



The Black Belt Community Foundation

DATA IMPACT CENTER

The Black Belt Bulletin

ISSUE 24 | NOVEMBER 6, 2023 | SPOTLIGHT ON ARTS GRANTS



– 2023 BBAI Grantees –

Bullock County

- ▶ 'Paint the Town with Dogs & Cats' Mural – Bullock Co. Humane Society
- ▶ After School Music Program – Chilly's ICE Cool Band

Choctaw County

- ▶ 'Female Deer Running in the Wild' Mural – Saiasi Foundation
- ▶ Dr. Shelia's Art in the Park – WR McGrew Outreach Development and Education Program

Dallas County

- ▶ Photographic Nights of Selma Festival – ArtsRevive CDC
- ▶ The Music & Story-Telling Festival – Bridge Crossing Jubilee
- ▶ Summer Camp Experience – Fathers of St. Edmund, Southern Missions, Inc.
- ▶ The West Dallas Antique Tractor Show – Orville Volunteer Fire Dept.

Greene County

- ▶ Arts and Crafts 2.0 – Center For Rural Family Development
- ▶ Art Sampler Showcase – Eutaw Housing Authority Enrichment Program
- ▶ Performing Arts Experiences – Girl Scout Troop 408
- ▶ Black Belt Folk Roots Festival – Society of Folk Arts & Culture

Hale County

- ▶ Outdoor Classroom Space at Magnolia Grove – Black Belt Workshop

Lowndes County

- ▶ The Okra Festival – R.E.A.C.H. (Rural Enrichment Assessing Community Hands)

Macon County

- ▶ "History in the Macon" – Alpha Nu Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity
- ▶ Workshops for Practical Arts & Crafts – Too Good for Drugs Photojournalism
- ▶ Rhythm & Blueberry Festival – Tuskegee Macon Co. Community Foundation
- ▶ "Remembering Sammy" – Tuskegee Repertory Theatre, Inc.

Marengo County

- ▶ Jazz Concert to Kick-off Christmas on the River – Two Rivers Arts Council

Perry County

- ▶ Arts Education Programs – West Perry-Marion Arts and Crafts

Pickens County

- ▶ The Kuumbian African Dance & Drum Ensemble – Pickensville Community Center Council

Sumter County

- ▶ The Coleman Arts Summer Program – Coleman Center for the Arts
- ▶ Purchasing Supplies for Summits & Camps – Divine Girls Coalition
- ▶ Expanding the West Alabama Poetry Project – UWA Foundation

Wilcox County

- ▶ BAMA Kids Cultural Arts Explosion II – BAMA Kids, Inc.
- ▶ Arts Programs and Supplies – Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center
- ▶ Museum Field Trips – Freedom Quilting Bee Legacy
- ▶ Gallery Lighting & Art Display Equipment – Wilcox ArtWorks

2023 Arts Grantees Emphasize Artistic Expression



Black Belt Artist, Megan Foose, stands next to the mural that she designed and painted on the side of Hilltop Grill in Union Springs, AL.

In 2023, the Black Belt Arts Initiative (BBAI) funded a total of 28 public art installations, workshops, festivals, classes and more, emphasizing the importance of artistic expression across the Alabama Black Belt. Recently, the Bullock County Humane Society, a 2023 BBAI grantee, unveiled a large-scale mural as part of their 'Paint the Town With Dogs and Cats' program. Through art, they are seeking to reach the younger population to "begin the education of responsible pet ownership and also to instill pride in the community in which they live," showing the power of art to both bring communities together, while also addressing pressing needs and providing education. The mural, a large, expressive painting of a cat and dog, with messages to 'Save

a Life, Spay, Neuter, and Adopt', was painted by local professional artist Megan Foose with assistance from her daughter and fellow artist, Ellen, who recently graduated from Kennesaw State with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA). The Black Belt is incredibly fortunate to be home to a variety of talented artists and legacies, and the BBAI grants help to highlight those artists in both traditional and nontraditional ways.

A similar BBAI grant-funded mural was recently unveiled in Gilbertown, AL, by the Saiasi Foundation. Gilbertown is a rural community with a population hovering around 700 and this beautiful female deer mural was painted on a building at Gilbertown Walking Trail park with the goal of inviting the community & visitors to appreciate the beauty and importance of deer and the landscape and to create a subliminal sense of care for these creatures.



The Gilbertown mural portrays a beautiful, life-sized, deer running in its natural habitat.

The 4th Annual Photographic Nights of Selma, an additional BBAI grant-funded program, was held the first weekend of November, highlighting photography as an art form. Through the power of art, this festival is building bonds of friendship as it crosses a multitude of boundaries and allows people to come together to better understand each other. The event included the work of more than 2 dozen international photographers, seen through exhibitions, screenings, and various presentations, all free and open to the public.

Other grant-funded projects include an upcoming Arts Sampler Showcase from the Eutaw Housing Authority and the Annual 'Christmas on the River' Musical Extravaganza in Demopolis the first Saturday of December. The diversity of organizations and arts projects funded emphasizes the BBCF's commitment to meeting the needs of their communities through artistic opportunities and underscores the ways that the visual arts can bridge gaps, through murals, photography, and so much more.



Group photo of the 2023 Black Belt Arts Initiative grantees after they were presented with their awards at a ceremony in Selma, AL on May 20, 2023.

IMPACT ON ALABAMA

The Black Belt Arts Initiative proudly funded 28 projects this year, totaling \$87,400. From public art installations to workshops, festivals and more, this funding makes a **significant impact** in our communities.



\$87.4K
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BLACK BELT GRANTEE ORGANIZATIONS