



COMMIT TO  
**Connect**

engAGED

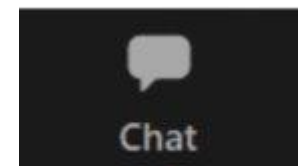
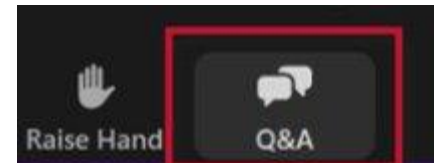
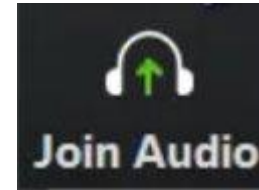
The National Resource Center  
for Engaging Older Adults

# Advancing Social Connection Through Arts and Creative Expressions

June 27, 2024

# Housekeeping

- **Audio Options**
  - Use your computer speakers, OR dial in using the phone number in your registration email.
  - All participants are muted.
- **Questions and Answers (Q&A)**
  - On the Zoom module on the bottom of your screen, click the Q&A icon, type your question in the box and submit.
  - For any questions that we aren't able to respond to, you may follow-up at [info@committoconnect.org](mailto:info@committoconnect.org).
- **Chat Feature**
  - The Chat feature allows webinar attendees, the host, co-hosts and panelists to communicate for the duration of the webinar.



# Accessibility and Support

- **ASL services are being provided today and will be pinned**
- **CART services are also being provided.**
  - Click on the CC Show Captions button or click on the link in the chat
- **Screen Reader Users: Reduce unwanted chatter**
  - Request speech on demand: Insert, Spacebar, “S”
- **To get our attention if you need tech assistance:**
  - Raise or Lower Hand: Alt + Y



COMMIT TO  
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# Commit to Connect Overview

**Katie Clark**

Administration for Community Living

# Commit to Connect

- Aim is to connect people living with isolation and loneliness with programs and resources to build the social connections they need to thrive.
- Commit to Connect is funded primarily by the U.S. Administration for Community Living
- USAging serves as the Coordinating Center
- Visit [www.committotconnect.org](http://www.committotconnect.org)



# Strategy

- Increase awareness and availability of programs and strategies that address social isolation and loneliness and grow social connections
- Build and strengthen collaboration with current and potential partners to leverage our collective efforts, resources, innovations and activities to increase social connection in the U.S.



# Key efforts include:

- Increase adoption of social connection programs throughout the United States
- Cultivate a Nationwide Network of Champions, an online networking platform, for passionate leaders and innovators dedicated to ending social isolation and loneliness
- Hold specialized events, such as the National Summit to Increase Social Connections
- Strengthen partnerships across national, state and local agencies addressing social isolation
- Develop and provide technical assistance resources that promote greater social connection and reduce social isolation and loneliness





# Welcome to a Nationwide Network of Champions

Dedicated to Ending Social Isolation and Loneliness

[Become a champion!](#)



## Connect

Connect with peers, expand your network, and make a difference.

[Visit the Member Directory](#)



## Collaborate

Join in discussions, voice your opinion, and further your knowledge.

[Visit the Discussions Page](#)



## Explore

Explore, share resources, and inspire the work in your community.

[Visit the Resources Library](#)



## Learn

Learn more about the work Champions are doing to address SIL.

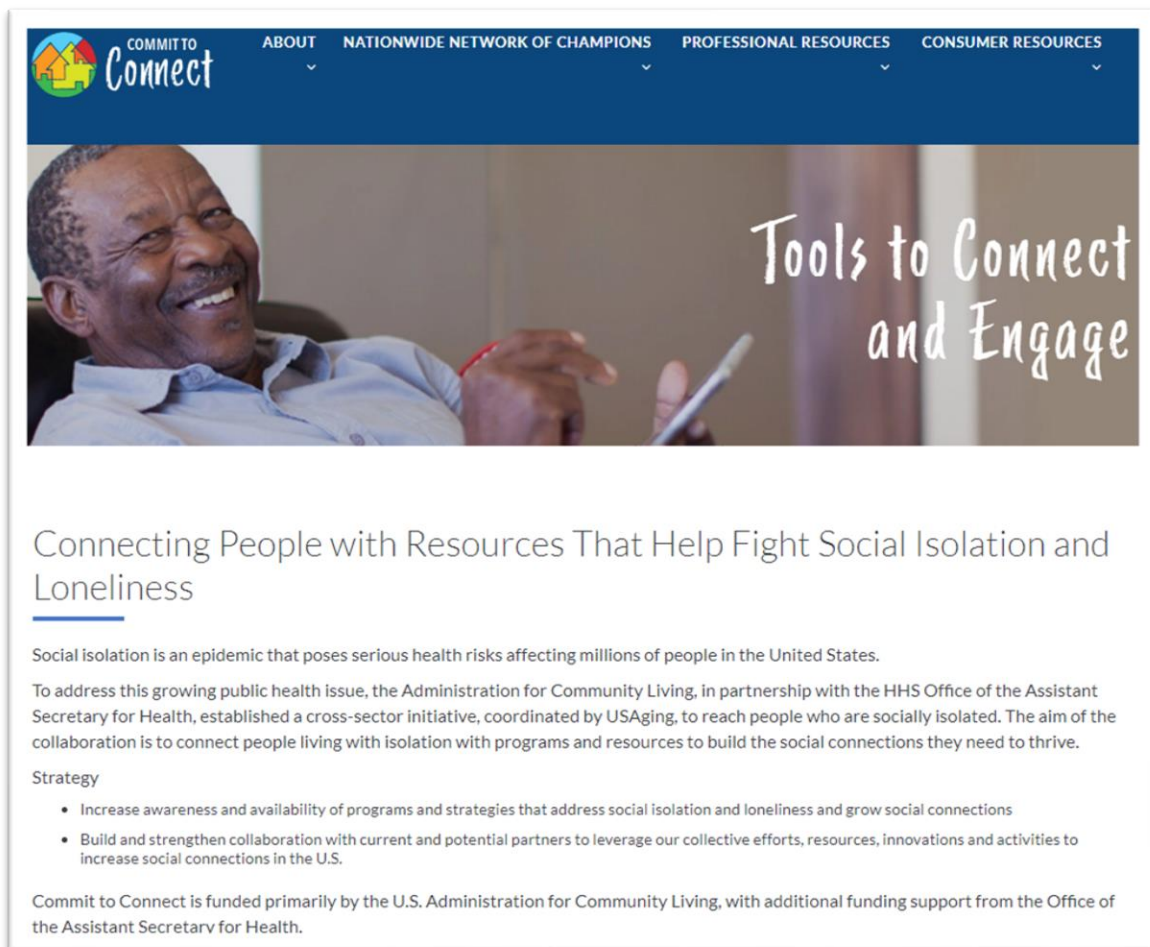
[Visit the Blog Page](#)



COMMIT TO  
Connect



# Commit to Connect Resources



COMMIT TO Connect

ABOUT NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF CHAMPIONS PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES CONSUMER RESOURCES

Tools to Connect and Engage

## Connecting People with Resources That Help Fight Social Isolation and Loneliness

Social isolation is an epidemic that poses serious health risks affecting millions of people in the United States.

To address this growing public health issue, the Administration for Community Living, in partnership with the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, established a cross-sector initiative, coordinated by USAging, to reach people who are socially isolated. The aim of the collaboration is to connect people living with isolation with programs and resources to build the social connections they need to thrive.

Strategy

- Increase awareness and availability of programs and strategies that address social isolation and loneliness and grow social connections
- Build and strengthen collaboration with current and potential partners to leverage our collective efforts, resources, innovations and activities to increase social connections in the U.S.

Commit to Connect is funded primarily by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, with additional funding support from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health.

- Visit the website and sign up for the newsletter at: <https://committtoconnect.org/>
- Learn about upcoming events and resources:
  - Webinars
  - Office Hours
  - Communities of Practice
  - Topical Guides
  - And more!



# Overview of engAGED

- National effort that provides training and technical assistance aimed for Aging Network organizations (and partners of the Aging Network) to promote social engagement and reduce social isolation and loneliness among consumers
- Administered by USAging
- Learn more at [www.engagingolderadults.org](http://www.engagingolderadults.org)

# Presenters



## **Susan Oetgen**

Arts Learning Projects Director, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

## **Leanne Hoppe**

Director of Philanthropy and Communications, Central Vermont Council on Aging



## **Holly Thompson**

Wellness Coordinator, Central Vermont Council on Aging

## **Ellis Wood**

Managing Director, Dances For A Variable Population

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# **Creative Aging: Arts Learning, Social Connection & Older Adults**

Thursday, June 27, 2024, 11:30 a.m. ET

# Creative Aging: Arts Learning, Social Connection & Older Adults



- What is creative aging?
- NASAA + EAMP partnership
- Research: creative aging + social connection
- Tips for bringing creative aging to your network

Artist Mary Hunt with participant at the West Nebraska Arts Center, Scottsbluff, NE  
(Source: Nebraska Arts Council)



# What Is Creative Aging?

- All arts modalities
- “Older adults” = aged 55+
- Designed for accessibility
- Designed for arts learning
  - Sequential lesson plans
  - Skills-based
  - Culminating event
- **Designed for social engagement**
- Culturally responsive
- Older adults have much to teach, too!

## **CA22-41 Vogue Robinson – West Charleston Library – Poetry Student Feedback**

“Have you ever written a poem before? **Never, not once. Didn't know I had it in me.**” – Tim

**“After forty years of silence, I have begun writing again. You have inspired me. Thanks.”**  
– Linda

## **CA22-26 Carol Foldvary Anderson – Sparks Museum – Oil Pastel Smudge Student Feedback**

**“Thank you, Carol, for opening my eyes and my brain. Who would have thought I'd be learning a new technique at 74.** You are truly a jewel of a human being. You are a natural teacher. I appreciate your enthusiasm, and all the effort you put into bringing us this workshop.” – James

**Source:** Nevada Arts Council





Artist working with charcoal in Lewiston Veterans' Home (photo by Larissa Dittman)  
**Source:** Idaho Commission on the Arts



Artist D. Kevin Williams with participant at the Palisade Public Library  
**Source:** Nebraska Arts Council



Artist Mary Hunt with participant at the Lakota Lutheran Center, Scottsbluff, NE  
**Source:** Nebraska Arts Council



Book Building Workshop, photos courtesy of artist Bailey Earith  
**Source:** Tennessee Arts Commission



Book Building Workshop, photos courtesy of artist Bailey Earith  
**Source:** Tennessee Arts Commission



Nora Eccles, Harrison Museum of Art  
**Source:** Utah Division of Arts and Museums

# NASAA + E.A. Michelson Philanthropy's Partnership

- **2020-2022 Leveraging State Investments in Creative Aging**
  - **\$60,000 Tier** (17 awards): AZ, DE, KY, ME, MD, NJ, NY, NE, ND, NMa, OH, OK, PA, SD, TN, UT, WY
  - **\$23,000 Tier** (19 awards): AL, CO, CT, DC, GU, ID, IN, KS, LA, MI, MT, NV, NC, PR, VT, VI, WA, WV, WI
  - Launched annual national **Creative Aging Institute**
  
- **2023-2025 States Leading Creative Aging**
  - **\$95,000** (9 awards): AZ, DE, IN, NY, NE, OH, TN, VT, WY
  - 4th annual **Creative Aging Institute** (November 2024)



## Research: Creative Aging + Social Connection

- Dr. Gene Cohen et al's **The Creativity and Aging Study (2006)** and **'The Impact of Professionally Conducted Cultural Programs on the Physical and Mental Health and Social Functioning of Older Adults'** (2006)
- Dr. Julene Johnson's **'A Community Choir Intervention to Promote Well-Being among Diverse Older Adults: Results from the Community of Voices Trial'** (2018)



Mosaic workshop  
**Source:** Virgin Islands Council on the Arts





Mosaic workshop

**Source:** Virgin Islands Council on the Arts



Teaching artist Barbara Wallace taught the basics of sculpture and clay at Elizabeth Public Library. Photography by Erik James Montgomery.  
**Source:** New Jersey State Council on the Arts



Teaching artist Sangue Mboup and Gloucester County Library participants pose after a workshop in African drumming. Older adult participants brought members of their family to experience the workshop, resulting in a multigenerational experience. Photography by Erik James Montgomery. **Source:** New Jersey State Council on the Arts



Sunshine Terrace (Photo Credit Maria Ellen Huebner)  
**Source:** Utah Division of Arts and Museums

# Tips for Bringing Creative Aging to Your Network

- Check out NASAA's creative aging resources webpage
- Attend NASAA's 2024 Creative Aging Institute and review archive of previous sessions
- Connect with other national creative aging partners
  - Arts for the Aging
  - Lifetime Arts
  - E.A. Michelson Philanthropy
- Reach out to state and local arts partners
  - State arts agencies
  - Local arts + cultural orgs
  - Local teaching artists

# In Praise

## by Kandace Steadman

Praise for deep sleep  
a warm bed, a sturdy roof for rising at light  
to stretch and begin anew

Praise for faucets  
that bring water from pipes  
to wells from streams to mountains from skies

Praise for good food from places to source it to keep and  
prepare it

Praise for seasons that change the views out my windows:  
green, gold and gray

Praise for hands and ears eyes and tongue  
for feet that walk  
and joints that bend

Praise for pain and twinges messages from my body reminding me  
I am alive

Praise for a full calendar to remind me I am needed and for cranky  
people who remind me to be kind

Praise for past thorns that leave smooth soul scars wounds healed  
balm to soothe others

Praise for family Some of blood Some of bond  
Near, dear or distant

Praise life and light  
body and breath  
grains of sand and constellations

Life Mandala Creative Aging workshop, Holladay City, UT, April 2022

**Source:** Utah Division of Arts and Museums

# Thank you!

Susan Oetgen, Arts Learning Projects Director  
Susan.Oetgen@nasaa-arts.org





# *Enhancing Social Connection through Arts and Technology*

Leanne Hoppe  
Holly Thompson





# *Program Opportunities*

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Our creative aging program allows us to:

- Provide creative aging opportunities to clients and community members
  - Reach new audience in community
  - Address social needs / isolation through new lens
- Engage a new base of volunteers
- Engage with partner nutrition programs in new ways
  - Special lunches
  - Arts activity programming

"It was just such a great way to, instead of calling up and saying, "Hi, can I help? Can I give you food?" **It was just engaging people around art and something exciting and positive.**"  
-Participant

# *Program Goals*



1. Provide a path for ongoing skill-building, self-expression, and social connection for older adults in their homes
2. Alleviate the opportunity gap for homebound older adults to participate in arts activities
3. Showcase and honor the creative work of older adults in the community
4. Help bridge the digital divide by providing devices, connection consultation, and individualized training to help facilitate social connection through the arts
5. Facilitate peer-to-peer engagement and encourage intergenerational storytelling
6. Alleviate social isolation and loneliness



"As you get old, you become young again that way, to be taken care of, and it's a way to give somebody acknowledgement. And I like that, and I think it's important. So I would say, the big impact for me was just being inspired to do more creative things." - Participant

## *Program Elements*

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- Participants choose from five Creative Care Kit options
  - Designed by professional teaching artists to be completed at the participant's own pace in their home
- Option to connect with a Creative Companion volunteer, who helps motivate and inspire their work through phone, Zoom, in-person meetings
- Option to receive an iPad and technology training
- Option to participate in live Zoom sessions with teaching artists, live open studio Zoom sessions, and on demand skill-building videos

# *Replicate Program: Three Ingredients to Making it Work*

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Creative  
Care Kit

Creative  
Companion

Technology:  
Device+  
Connection+  
Training

# *Qualifications*

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"I'm on disabilities, which means I'm poor. And so to get a whole bag full of wonderful art materials and an iPad is pretty darn cool. If it was only that, that would be almost enough for me. I like the rest of it too, but that was another huge plus." - Participant



- Participants must be age 60+
- Participants are asked to express their desire to engage in arts activities in their homes (homebound older adults are given priority)
- Creative Companion volunteers can be any age, but outreach is primarily for volunteers age 55+ for our AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP program
- No financial qualifications to participate (80% of CVCOA clients are below 185% of FPL)
- Must meet financial qualifications and express continued motivation (either to engage in technology training or continue using) to keep the iPad

# *Program Funding*

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A variety of funding sources have supported this program over four years of iteration and development:

- Initial project support from AARP Community Challenge grant and the Vermont Community Foundation Spark grant
- Meals on Wheels America More Than a Meal grant
- Business sponsorships
- Community foundation support
- CVCOA staff support
- In-kind support from partner nutrition sites and Technology for Tomorrow

# *Kit Options*

1. Storytelling through Drawing, Illustration, and Cartooning
2. Watercolor Painting
3. Poetry Writing
4. Crafting (rock painting and collage)
5. Digital Drawing



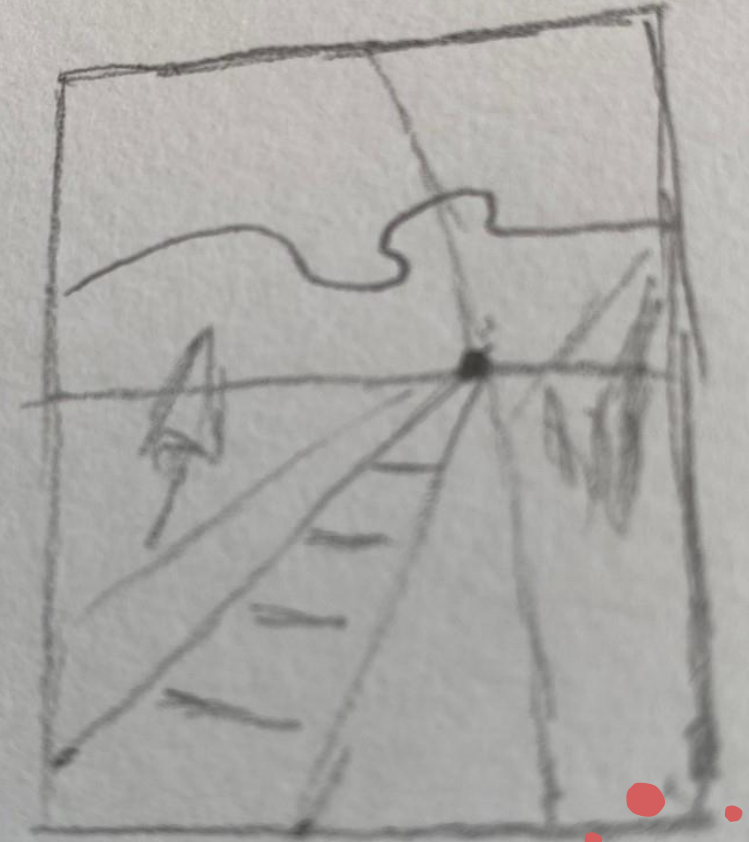
# *Example Kit Activities*

## *(Drawing Kit)*

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1. Storytelling with Illustrations
2. Life Path Project
3. Drawing Plants

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# *Supporting Volunteers*

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1. Volunteer Training – Ongoing Skill-Building Opportunities
2. Tip Sheets to Help Prompt Ways to Start Activities
3. Ongoing Staff Support
4. Social Gatherings

“I think this program truly impacted my client in a very positive way. He was an artist who hadn’t drawn in a very long time. When this opportunity came along to get him a Creative Aging kit with art supplies in it, he started to draw again and it renewed his passion for art. He drew pictures for everyone who worked with him and for many of his friends. He was so ecstatic every time he was able to receive more supplies. **His love for art and the joy that it gave him during his last several months was very evident every time I came to visit him.**”

-Case Manager

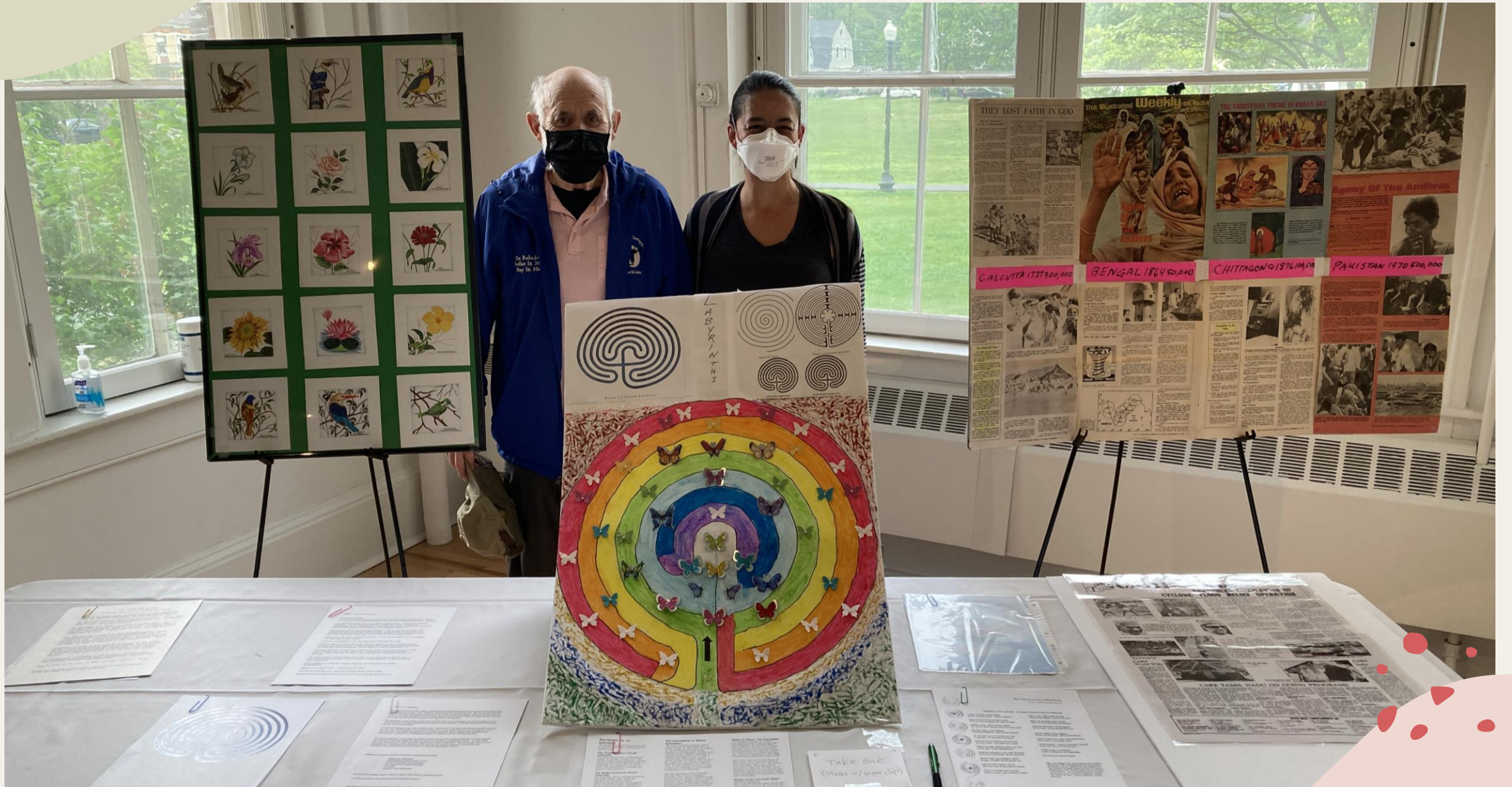
# *Celebrating Creative Aging*

Each June, CVCOA hosts a Creative Aging Celebration to showcase and honor the creative work of older artists in Central Vermont.

This free community event is a special opportunity to feature the work of Creative Care Kit participants and to bring together multiple generations to celebrate creative expressions throughout the lifespan.









*Creative Companion volunteers help motivate and inspire kit recipients through regular communication (phone, Zoom, or in-person, storytelling, conversation, and skill sharing.*

# *Questions?*

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Leanne Hoppe

[Lhoppe@cvcoa.org](mailto:Lhoppe@cvcoa.org) or 802-476-2662



**[www.cvcoa.org](http://www.cvcoa.org)**



**DANCES FOR A VARIABLE POPULATION**

**CREATING  
SOCIAL CONNECTIONS  
THROUGH DANCE**



# BRINGING DANCE TO OLDER ADULTS IN NYC (AND BEYOND)



**2500+**

audiences at free  
public  
performances

**1000+**

donors since  
inception

**800+**

older adults  
served annually

**25+**

older adult centers

**20+**

teaching artists



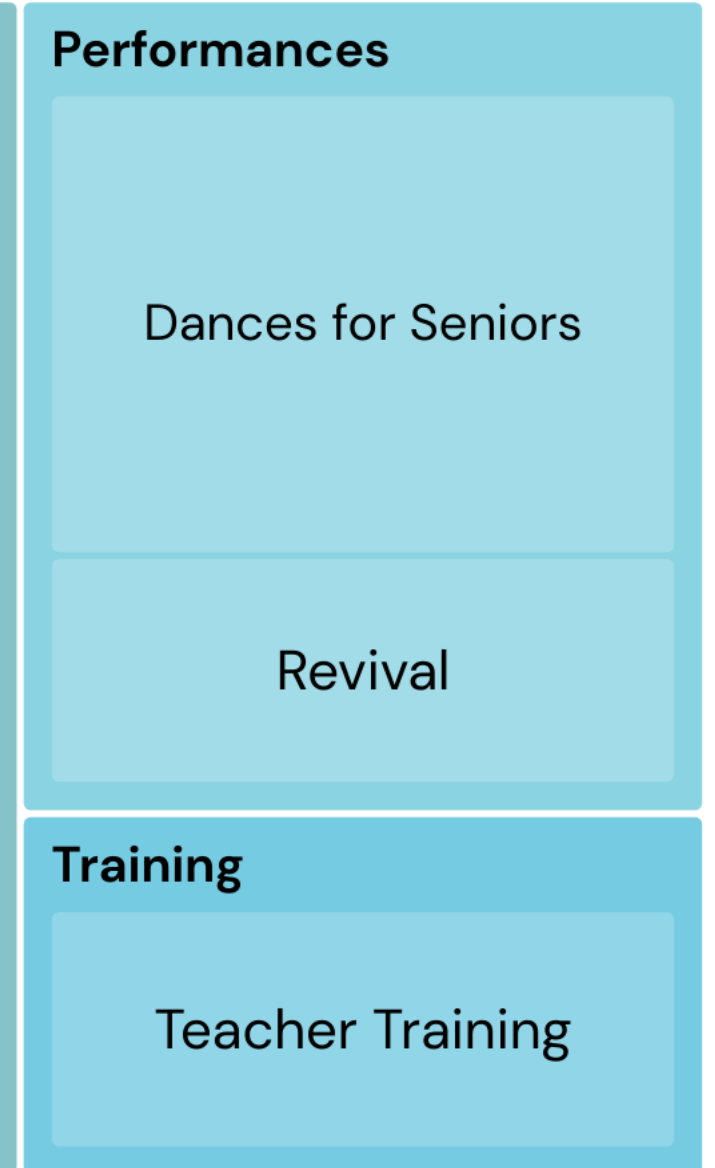
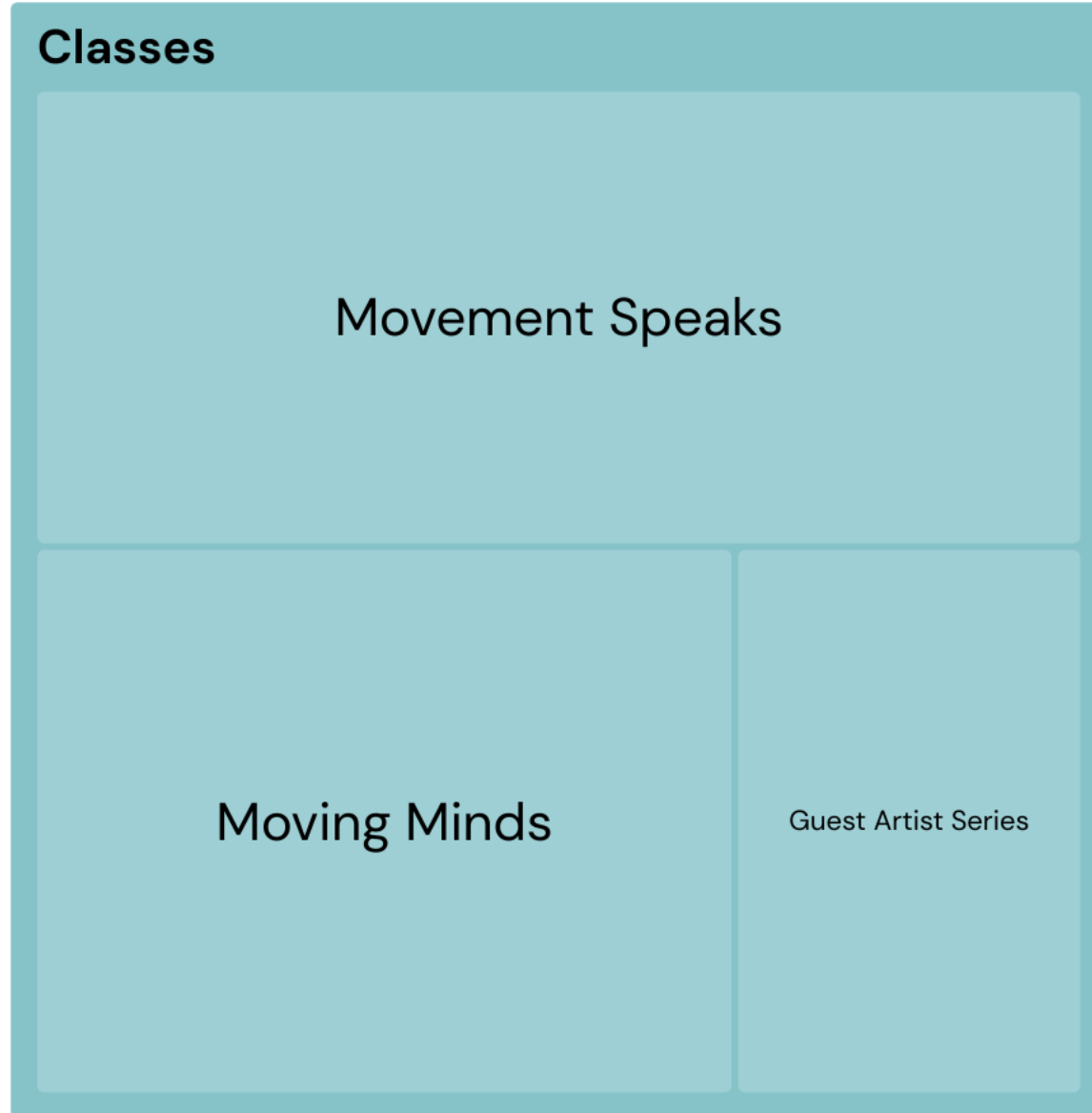


# DVP Free Programs

1 Classes

2 Performances

3 Training



# MAKING AN IMPACT

## Build creativity

90.9% of participants report increased creativity

## Improve mental and physical health

96.0% of participants report improved mental and physical health

## Strengthen social connections

89.4% of participants report improved social connections

## Enhance confidence

91.0% of participants report improved confidence

# Funding By Phase

1 Know Your Passion



Pre-funding

2 Identify What Works



Commissioned projects

3 Find the Market



Government funding from council members

4 Organize and Grow



Government funding, Foundation funding, Individual donors



# Website and Socials



Webpage:  
dvpnyc.org



Facebook:  
@DancesForAVariablePopulation



Instagram:  
@dvp\_nyc



**THANK YOU!**

**Contact DVP at  
ellis@dvpnyc.org**



# Questions and Discussion

Please submit your questions or comments through the Q&A.

# Thank you!

- Please complete the survey which will be displayed in your browser after Zoom closes.
- The recording will be available on [www.committtoconnect.org](http://www.committtoconnect.org)
- For further questions, contact us at:  
[info@committtoconnect.org](mailto:info@committtoconnect.org)

***Join us for more discussion in the Office Hours!***

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