



City of  
**OAKLAND**  
California

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News from: **Economic & Workforce  
Development Department**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 4, 2021

**\$480,000 in Cultural Grants Awarded to Local Artists,  
Arts Nonprofits to Bring Oaklanders Together**

*Oakland, CA* – The Oakland City Council approved \$480,000 in fiscal year 2020-21 grants to Oakland-based nonprofit organizations and individual artists through the City’s Cultural Funding Program, *Neighborhood Voices (VOICES)*. The arts grants range from \$7,000 for individual artist projects to \$20,000 for organization projects and have been awarded to 37 recipients. The grants will support 772 distinct arts events and activities that will expose more than 110,000 participants to cultural programming.

The VOICES grant program seeks to bring Oaklanders together to create and support a sense of belonging within a community, foster social connections that lift our spirits, feed our community well-being and offer visions for our collective future. It affirms the voices of Oaklanders by supporting the expression, recognition and understanding of the array of diverse communities that make Oakland unique, vibrant and resilient.

“Neighborhood Voices was designed to highlight and support the community-based cultural expressions, stories, histories and heritage of the many communities in Oakland’s neighborhoods,” said Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. “During a time when we have seen a collapse in our social networks, there is a great need to rebuild our community resiliency and reaffirm our neighborhoods and sense of belonging – Neighborhood Voices seeks to support just that.”

The grants support a wide range of Oakland-based artists and nonprofit organizations providing arts and cultural services in Oakland. The goal of the VOICES program is to infuse Oakland’s neighborhood with arts and cultural activities that increase exposure to, understanding of and respect for diverse cultural heritages; engage the community through arts activities; and support arts education in Oakland’s schools.

The grants support a variety of activities, with a focus on virtual programming, storytelling and arts education. For example, organization grantee Chapter 510 will provide time and space for Oakland youth to write and publish their thoughts on the COVID-19 pandemic and the current racial justice movement. Led by Oakland BIPOC teaching artists, 325 youth will participate in 6-to-20-week-long poetry, fiction and memoir classes with an opportunity to publicly (virtually) perform.

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Individual Artist Fernando Santos will execute The Laurel Civil Rights Mural Project - a multi-media outreach project that includes a civil rights mural, youth outreach, and web page highlighting Laurel District street art and artists. The

mural will feature a multi-cultural representation of civil rights leaders that represent the diverse spirit of Oakland’s social justice movements.

**Grant Application Review Process**

Following the grant application deadline, panels comprised of Bay Area professional artists and arts administrators reviewed 179 eligible applications to prepare for public review panels held in November 2020. In December 2020, the panels’ rankings were forwarded to the Funding Advisory Committee (FAC) which oversaw the allocation of funds. The FAC recommended 37 grants in this round to support the arts and cultural activities in the local community and public schools.

Funding for the VOICES grants comes from a General Purpose Fund allocation as outlined in the City’s FY 2020-21 Biennial Budget, voter-approved Measure C which added a Transient Occupancy Tax surcharge, and carryforward Public Art funds.

**Grant Recipients by Funding Category**

<b>Neighborhood Voices</b>	
<b>Individual Artist Project</b>	
<b>ARTIST</b>	<b>GRANT AMOUNT</b>
Frederick Alvarado	\$ 7,000
Karla Brundage	\$ 7,000
Cristina Carpio	\$ 7,000
Darren Lee Colston	\$ 7,000
Maria De La Rosa	\$ 7,000
Elizabeth D. Foggie	\$ 7,000
Rachel-Anne Palacios	\$ 7,000
Laurie Polster	\$ 7,000
Hasain Rasheed	\$ 7,000
Kweku Kumi Rauf	\$ 7,000
Carmen Roman	\$ 7,000
Michael Roosevelt	\$ 7,000
Fernando Santos	\$ 7,000
Teofanny Octavia Saragi	\$ 7,000
Kimberly Sims-Battiste	\$ 7,000
Cleavon Smith	\$ 7,000
Lena Sok	\$ 7,000
Babette Thomas	\$ 7,000
Ja Ronn Thompson	\$ 7,000
Joseph Warner	\$ 7,000
<b>Category Total</b>	<b>\$ 140,000</b>

(more)

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<b>Neighborhood Voices</b>	
<b>Organization Project</b>	
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>GRANT AMOUNT</b>

Asian Health Services for Banteay Srei	\$ 20,000
Beats Rhymes and Life	\$ 20,000
Chapter 510 INK	\$ 20,000
Dancers Group for dNaga GIRL Project	\$ 20,000
Dancers Group for Dohee Lee Puri Arts	\$ 20,000
Dancers Group for Grown Women Dance Collective	\$ 20,000
East Oakland Youth Development Center	\$ 20,000
Higher Gliffs for Endangered Ideas	\$ 20,000
Hip Hop for Change	\$ 20,000
Junior Center of Art and Science	\$ 20,000
Mycelium Youth Network	\$ 20,000
Oakland Education Fund for Youth Beat	\$ 20,000
Oakland Theater Project, Inc.	\$ 20,000
Sarah Webster Fabio Center for Social Justice	\$ 20,000
The Intersection for Alphabet Rockers	\$ 20,000
Women's Audio Mission	\$ 20,000
Youth Radio/YR Media	\$ 20,000
<b>Category Total</b>	<b>\$ 340,000</b>

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***About the Cultural Affairs Division***

The Cultural Affairs Division is part of the City’s Economic & Workforce Development Department. The division includes the City’s cultural funding program, which provides approximately \$1 million in grants to support the arts in Oakland; the public art program, which has more than \$1 million in funds currently dedicated for public art installations across Oakland and staff working on special events, film production permitting and a walking tours program.