



Annual Report

“We are truly inspired by the incredible resilience, resourcefulness, and determination of the people and the community we work for and among. Our goal for the next year is to continue our flagship programs and utilize our new center to become truly a cultural hub for the refugee and immigrant communities.”

Dear ARTTogether Community,

It is with tremendous gratitude and appreciation that I present to you ARTTogether's annual report for 2022. After more than two years of coping with the COVID pandemic, we have wrapped up the year cautiously optimistic that life is returning to a more recognizable normal. For ARTTogether, the recent months have gradually allowed us to organize more in-person programs, events, and gatherings, giving us the opportunity to reconnect more meaningfully and personally with our community.

World Refugee and Immigrant Day—postponed in 2020 and 2021—returned to Oakland in June and featured an impressive lineup of performances and activities for children and adults. ARTTogether expanded its music program, so that now more than 600 newly settled refugee and immigrant high school students in Oakland have the opportunity to take part. More than 300 visitors attended our Khamsa exhibition during the month of September. We collaborated with local artists and members of the community to design and paint murals in four different public spaces across the Bay Area. And through our various programs, we were able to provide financial support to more than 40 local artists.

We also are incredibly excited to announce that ARTTogether has now acquired its own community

center in downtown Oakland. With a prominent ground floor street front, the location has a gallery space for our artists to exhibit their work, and room for our diverse community to gather and share.

While all of this news represents our continuing growth and development, we stay close to the essence of our beginning. From its conception, ARTTogether has sought to bring its programs directly to its communities' spaces: neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, parks, and even homes—for this is where community revival, building, and growth happens.

As at the end of every one of these past five years, we are truly inspired by the incredible resilience, resourcefulness, and determination of the people and the community we work for and among. Our goal for the next year is to continue our flagship programs and utilize our new center to become truly a cultural hub for the refugee and immigrant communities.

This report shares our 2022 moments of joy with you and extends a heartfelt thank you for being with us through this journey. I am grateful for our community, staff, volunteers, board members, funders, and advisors, who are the true force behind our achievements.

With Deepest Gratitude,



Leva Zand
Executive Director

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HEALING ARTS
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HEALING ARTS

01



KHAMSA

ENTER HERE

KHAMSA:

EXPLORING GRIEF THROUGH MIXED MEDIA

Grieving is a fundamental part of the human experience. For refugees and immigrants, loss may be a defining experience: loss of home, belongings, country, community, and the proximity of friends and loved ones.

This fall, ARTTogether and Gathering All Muslim Artists (GAMA) featured *Khamsa*, a collaborative multimedia installation that explored the forms, contexts, and expressions of grief. Drawing from the Arabic word for “five,” the name “Khamsa” refers to the five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression

and acceptance. From the personal pain of losing a loved one, to the toll of Islamophobia and prejudice, *Khamsa* tapped into the experiences of each and every one of us, while bringing the stories and experiences of Black, Muslim, immigrant, and refugee artists to the forefront.





*“Grief is like the potter’s hands, and
we’re just in the center, spiraling.
We are shaped by our experiences.”*

—Fahd Butt, *Khamsa* Contributing Artist

**KHAMSA CLOSING NIGHT AT AGGREGATE
SPACE GALLERY/
October 2022, Oakland, CA**

Khamsa's Lead artist, Guled Muse, and its executive director, Abbas Mohamed, hosted a five-episode podcast around the project which featured conversations with contributing artists, exploring their artistic process, their relationship with grief, and their involvement with *Khamsa*.

Khamsa was unveiled at the *Aggregate Space Gallery* in Oakland in the fall. Visitors and participants were invited to share their own grieving and

healing processes, adding their thoughts in blank books. A hip hop album featuring tracks by *Khamsa* music artists was released on October 23rd through the Simmons Music Group.

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FUNDER/ Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art





PRESS PLAY :



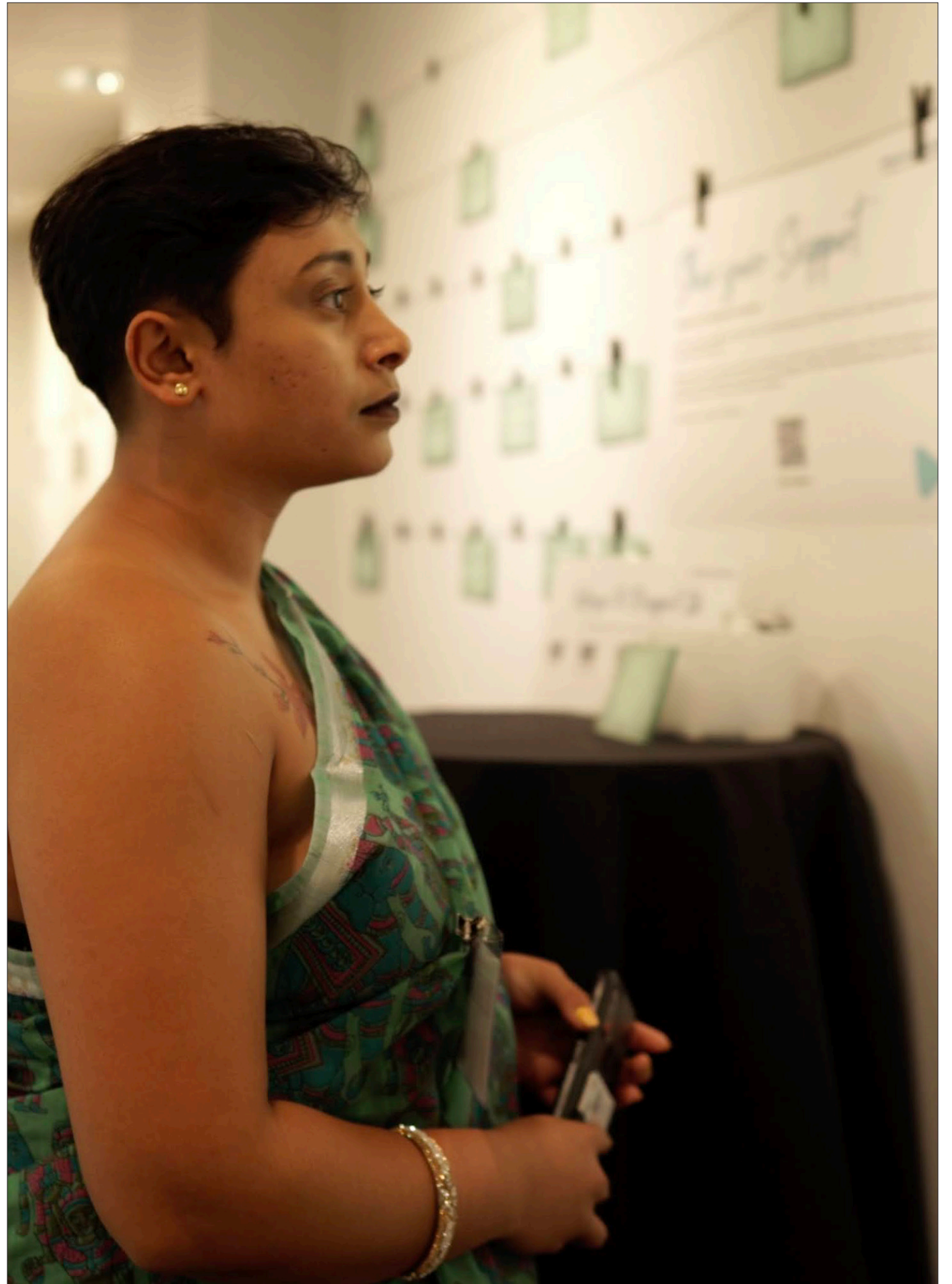
We all benefit from open and informed conversations around mental health. For refugees and immigrants, who may have experienced significant upheaval or even trauma, it can be crucial. Yet among these communities, misunderstanding and stigma around mental health struggles often present special circumstances and challenges.

October is the month of Mental Illness Awareness Week and World Mental Health Day. As part of a powerful effort to raise awareness and remove the stigma around mental health,

PRESS PLAY EXHIBITION/
October 2022,
Oakland, CA

the Oakland Asian Cultural Center (OACC), with the promotional support of ARTogether, recognized this important time with a month-long exhibition of the award-winning comic *Press Play*. The exhibition was displayed at OACC, a community hub for the Asian and Asian American community in the East Bay.

Raising Awareness around Mental Health





“

I eventually settled on the concept of displaying the comic panels on clothespins, as though they are laundry being aired to dry under the sun.... Because doesn't it feel like when we express our emotions or share our mental health experiences, it can often feel as though we're airing out our dirty laundry?... Even clean laundry will start to smell too if we do not air them out from time to time.

”

PRESS PLAY EXHIBITION/
October 2022, Oakland, CA

— Edward Gunawan, Artist
and co-author of *Press Play*

Press Play was the personal creative project of interdisciplinary writer and filmmaker—and long-time friend of ARTTogether—Edward Gunawan and his brother, illustrator and animator, Elbert Lim. The widely-viewed work was launched as an online webcomic in 2019, and as a chapbook in 2020. The OACC event was its debut as an in-person exhibition.

Near the close of the *Press Play* exhibition,

ARTTogether sponsored a Writers Panel at the OACC, featuring our Artist Support Program Director and poet, Michelle Lin (*A House Made of Water*), and poet Christine No (*Whatever Love Means*). Each read from their published works, inviting discussion about the possibilities and challenges of self- and communal-healing while confronting mental health struggles and intergenerational trauma.

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

02

Afghan Family Gatherings

COMMUNITY SUPPORT OF NEW ARRIVALS

Although it has been well over a year since the United States pulled out of Afghanistan and the Taliban took power, many Afghan refugees are only recently being processed in the U.S. Before arriving in California, they have often endured months of waiting in base camps in other states.

Fremont, California, has one of the largest Afghan communities in the U.S. Many of the new Afghan refugees are landing here, joining friends and family who are already settled.

ARTogether's Afghan Community Wellness Program is a creative approach to supporting newly-arrived Afghan refugees and parolees in our community. Structured around monthly gatherings for participating Afghan families, our staff and volunteers work to create a setting that fosters community connections while offering essential support and wellness resources.

AFGHAN FAMILY
GATHERING/
February 2022, Fremont, CA



AFGHAN FAMILY
GATHERING/
February 2022, Fremont, CA

When possible, gatherings take place in public parks near areas where many Afghan communities have settled, and participants are offered transportation in advance. Children, men, and women are split into separate groups—an approach we’ve found helps create a sustained safe space for adults to share experiences, concerns, and personal challenges. Each group is offered wraparound occupational therapy support and art-based activities—tasks that keep the hands busy and the mind present.

Many participants currently live in transitional homes and short-term rentals, many of which lack essential kitchen supplies, particularly for larger families. With the support of individuals and in coordination with the East Bay’s two refugee resettlement agencies and the East Bay Refugee and Immigrant Forum, ARTogether provides a donation distribution corner at each of its events. Items provided are based on what has been requested from our Afghan family participants.

FUNDERS/ Samuel Merritt University, California Arts Council, the City of Fremont, and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence



Women Life

Freedom



PUBLIC ART TO RAISE AWARENESS

Late one chilly October night on a Solano Avenue corner in Albany, California, two women stood on top of a multi-level scaffold positioned next to a shop window. Paintbrushes in hand, they worked with focused determination, transferring a computer-projected image onto the wall with their paint.

The image they painted was that of a woman, defiant in pose, arm raised and holding a burning headscarf. The headscarf is symbolic of systemic oppression in Iran, and the image has become

an iconic representation of the ongoing protests against the country's regime.

The words "Women, Life, Freedom"—the leading slogan of the protestors and their movement—were later added in Farsi at the bottom of the image. This became the first of a series of three murals that ARTTogether is sponsoring in the Bay Area.

WOMEN, LIFE, FREEDOM MURALS/
Mural Painting,
October 2022, Albany, CA



WOMEN, LIFE, FREEDOM
MURALS/
November 2022,
San Francisco, CA



A second mural was completed in early November in Clarion Alley, in the Mission District of San Francisco. It depicts a woman cutting her ponytail—another iconic image of the Iranian protests—over the backdrop of the tricolor red-white-green of the Iranian flag, and underneath the English words, “Women, Life, Freedom.”

These murals, sponsored by ARTogether, express our wish to demonstrate solidarity with the courageous women in Iran. We hope that they may help raise awareness about the events unfolding in the country.



WOMEN, LIFE, FREEDOM
MURAL/
November 2022,
San Francisco, CA

San Antonio Park Mural:



PUBLIC ART TO CELEBRATE COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY PAINTING
DAYS/
September 2022, Oakland, CA



San Antonio Park is one of Oakland's oldest parks, with a rich history rooted in Oakland's founding and development. Although the park passed for a time into a period of decline, the public's efforts in recent decades have transformed the location into a thriving space for sports, community gardening, events and gatherings. The park hosts the Malcolm X Jazz Arts Festival each year, and offers food distribution and social services to the neighborhood year-round.

The external walls of the park's tennis courts are the location of a new mural—the collaborative effort of Bay Area muralist Cece Carpio and ARTogether—that celebrates the neighborhood community, as well as nature, sports, and activities that the park brings together. Residents of the surrounding neighborhoods—including students at the nearby Roosevelt Middle

FUNDERS/

California Arts Council and
the Office of Councilmember
Nikki Fortunato Bas

School—were invited to take part in its creation and design in a series of workshops, starting with the question, “What does the park mean to you?” At the end of the process, each participant made their own mural design with collage.

Plants, oak trees, acorns, a hawk, basketball, hands gripping a tennis racquet—a reference to Selena and Venus Williams, who many recall played in the park early in their careers—all appear in the mural, which was unveiled in a community gathering in September.



Peralta Hacienda Historical Park Mural

PUBLIC ART TO EMPOWER

Peralta Hacienda Historical Park is a six-acre park in the Peralta district of Oakland. With historic roots as the first Spanish-speaking settlement in the Oakland area, it opened as a public space in 1996, and today hosts a range of events, exhibits, and programs that celebrate

and support the diversity of its surrounding communities. In recent years, the park has been the gathering place to honor the springtime Cambodian New Year. Social services, food distribution, and Covid testing and vaccination, are made available at the park year-round.



“ This program, and ultimately the mural, involved a lot of critical thinking and learning about what kids think about these days: mental illness, depression, being misunderstood, social media. ”

—Pat Kong, Lead Artist

This fall, Peralta Park became the site of a new mural, a collaborative effort of Khmer-American artist Pat Kong and participants in CERI and ARTTogether's Southeast Asian Street Art Workshops (SEASAW) program. The work is a powerful depiction of protest, pride, and resilience, but remains grounded in participants' cultural roots. Although many in the group were Cambodian—represented richly in the mural's images—one participant from a Latinx family advocated for the inclusion of an Aztec temple.

CERI and ARTTogether, together with SEASAW participants and friends, celebrated the mural's unveiling in the park on September 28th.

FUNDERS/ California Arts Council and the City of Oakland

MURAL UNVEILING CEREMONY/

August 2022, Oakland, CA



World Refugee and Immigrant Day

*WORLD REFUGEE AND
IMMIGRANT DAY FESTIVAL/
June 2022, Oakland, CA*

After a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Oakland's annual World Refugee and Immigrant Day has returned!

We're thrilled to report that the 2022 Festival was a great success! The program featured an outstanding and diverse lineup of performances, representing several of the refugee and immigrant communities of Oakland. It included music and dance from Afghanistan, music from Latin America, a traditional fashion performance from Vietnam, music from the Arab Middle East, contemporary dance and music, and traditional Chinese music. Food was provided free, offering dishes from an Afghan caterer for halal foods, Korean bento boxes, and Vietnamese sweets. Activities included programming for children—face painting, soccer, games, and art—and for adults and children, a mural project.





The event occurred on June 18, 2022, at Clinton Park in Oakland's Little Saigon. Sponsored and organized by East Bay Refugee and Immigrant Forum and its partners, the date aligned with UNHCR World Refugee Day, honoring refugees around the world.

Turnout was estimated at over 400 participants from over 20 cities—most from Oakland—across the Bay Area, with over 20 languages represented among them. More than half of attendees reported having or having had refugee or asylee status, and a third had been living in the United States for ten years or less.

FUNDER/ City of Oakland

*WORLD REFUGEE AND
IMMIGRANT DAY FESTIVAL/
June 2022, Oakland, CA*

PEDALING POINT:

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

This is our first ever program to run at our new center! We are so excited and inspired by the warm, welcoming atmosphere created by the artists and participants in our new space.

Pedaling Point is a multi-stage art project that began this Fall with plans to continue through much of the next year. The vision of installation artist Taro Hattori in a collaborative effort with ARTTogether, it seeks to spark conversation between refugees and non-refugees in our community, helping to bridge gaps of misunderstanding and isolation through dialogue, singing and shared narratives.

Bridging Experience

ARTOGETHER



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES / PEDALING POINT

45

**PEDALING POINT WORKSHOP
AT THE ARTOGETHER CENTER/
November 2022, Oakland, CA**

For the first stage of the project, sixteen community members were selected to participate from a pool of diverse applicants early in 2022. Each participant identifying as a refugee or immigrant was paired with a non-refugee or immigrant participant. In the Fall, Bay Area artist Sabina Kariat led the group through a series of four three-hour workshops, introducing diverse examples of story-telling, and inviting participants—working closely with their partners—to tell their own stories through a combination of writing and art. Workshops continuing into 2023, led by composer Sahba Aminikia, will introduce music and singing as forms of self-expression.

FUNDERS/ The Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation and the Creative Work Fund, a program of the Walter and Elise Haas Fund that also is supported by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.



MENTORSHIP PROGRAM:

Forging an artistic career requires both creative force and a specialized knowledge of available resources and direction. Having a guide, a model, or a friend with common life and professional experience can help establish a foundation of inspiration, motivation, and self-confidence—all crucial to laying down a creative pathway.

ARTogether is proud to offer the Artist Mentorship program, an Oakland-based program created to support refugee and immigrant artists. Launched in January 2022, the program welcomes artists of all crafts, levels, and experiences, looking to expand their network, learn new skills, developr their

career, and obtain professional guidance. Following an application process, we pair mentees—theyselfs up-and-coming artists—with mentor artists with compatible interests, artistic craft specialties, experience levels, and/or goals for the mentorship program.

In its first form, the program was structured around six one-on-one monthly meetings of mentees with their assigned mentors, as well as six gatherings with artists and art professionals, including three professional development opportunities (grant writing, portfolio review, and a marketing workshop), and some financial support.

Supporting Refugee and Immigrant Artists





“[My mentor] was so extremely inspiring, his curatorial projects are impressive as well as his sense of community.... I just wanted to go straight to my studio and do more work, not any kind of work but be brave, daring... something I lost a bit during my immigration and reintegration process.”

—Artist Mentee, Mentorship Program

“... I really feel like I am gaining understanding about my goals, my visions and what I need to do next to obtain them!.... It feels really empowering to define and pinpoint exactly what it is that I want to represent.”

—Artist Mentee, Mentorship Program



FUNDER/ City of Oakland

YOUTH PROGRAMS

03

Music Program

MUSIC: TRANSCENDING LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL BARRIERS

The ARTTogether Music Program brings the magic of music-making directly to refugee and immigrant students at their schools. Launched in early 2019 at Oakland International High School, the Music Program expanded early this Fall to include Fremont High School in East Oakland, where it has been specifically developed for its NEST (Newcomer Education Students in Transition) program.

Nick Kanozik, ARTTogether's Music & Artistic Director, leads students together in a jam session that features songs of their choice. Students may suggest playing a traditional Yemeni song, a Vietnamese lullaby, a Reggaeton track, or an American pop song. The group makes a collective decision, and Nick shows students how to play it on their instruments, simplifying the music as needed. Students are

given instruction in singing or playing on a variety of instruments, including drums, bass, guitar, piano, and auxiliary percussion.

All of the more than 300 NEST students at FHS are new arrivals to the United States; many from Central America, East Africa, Yemen, and Afghanistan. Students at both high schools come with a broad range of music and language skills. Although English is a second language for all of the program's students, it poses little barrier when what's being created is so universal, and because the creative process itself is so physical.

"You just see their eyes light up!" Nick says. Suddenly, students can recreate songs from their childhood or melodies they've heard on the radio. "I can't describe the experience in words."

FUNDERS/ The Joseph & Vera Long Foundation, the Barrios Trust, The Nicholson Family Foundation, TahDah Foundation, the Betsy Gordon Foundation, California Arts Council, and the City of Oakland



“It is not uncommon to have a class where students are all speaking separate languages (whether Amharic, Spanish, Arabic, Tigrinya, or English). We can’t always speak to each other, but we still come together to make music.”

—Nick Kanozik, ARTTogether's Music & Artistic Director

Music Scholarship



ARTogether's Music Scholarship program is a unique opportunity for youth from refugee and immigrant families to pursue a career in music. Launched in 2020 and now awarded once every year, each student selected for the Music Scholarship program works with ARTogether's Music & Artistic Director, Nick Kanozik, to develop a year-long project that will help them realize their aspirations and develop as musicians.

The scholarship student receives the instrument or musical equipment that supports their musical interests and project goals, as well as free one-on-one music lessons with local professional musicians throughout their project. Students not fluent in English are connected with multi-lingual music teachers fluent in their primary language

Past projects have included developing musical pieces for a final performance and recording, and

working with local musicians to compose and perform an original musical composition.

This year, ARTogether is expanding its Music Scholarship program to select two student recipients from refugee/immigrant families. Student candidates will be selected through two channels: one student through ARTogether's ongoing Music Program at Oakland International High School and Fremont High School; and one student through outreach across

the Oakland Unified School District through the district's Visual & Performing Arts Department. Students will also be considered and invited through Oakland-based charter schools where over 80% of the student body are eligible to receive free or discounted lunches.

FIRST SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT
April 2022, Oakland, CA

SEASAW:

SUPPORTING AT-PROMISE YOUTH THROUGH ART

Southeast Asian Street Art Workshops (SEASAW) was a 2022 program rooted in a new way of thinking about civic engagement and social justice. A joint effort of ARTTogether and the youth program of the Center for Empowering Refugees and Immigrants (CERI), SEASAW sought to give youth whose lives have been affected by systemic inequity and the carceral system the sense of an affirming community. Offering an alternative space and creative means of communication and expression, it provided youth with much-needed support, guidance, and opportunity to learn.

“The reality is that many young people are drawn to gang culture, especially from marginalized communities, simply because they long for belonging, connection, and a sense of safety, which we all crave.”

- Polina Marso, ARTTogether's Program Manager



“It is important for these youth to see their faces in public places to cultivate a sense of belonging and ownership to their city.”

—Leva Zand, Executive Director of ARTogether



Launched late last year and continuing through the past summer, the SEASAW program was divided into 3 two-month modules: Arts and Social Justice Education, Identity and Storytelling, and Mural Art. The twenty participants, all under the age of 24, were at-promise and ICE-impacted youth from refugee and immigrant backgrounds. Khmer-American muralist Pat Kong led the group through an exploration of local art history, identity, storytelling, and mural painting.

Participants learned about different art-making techniques that cultivate self-expression through art. Field trips for the group included a visit to the Oakland Museum of Art

The SEASAW series culminated with the creation and unveiling of a mural in Oakland’s Peralta Hacienda Historical Park, designed and painted by Khmer-American artist Pat Kong together with the collective inspiration and contribution of all the workshop participants.

FUNDERS/ California Arts Council and the City of Oakland



SUMMER ART CAMPS

For Children



SUMMER ART CAMPS/
june 2022, Oakland, CA



Offered free to children ages 6-11 years from immigrant and refugee backgrounds, ARTTogether's annual Summer Art Camps are one of our longest-running programs.

Co-hosted with the Center for Empowering Refugees and Immigrants, our camps offer a welcoming space where kids can explore their creativity and express

their imaginative ideas through art. Camp activities range from guided creative art projects to educational and holistic art activities to more freeform expressive art. Kids can look forward to fun projects like making clay sculptures, painting, collaging, and exploring the styles of famous artists. Elements of the activities address sensory and mental wellness.





The ARTTogether-CERI Summer Art Camps are developed and run in partnership with Samuel Merritt University. Counselors included students and faculty from the Department of Occupational Therapy, who bring their expertise to the design

and implementation of camp games and activities. We look forward to hosting next year's camps at the new ARTTogether Center in Downtown Oakland!

FUNDER/ Oakland Art Association

SUMMER ART CAMPS/
July 2022, Oakland, CA



IMPACT

04

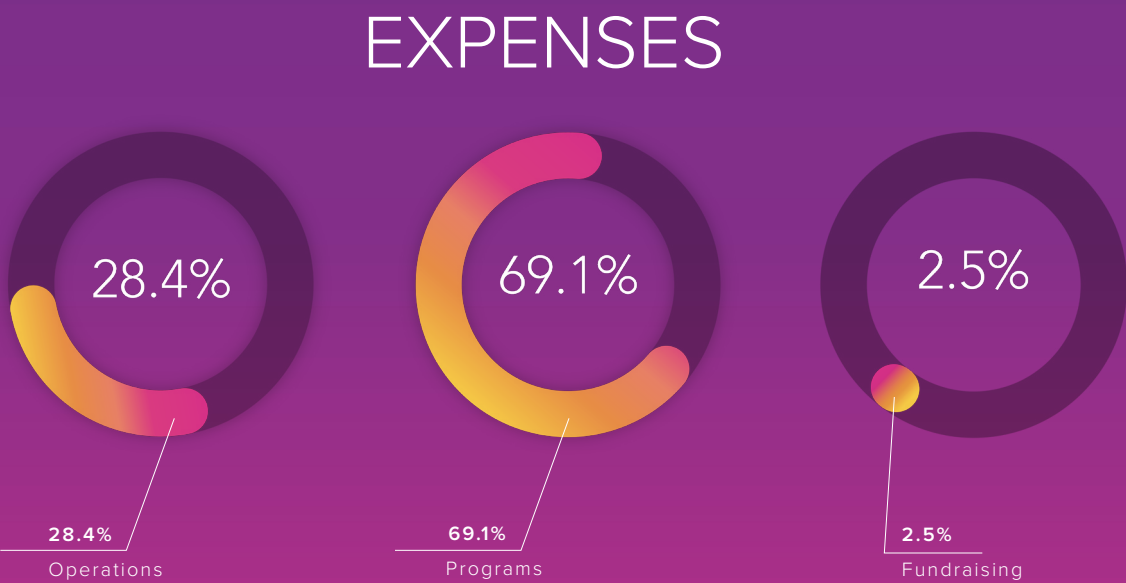
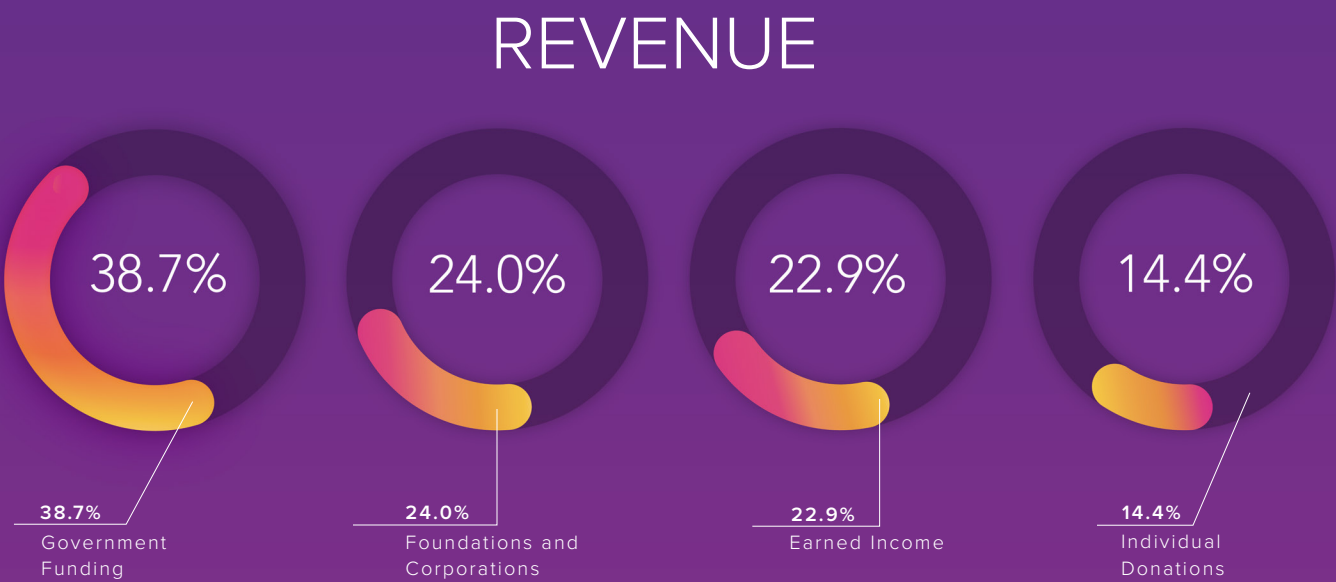
PROGRAMS/ REACH

ARTogether provided **17** unique programs (a total of **147** sessions) to our community and a total of **914** individuals participated in our workshops and events! See below how we improved our programs and participation over the last six years.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Programs	6	10	18	27	31	17
Sessions	34	77	144	112	134	147
Participants	384	1021	730	835	858	914

FINANCIAL REPORT

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Revenue	\$6,301	\$47,172	\$76,052	\$305,192	\$374,423	\$536,624
Expenses	\$6,300	\$15,912	\$51,528	\$239,864	\$243,825	\$551,746



THANK YOU

VOLUNTEERS AT AFGHAN
FAMILY GATHERING/
February 2022, Fremont, CA



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