failing school. It was a huge challenge because we had kids and teachers who were frustrated, angry, and marginalized. I had to learn how to absorb that and build our own community with them. We did that by fostering relationships. We treated people with kindness and respect. And people repeatedly said, "Are you for real? We've never been treated like this in a public school before."

I liked what Laura said regarding being really clear about the program. Within my district, our sister schools ridiculed us because we weren't understood. As we clarified who we were by building a community, by showing growth, both academically and in enrollment, it became clear to our peers that this was working in the public sector, it wasn't just a private school model.

Another layer of challenges was in meeting district, state, and federal guidelines and requirements. In America, Waldorf schools have grown up and matured in total freedom as private schools. There was a lot of concern about these government regulations removing that freedom.

By demonstrating the education, the curriculum, teacher expectations, student expectations, and outcomes, we have made it clear to the public education system and our private school peers that the public Waldorf schools are valid, valuable, and thriving educational environments.

**Laura:** It's so interesting because what you have created is the strongest answer to objections that a Waldorf school can't exist within the public sector.

People told me that my students wouldn't appreciate something unless they paid for it. Until we tried it, I didn't have a great response to that. But once we established this new model and it worked, then that was the best response to our critics. The living example is so powerful.

**Mark:** Laura, I'm interested in this model that you have created for sustaining support for your work in a gift economy. Can you talk about how it's working?

**Laura:** Free Columbia runs completely on contributions from many individuals, including our students. Sometimes, I do wonder if it's going to be working next month or next year, but so far, it is.

As a teacher, that gives me this amazing feeling of freedom. I can give the very best that I have to my students and it isn't tied to what I owe someone for paying me a lot of money. You actually get to teach out of what you know is right for your students in the moment. It's such a strong feeling that I have given up teaching in any other model.

I've also stopped selling paintings for money. We started two years ago having what we call an art dispersal, where we hang up lots of paintings and make them available to the community. Community members can become stewards of the art, which means they can take the art and keep it for as long as they want. They can pass it onto somebody else or give it back to the artist whenever they choose to.

It was an amazing experience when we first did it. People just came and took the paintings off the walls and took them home. They emailed us about where they were hanging them and sent us pictures. It was as if, until then, the paintings had been out of work and unemployed.

This has also become part of our financial model because people can contribute money to the endeavor and to support the artists.

**Mark:** Allegra, you've been cultivating this really practical and deep approach to educating. What have been some of the highlights or transformative moments for you?

**Allegra:** I'm actually inspired by some of the parallels that I'm hearing in what Laura has said. I'm reminded of a story about my students. They have a main lesson block in health and nutrition. In one activity, they harvest chard and kale from our garden and prepare it with eggs from

> Continued on page 11

> “Creatively Financing the Arts”

continued from page 3

As of late, RSF has reinvigorated its historical focus on the arts. Given the state of our culture, the arts and access to them are more important than ever. At RSF, we believe the social value created through the growth of the arts has deep, long-term positive impact in the world. We invite you to join the conversation and share your insights into the arts and how we can create the systems necessary to support their financial and creative sustainability. ↻

### FINANCING THE ARTS

While we are open to working with a range of arts organizations, we are particularly interested in those that:

- Provide access to in-house art education, training, or experience; or contract directly with schools and community-based organizations
- Provide technical or economic infrastructure for artists
- Utilize the arts for social and/or environmental transformation

All borrowers must have three or more years of operating history and minimum annual revenue of \$500,000. Loans we provide range from \$100,000 to \$5 million. RSF provides loans for construction or acquisition of property, and lines of credit.

Spread the word and contact us if you know of any great organizations in need of financing. Contact Reed Mayfield at 415.561.6175 or [reed.mayfield@rsfsocialfinance.org](mailto:reed.mayfield@rsfsocialfinance.org).

> “More Than Murals”

continued from page 7

collaborative partnership between a variety of organizations from both the for-profit and non-profit sector that have united to create a place rich with opportunities and resources.

To kick off their work in the neighborhood, Color Squad will be installing a community mural on Creative Action’s new building once complete. The mural will face the Metro rail so that it can be seen and enjoyed by commuters and visitors to the Chestnut neighborhood each day. Creative Action hopes to become a solid foundation for the community’s growth as a cohesive, innovative entity that welcomes and unites people of all ages and from all walks of life.

It’s clear that Creative Action’s Color Squad is making a mark on Austin’s art culture and local community. Their strategy of using the arts as a means for youth development, community engagement, and revitalization offers a unique and innovative model for others.

“What is exciting about Color Squad is how the projects allow youth to create truly impactful art that actually changes public spaces,” voices Torres. “Through this process, we hope participating youth will be empowered as they discover how visual art can be bigger than just themselves, that their ideas and their work speaks to the whole community, and that they develop a greater sense of connection and purpose in their city.” ↻

> "Building on a Shared Vision"

continued from page 9

our chickens. Students told us that they went home and cooked it all week long for their families—the most green vegetable they could remember eating.

It's like the artwork going out into the communities, it's this learning that the students realize, "Here's something I grew in my own garden at school. We planted it, we harvested, and now, I can take it home and nourish my family." When that happens, you have families that are being supported by what's going on in the classroom.

The art of our education is leaving the school campus with these kids and going into their homes—it's bringing health, nutrition, and love of learning home.

In the first year of the school, I would go into classrooms to visit. The classrooms were chaotic. There was little respect for the teachers, for the learning environment, for the physical space. I walked into one classroom and greeted the teacher in the class. And one girl looked at me and said, "Why are you always smiling?" I thought, "Uh-oh, this is a really hard question to answer, because she thinks I'm happy." I was actually sad. I wasn't sure that this experiment of bringing Waldorf methods into the public sector was going to work. I had to think long and hard before I could answer truthfully. I replied, "Well, I love teenagers. I've always worked in high schools; it's the place in education I love. And that's why I'm here." And I literally felt like the earth shifted. The kids realized I was serious. They believed that they were in a new kind of environment where learning could be interesting and fun, and where adults would listen respectfully to them. This experience taught me about the incredible potency of Waldorf education. The potency is held in the relationships, the intentions, and the vision that we share which is transforming our communities.

**Mark:** To wrap up, is there anything that you've heard from one another that has really resonated with you?

**Allegra:** I really like hearing Laura talk about the movement of art in the community. I've heard John Bloom speak about the healthy movement of money. And I think it's true for art and other things. In my world, it might look like trying things, experimenting, not holding fast to certain protocols about education or what it's supposed to be, but rather exploring through relationship and a safe environment. This picture of movement and flow in an educational setting is really resonating for me.

**Laura:** Throughout this conversation I'm hearing surety that this deep level of intention does work. It isn't just that it works in a small, limited, cloistered place where

everybody has the same values or the same financial background. It can work for diverse groups of people. And when it does work, it can transform people and allow them to see things that they couldn't see before. ↻

### ALLEGRA ALLESANDRI PFEIFER


is the principal of George Washington Carver School of Arts and Science, in Sacramento, CA, the first public Waldorf high school in the nation. She is a graduate of Sacramento Waldorf School and a founder and teacher of San Francisco Waldorf High School. Allegra earned her doctorate at UC Davis as part of her mission to bring Waldorf education to a wide variety of educational institutions. Sacramento City Unified School District serves 45,000 students and is the only school district in the US to support three public Waldorf schools educating over 1000 school children.

### LAURA SUMMER

is co-founder with Nathaniel Williams of Free Columbia, an arts initiative that includes a year-long program based on the fundamentals of painting as they come to life through spiritual science. She has been working with questions of color and contemporary art for 25 years and her approach is influenced by Beppe Assenza, Rudolf Steiner, and Goethe's color theory. Her work, to be found in private collections in the US and Europe, has been exhibited at the National Museum of Catholic Art and History in New York City and at the Sekem Community in Egypt.

## Events

For the latest on RSF's participation in conferences and events, check out our "Events" page at [rsfsocialfinance.org/connect/events](http://rsfsocialfinance.org/connect/events)

**THE FARM AS A LIVING ORGANISM** 

1/22/14  
Pacific Grove, CA  
[www.biodynamics.com/ecofarm](http://www.biodynamics.com/ecofarm)

**CONFLUENCE PHILANTHROPY** 

2/4/14 – 2/6/14  
Santa Fe, NM  
[www.confluencephilanthropy.org](http://www.confluencephilanthropy.org)

**PLAY BIG** 

2/9/14 – 2/12/14  
Sausalito, CA  
[www.renewalpartners.com/playBIG2014](http://www.renewalpartners.com/playBIG2014)

**SEA SUMMIT**

4/13/14 – 4/16/14  
Nashville, TN  
[www.summit14.org](http://www.summit14.org)

### WHAT'S AHEAD

The next *RSF Quarterly* will be published in April 2014 and will focus on Social Finance. We like hearing from you! Please send comments on this issue or ideas for the next to [jillian.mccoy@rsfsocialfinance.org](mailto:jillian.mccoy@rsfsocialfinance.org), call 415.561.6156 or



**NEW LEAF PAPER®**  
ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS STATEMENT  
*of using post-consumer waste fiber vs. virgin fiber*

RSF Social Finance saved the following resources by using 675 pounds of Reincarnation Matte, made with an average of 59% post-consumer waste and manufactured with electricity that is offset with Green-e® certified renewable energy certificates.  
Summer Newsletter: 4,400 units

trees	water	energy	solid waste	greenhouse gases
3.6 fully grown	1893 gallons	2.3 Million BTUs	127 pounds	349 pounds

Calculations based on research by Environmental Defense Fund and other members of the Paper Task Force.  
[www.newleafpaper.com](http://www.newleafpaper.com)

