

## California Arts Council

### 2016-2017 Reentry through the Arts Project Descriptions

Reentry through the Arts (RTA) is a two-year pilot grant program rooted in the California Arts Council’s (CAC) belief that the arts are a powerful vehicle for positive change in people, communities and society. RTA was initiated in response to the Senate Budget Act of 2016 that states, “The Arts Council shall develop a reentry or bridging program to facilitate and expand arts programs designed to help inmates transition from incarceration back into their communities and prevent those on probation, parole, or post-release community supervision from being incarcerated.” For this pilot program, RTA supports high-quality arts programs for people who have been convicted of a criminal offense and have served time in correctional institutions. Learn more at <http://arts.ca.gov/programs/rta.php>.

Number of Grants Awarded: 10 | Total Investment: \$648,284

Organization, County and Grant Award Amount	Project Description
<b>Actors' Gang, Inc.</b> <i>Los Angeles</i> \$100,000	With support from the California Arts Council, The Actors' Gang Prison (Reentry) Project will provide four 10-week workshops (once a week, four hours a day) at FOTEP/HealthRIGT 360, El Monte, specifically servicing women over the course of two years. Using theatre as a tool, The Reentry Project fosters self-esteem, tolerance, and nonviolent expression, significantly reducing in-prison violence while preparing students for life beyond bars with emotional tools to successfully return to society.
<b>Aviva Family and Children's Services</b> <i>Los Angeles</i> \$47,093	With support from the California Arts Council, Aviva Family and Children's Services will partner with the UCLA Visual and Performing Arts Education (VAPAE) Program and Agency Arts to produce a Performing Arts program for formerly incarcerated youth served by Aviva's residential and community programs. During Fall 2017 and Winter 2018, we will offer weekly workshops in dance, theater and performance for probation youth, culminating in an original theatrical performance for a community audience.
<b>Community Works West</b> <i>Alameda</i> \$80,000	Community Works will coordinate and conduct Restorative Justice Arts workshops in reentry facilities in San Francisco and Alameda County. The RJ Arts program will support returning individuals through restorative justice healing circles and hands-on art-making. Integrated with existing reentry services at each site, these 12-week sessions will focus on repairing and reconnecting relationships of formerly incarcerated people with themselves, their families, and communities.
<b>Friends Outside in Los Angeles County</b> <i>Los Angeles</i>	With support from the California Arts Council, Friends Outside in Los Angeles County (FOLA) will expand their collaboration with TheatreWorkers Project by providing increased opportunities for the formerly incarcerated and those on work release to redefine their personal narratives through theatre. FOLA's Dads Back! Academy members'

\$90,000	participation in improvisation, movement, and writing will culminate in the creation of performances presented to peers, at-risk youth, families, and the public.
<b>Idris Ackamoor and Cultural Odyssey</b> <i>San Francisco</i> \$80,000	With support from the California Arts Council Cultural Odyssey's Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women will partner with the San Francisco Sheriff's Department to will bridge the community-prison division by providing opportunities for structured artistic interactions between community members and formerly incarcerated individuals; utilize artistic experiences to positively impact the lives of formerly incarcerated people; and demonstrate the impact of restorative justice strategies.
<b>Los Angeles Poverty Department</b> <i>Los Angeles</i> \$63,200	With support from the California Arts Council, the Los Angeles Poverty Department, will produce five months of weekly theater workshops (five months yearly in each of the two Arts Through Reentry pilot program years) with participants in the Weingart Center's EPIC six-month residential reentry program. Each workshop series will culminate in a community presentation. EPIC provides men and women on parole a structured transition into the community.
<b>Muckenthaler Cultural Center</b> <i>Orange</i> \$50,611	We propose storytelling and hip-hop dance classes with formerly incarcerated youth ages 15-26 years with mental health needs. Students will craft their stories and perform in front of a group with the intent to help with their reunification with family and job interviews, both times when lives can be drastically improved with good communication skills. Students will also learn how to constructively express themselves through dance while building their confidence, self discipline, and self-esteem.
<b>Playwrights Project</b> <i>San Diego</i> \$36,000	With support from the California Arts Council, Playwrights Project will partner with the East Mesa Reentry Facility (EMRF) to provide playwriting and theater education to inmates at EMRF. The program will consist of six 12-week playwriting programs over a two-year period. Out of the Yard curriculum utilizes instruction in theatre arts as a tool for learning and practicing interpersonal, problem solving, and communication skills required for reentry in the workplace, home life, and community.
<b>The Aja Project</b> <i>San Diego</i> \$65,380	With support from the California Arts Council, The Aja Project will partner with the San Diego County Office of Education's Juvenile Court and Community Schools' Career Technical Education Work Readiness program to support young people as they enter the workforce. Through photographic image and narrative creation and in-class facilitated conversation, participants will analyze the factors in their lives which inspire and inhibit their ability to succeed in post incarceration employment.
<b>Ventura County Arts Council</b> <i>Ventura</i> \$36,000	With support from the California Arts Council, VCAC will contract Lise Solvang to teach knitting to formerly incarcerated women taking part in the Probation Department's STEPS program, managed by the Human Services Agency. Solvang will teach a two hour class every week. Participants will learn to knit, learn to teach knitting, and have an opportunity to sell their work in a retail environment run by VCAC where they can also receive job training.