

Philadelphia Parks and Recreation CASE STUDY Philadelphia Unites Artists and Communities Through Collaborative Program



A map of Philadelphia, PA and Philadelphia County, with a blue circle indicating a specific location in the southeast corner of the city.

Philadelphia, PA
Philadelphia County

Background:

In 2011 Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PP&R) and the City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program launched a collaboration that aligns PP & R's objective to develop high-level practices and leadership in "out of school" activities with Mural Arts' mission to unite artists and communities through a collaborative process that transforms public spaces and individual lives.

Rationale:

A2O combines art education programming and community engagement to foster a lasting appreciation of the natural and environmental assets of Philadelphia. Artists are temporarily paired with selected recreation facilities, where they lead twice weekly art classes and two family and community events that offer both an exploration of the natural environment and engaging, hands-on arts activities. Every residency culminates in a temporary or permanent artwork that lives in the recreation facility.

Resources Required:

A2O is primarily funded by Philadelphia Parks & Recreation and managed and facilitated by Mural Arts. All programs are held at Philadelphia Parks & Recreation sites.

Process:

A2O began with site and artist selections. RFP's were distributed to various parks & recreation facility supervisors to see who would like to be a part of the program. Artists who submitted job applications and resumes were brought in to discuss possible artwork and themes they would like to explore. Once sites and artists were chosen, they were paired. Themes and projects were agreed upon and then registration for the classes began.

28 Residencies have been completed
13 Recreation sites have been involved
25 Artists have worked with A2O
325 Children have participated

Challenge Overcome:

Some challenges the program first faced were adjusting the times of the programs, changing age requirements and other activities taking place in the same space. These challenges were easily addressed to accommodate everyone more successfully and even to include some of the participants in the other programs who wanted to be a part of A2O. Most of these participants came directly from the already existing After School Programs at the site. As a result of this, extension "After School Curriculum Guides" have been published highlighting A2O projects and distributed for all the PPR After School Programs so they can include A2O activities in their curriculum.

For more information on A2O, please visit

<http://muralarts.org/collections/projects/arts-artists-outdoors-environmental-projects>

