



2024 Project Highlights

2024 saw Arts Street@Youth Employment Academy overflowing with connection, community, and creativity with **189 unique youth** participating in our creative industry academies, internship, and mentorship programs. Our youth identify as 94% BIPOC and 97% low-income with many residents from our affiliate organization, Denver Housing Authority.

- Our **creative industry academies** served **193 youth** with a **95% completion rate** and **100% demonstrating an increase in industry skills**. One highlight was our partnership with Denver Public School Colorado High School Charter Osage where youth explored fashion design and photography culminating in fashion show at the school - all while they earned credit towards graduation. Our summer academies worked with over 60 youth who learned about community issues in urban farming, affordable housing, and mental wellness. They focused on large-scale public art projects including garden murals in the Westwood neighborhoods as well as commissioned artwork in collage, painting, photography, and digital design for our client, NineDotArts. **97% said Arts Street helped them improve their computer/digital skills and 94% said they are better at solving problems.**
- Our **internship program** worked with **23 young adults** who earned stipends while working on projects for our real-world clients. Amazing projects included learning animation for a public art display at the Denver Clocktower and designs for stickers that will be sold at Winter Park and Steamboat resorts. **97% of our interns completed their internships and 100% showed an increase in industry skills.** One intern said, *"Before I came here an art career seemed impossible, not now I know there are so many options."*
- Our **mentorship & mental wellness programming** thrived with all youth participating in mental wellness workshops, and many working 1:1 with our in-house counselors, Tamika Thomas or Diana Frances and with our Youth Advisor, Destini Montez. Many got to be part of special experiences such our art and wellness retreats to Steamboat Springs and the Colorado sand dunes. All received support in guidance towards their goals of education, employment, and mental wellness. **99% of our high school students stayed in school or graduated and 97% said that Arts Street has helped them feel accepted for who they are.**
- Arts Street is also privileged to work with so many amazing **Denver artists** who teach their skills and mentor our young artists individually and in community. Our projects highlight this work led by these outstanding creatives; Adama Bamba, Jess Early, Juan Fuentes, Chelsea Romaniello, Devin Urioste and Jasmine Wynter. One Arts Street participant said, *"I love learning and being surrounded by caring, supportive and creative beings."*

Fashion Design & Photography

Spring 2024



“Life’s too short to wear boring clothes.” - Cushnie et Ochs
Arts Street worked with students, ages 14-21, attending Colorado High School Charter for eleven weeks this spring exploring fashion. The Arts Street course, taught by Jessica Early, Juan Fuentes, Devin Urioste and Adama Bamba, inspired 34 students to learn about contemporary fashion designers & photographers as well as how to create their own unique apparel. All fashion was upcycled from repurposed clothing and the young designers learned various sewing and embellishing techniques as well as portrait photography. Their clothing creations were an exploration of personal identity with student discussions about how the clothes they wear and how they present themselves in their community reflect who they are. They wrapped up their course with an exhilarating fashion show held at their school. The upcycled forward fashion wowed the audience. We’ve already seen people asking the students for commissions for their own personal upcycled fashion!



DHA Communication Dept. Designs

Spring 2024

During our spring internship, 11 artists, ages 14-17, worked with Denver Housing Authority's Communication Department to create digital designs for some of their internal communications. DHA's Communication Department sends out emails recognizing special holidays and designated months such as Cesar Chavez Day and Women's History Month. The department was utilizing simple clip art for these communications and asked Arts Street interns to develop original designs for them. The interns were assigned different days/months and researched their assignment. Next, they created a digital design they felt represented the holiday/month. Images that were chosen were then shared with DHA staff through the emails. Because of the success of this project, the DHA Communications Department wishes to continue with other interns to create designs throughout the year.



César Chávez Day 2024



Arts Street intern, Elli'Anna G (she/her), age 17, created this drawing of César Chávez, the leader of the first farm workers union, because it represents "Si Se Puede" which means "yes we can" and shows the fields and the vegetables the Chicano/as worked and grew food in.

DHA employees take time this Sunday, March 31 to honor the birthday of César Estrada Chávez. Observing his birthday serves as a tribute to his commitment to social justice and respect for human dignity. He was a trailblazer who fought for the rights of farmworkers through nonviolent resistance. Let's continue his work by practicing empathy, inclusivity, and dedication in our daily tasks. Chávez's legacy continues to inspire all of us with his unwavering emphasis on equality, equity, and justice paving the way for important victories in improving working conditions.

For more than 20 years North Denver has held a celebration in his honor that concludes at the César Chávez Park on Tennyson Street in the Berkeley neighborhood. To learn more about Denver's 23rd Annual Marcha & Celebration on April 13, visit <https://www.facebook.com/CCPJCDenver/>



Exploring Identity Spotlight

Spring 2024



This spring, Denver artist Devin Urioste worked with youth artists through our partnership with Colorado High School Charter as well as with our Arts Street interns. Devin led discussions exploring personal identity through art. This included talking about different areas of identity from the way we look, hobbies we have, cultural identity and community.

With 34 Colorado High School Charter students, ages 14-21, Devin led them in creating upcycled t-shirt collages. Students deconstructed old t-shirts and cut out pieces that represented aspects of their identity. After collecting their pieces, students sewed them onto a plain t-shirt. Many of the students wore these in a final fashion show at their CHSC.

Identity was also the focus with eleven Arts Street spring interns, ages 14-17, who worked with Devin to express aspects of their identity creatively. They discussed the meanings of their names and created graffiti style paintings. They also created a personal identity collage and an oil pastel that represented their community identity. Finally, they created self-portraits infusing their identity knowledge, utilizing photography and digital designs. These pieces were entered in the U.S. Congressional Art Competition and the interns were able to attend a reception with their work displayed and meet U.S. Congresswoman Diana DeGette.

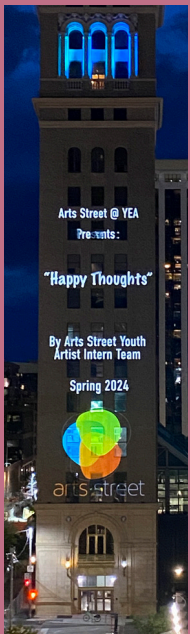


Denver Downtown Clocktower Animation

Spring 2024



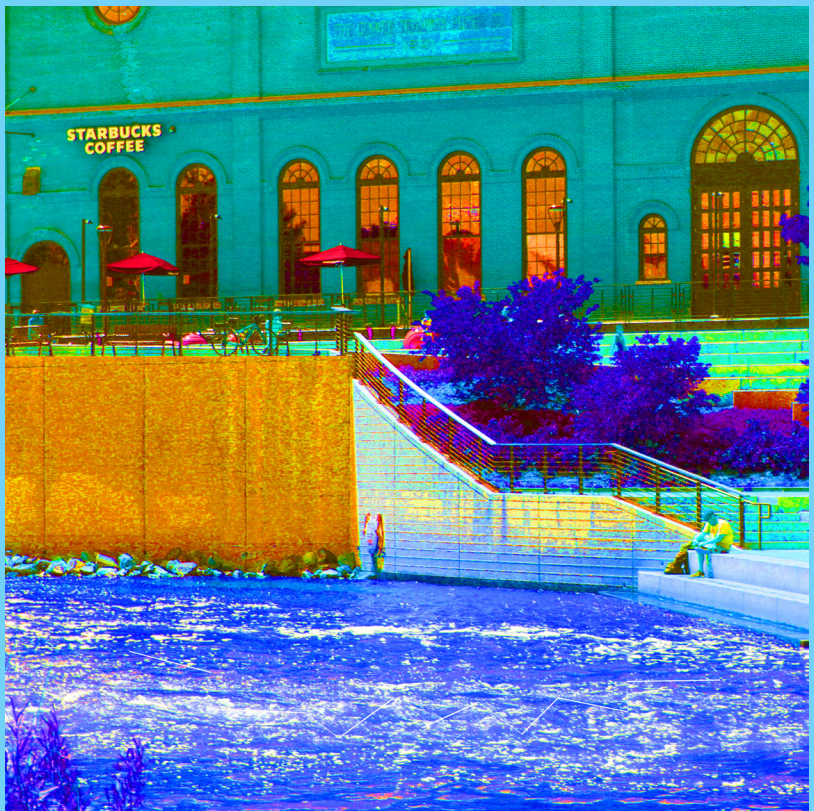
This spring, Arts Street's eleven interns, ages 14-17, worked on a large public art installation of animations projected on the Denver Downtown Clocktower on the 16th Street Mall. Arts Street's client, David Moke, with Night Lights Denver, presented information on this project to the interns and encouraged them to produce a theme they thought the public would enjoy. Interns chose the theme of a happy memory that they each have. Examples of the theme included learning that they had been accepted into cosmetology school, a camping trip and playing games with family. Led by artist/instructor, Chelsea Romaniello, our young artists learned about asset creation using iPads and Procreate software, how to export files, and how to create an animation using After Effects software. This project culminated with a celebration of interns, friends, family members and Arts Street staff going downtown to see the premier of the animations being projected. Night Lights Denver led a tour of the projection booth and explained about the projection process and opportunities in careers in animation. As night fell, the animations were played on the clocktower with exclamations of delight. Animations were projected through the weekend for a fabulous public art installation for Denver!



DHA Flo Building Signage

Summer 2024

This summer one of our artist teams had the opportunity to create unit signage designs for Denver Housing Authority's Sun Valley Flo Building. For this project, eighteen Arts Street artists, ages 14-18, met with our client, DHA Real Estate Department and Oz Architecture. During that meeting, the young artists were tasked with creating designs for unit signage using photography as their starting point. Some of the direction from the client were to be creative and think about the theme of the building which is water and estuaries. To kick off this project, the youth artists went on a photoshoot at the Platte River which runs through the Sun Valley neighborhood. Using those images, they learned techniques in Photoshop to edit and manipulate the photos. Some of those techniques included adding a color wash, creating composite photographs, and using filters. In addition, the artists learned the Japanese art of paper marbling, suminigashi, and used those pieces as additional backgrounds for possible signage. The emerging artists were led through this project by artist/instructors Adama Bamba and Juan Fuentes. Artists included: Vashti A., Jalesa A., Jayda A., Pepper C., Jade C., Bry C., Jazzy H., Esma M., Rue M., Isabella M., Val O., Ricci P., Gabie R., Laila R., Jake S., Storm S., Justine T., and Talaya W.



DHA Central Office Mural



Summer 2024



Arts Street's largest project of summer '24 kicked off by meeting with members of Denver Housing Authority's Executive team to learn about their vision for a mural in a hallway of DHA's main building. Our artist team was made up of twenty-one artists, ages 15-18. The young adult artists were able to ask questions and learn more about the values of DHA during that meeting. Using that information, each artist created a digital design in Procreate that they felt represented the vision of DHA with their own chosen color palette. They then presented the completed designs in person to DHA's executive team. That group chose one final design for the mural and three honorable mention designs that will be fabricated into hanging art. Led by artist/instructor Jessica Early, the artist team painted the chosen design on the hallway walls with a final reveal and celebration. Young adult artists included: Alex L., Angel S., El W., Eli G., Ezekiel G., Fabio N., Hannah Y., Jaishaun L., Kayla M., Kimora W., Leila A., Mikey R., Nevaeh L., Parker A., Terah G., Thien N., Thu N., Vanessa M., Yozmi R., Zariah A., and Zariah C.



Winning mural design by Eli G., pictured standing with DHA COO & General Counsel Joshua Crawley, Esq.

Decatur Fresh Stickers

Summer 2024

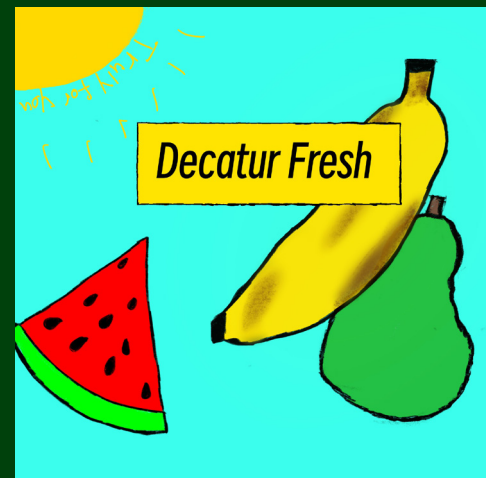
Justine Tipton's
winning design



In July 2024, twenty-two emerging artists, ages 14-23, worked with our client Decatur Fresh international market to create a design for stickers to be used in the market. Led by artist/instructor Jasmine Wynter, our artist team first met with stakeholders from Decatur Fresh to learn about the market, the Sun Valley neighborhood and what the sticker would be used for, as well as preferred color palettes and specific images the client was interested in. The young adult artists then created innovative sticker designs utilizing Procreate software on iPads. Each artist presented their completed design discussing their inspiration to the Decatur Fresh team. One image was chosen that will be produced as stickers for use for Decatur Fresh marketing. The winning design was by Justine T., age 17 and a former DHA Sun Valley resident. Other youth artists included: Amberly G., Amir R., Aubree B., Crishawn C., Daniella T., Erica D., Estella S., Hussein H., Jasid P., Jaylynn R., Josiah C., Kevin N., Attilina T., Macky G., Pierre M., Teyha M., Veronica M., Yunis A., and Zuriah B.



Arts Street artists presenting their designs to the client



Artwork for the Alta Mile High Building

Summer 2024



Arts Street's worked with client Wood Partners, facilitated by NINEdotARTS, to develop artwork for a salon wall for their affordable housing project being built in Sun Valley. The project involved creating multiple art pieces by Arts Street's emerging artists that expressed the Denver community and showcased each individual artist's voice. Led by professional Denver artists, the young adult team worked in multiple mediums including collage, painting, and digital photography. All artwork was submitted to the NINEdotARTS and Wood Partners client team and they narrowed the images down to 30 pieces that will be used for the artwork on the salon wall in the Alta Mile High building. Our team consisted of twenty-one youth artists ages 15-18 and included Alex L., Angel S., El W., Eli G., Ezekiel G., Fabio N., Hannah Y., Jaishaun L., Kayla M., Kimora W., Leila A., Mikey R., Nevaeh L., Parker A., Terah G., Thien N., Thu N., Vanessa M., Yozmi., Zariah A., and Zariah C.



Black and White Photographs

For these pieces, our young adult artists worked with Denver photographer Juan Fuentes, whose work has a focus on street photography and has been featured in multiple major museum exhibitions. They learned the basics of cameras and photography and went into the La Alma neighborhood to find images that represented the community. They discussed community identity and the ways that could be exemplified in a photograph. After photographing, the artists chose their favorites and edited them in Photoshop to create black and white images from the original color photos.



Artwork for the Alta Mile High Building

Summer 2024



Self-Portrait Photo Composites

In this part of the project, youth artists learned about studio photography, skills in Photoshop and expressing their identity creatively. They started by taking environmental photographs outside, looking for subjects that described their identity in some way. They then brought an object from home that showed an aspect of their identity to photograph. In addition, they worked together to take studio portraits of each other. They worked with artist/instructors Adama Bamba and Juan Fuentes to learn how to create composite photographs in Photoshop utilizing their environmental, object and portrait photos.



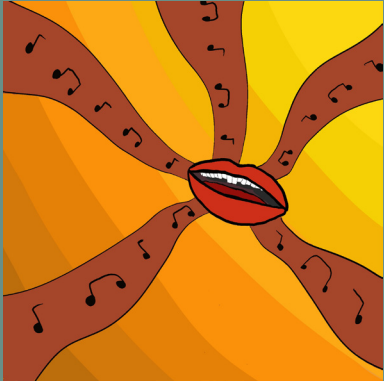
Collage

Working with Denver artist, Devin Urioste, our youth artists began this project with an exploration of identity. They discussed intersectionality and the different areas that go into personal identity. From there, they discussed color theory and design and how to make artwork more impactful. After these discussions, the artists went through magazines, books, and photographs to find different imagery that represented the intersections of their identity and created a large-scale collage composition.



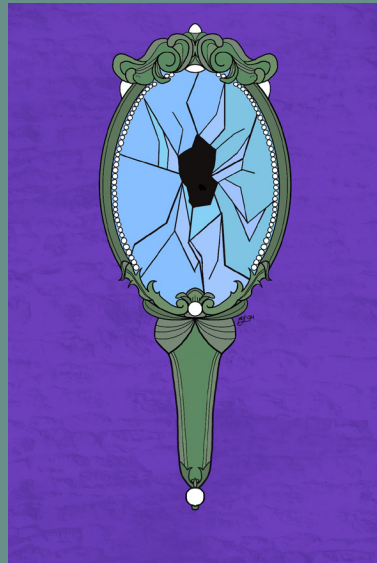
Artwork for the Alta Mile High Building

Summer 2024



Digital Design

For this part of the project, our emerging artists were inspired by their favorite song that they felt represented their identity. Led by artist/instructor Jasmine Wynter, they created digital images inspired by that song using Procreate on iPads. Exploring their own voice and style, they were encouraged to push their creativity.



Word Paintings

For the final part of the project, youth artists worked again with artist/instructor Devin Urioste and guest artist Darin Balaban from Oakland, California. They explored the meaning behind words and learned the history of graffiti and what it really means. They brainstormed different words that represented Denver to them and chose one that connected to them personally. Devin taught them about different letter fonts, drop shadows, and more as they created their first sketches. Utilizing canvas boards and acrylic paint, they created their final impactful pieces.



Westwood Arts and Eats



Summer 2024

Twenty-two emerging artists, ages 14-23, participated in a creative industries academy in July 2024 held at Denver Housing Authorities Westwood public housing development. Youth artists applied for the academy and were eligible if they lived in the Westwood development or the surrounding 80219 neighborhood. Led by artists Chelsea Romaniello and Devin Urioste, the young artists learned about community gardens, culturally relevant healthy foods and creating art to build community and highlight information. They went on a field trip to Barnum Community Gardens where they learned about composting and saw a thriving community garden with goats!



The creative components of this academy consisted of two main elements which was learning techniques for large scale chalk art and creating stencil designs and painting community garden wall murals. Chelsea Romaniello showcased her talent as a professional chalk artist and youth learned terms such as “pouncing” and techniques such as blending colors. Designs were inspired by community gardens and pollinators to inform the community. Devin led the mural component with artists first choosing multiple garden beds to highlight and painting geometric color blocks. They then created stencils that were used as templates for spray painted designs. The colorful results highlighted the community gardens that are available for use by DHA Westwood residents.



Finally, it all came together for a large community celebration which had teams of youth artists creating their chalk art designs, crafts for younger children, free food and fresh produce and booths from community partners. Community partners included Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver Public Schools pre-school program, Healthy Food for Denver Kids and more. Youth artists included: Amberly G., Amir R., Aubree B., Crishawn C., Daniella T., Erica D., Estella S., Hussein H., Jasid P., Jaylynn R., Josiah C., Justine T., Kevin N., Attilina T., Macky G., Pierre M., Teyha M., Veronica M., Yunis A., and Zuriah B.



Steamboat Ski Resort Stickers

Arts Street interns began working in fall 2024, with a new client, Steamboat Ski Resort, to create sticker designs that would be produced and sold in various retail shops at the Steamboat and Winter Park ski resorts. Ten interns, ages 14-18, first met with, Andrea Benavente who is the Visual Merchandising Manager for Steamboat. They learned about her career journey, the resort and what the client was looking for specifically in sticker designs. The interns were then asked to create three different designs, either digitally or with traditional mediums. The client wanted designs that would appeal to families and visitors to the resort, that represented Steamboat and the mountain activities, and that could also be a souvenir. Most of all, they wanted to see what creativity the interns would bring to the project.

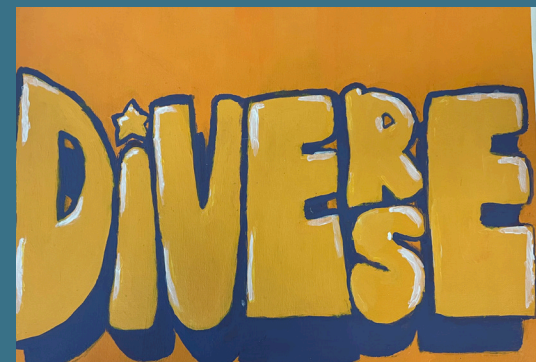
Fall 2024



The interns then presented their final designs to Andrea and Lynn Sparkman, Alterra Mountain Company Senior Retail Buyer. The interns received amazing feedback, and the client chose the designs that they wanted produced. Each intern had at least one design chosen to be made into high-quality stickers with one standout intern, Kimora W., having all three of her designs chosen. Kimora was then chosen to assist in refining the designs and to be part of the production meetings with the client. Once the stickers were produced, they were shipped to Steamboat and Winter Park where they are for sale in Steamboat Store, Giggle Gulch, Steamboat Apparel and Gifts, and Sheraton in Steamboat and James & Parry's in Winter Park. Youth artists included Ayannah C., Bell W., Da'Nae B., Ella W., Erica D., Da'Nae B., Kimora W., Melissa V., Mercedes S and Monika S.

Mental Wellness & Mentorship 2024

YEA continued its programming to support our youth participants' mental wellness while guiding them in our mentorship program. This year included mental wellness workshops to build tools youth can utilize every day such as dealing with grief & loss and letting go of anxiety. Art and nature were included in many of the workshops with youth examining their emotions while conveying those thoughts through their photography at Bear Creek Park and meditation at Sunken Gardens park. Identity was another subject that participants explored through reflection and art with many participating in additional opportunities to learn about creative careers. Nominated youth were able to dive deeper into the connections of art and nature through multi-day trips to Steamboat Springs and Sand Dunes National Park. In addition to all this innovative programming, YEA participants were also guided through counseling with our Youth Advisor and were able to schedule 1:1 free therapeutic service with our licensed therapists. As one participant said, "I knew about mental health, but I really learned about what it means and how to deal with issues through the YEA mental wellness program."



Graduation 2024



Congratulations!

We are so pleased to congratulate all our YEA 2024 graduates. Our young adults continue to impress us by setting goals, overcoming obstacles and reaching their dreams. Many of our high school graduates are planning to attend college or have started their career paths. Elli'Anna G. (photo at right) is one of those students. She interned at Arts Street starting in September of 2023 and continued her internship through spring 2024. She is an amazing artist and team leader who excelled in school and graduated top of her class from Colorado High School Charter while also earning college credits from Community College of Denver. She plans to attend Metro State University of Denver in the fall of 2024 majoring in photography and business!



Steamboat Springs Youth Retreat

Summer 2024



A group of young adults were excited to be chosen to attend YEA's 2nd annual art, nature, and mental wellness retreat in Steamboat Springs. On this multi-day retreat, participants explored nature through Steamboat's botanic garden, hikes on Steamboat Resorts mountain top and at Dumont Lake. Utilizing photography and other art materials, youth were led in exploring emotions versus feelings and expressing their identity and specific issues they are dealing with in transitioning from teens to young adults. In addition, we were fortunate to meet with the merchandising manager for Steamboat Resorts who inspired youth to find their career path. Besides meeting other professionals living in Steamboat the group also got to ride the chair lift and gondola at the resort – a first! Participants remarked that this trip was a life changing experience and gave them time for reflection and embodying the tools they learned for positive mental health.

Art Mentorship: Glassblowing Workshop

Summer 2024



Arts Street partnered with Metro State's Center for Visual Art for a unique opportunity for nine young artists to participate in a hands-on glassblowing workshop with Los Angeles artist, Corey Pemberton, at Flux glass studio on August 3, 2024. Our youth were inspired by Corey, who talked about being one of the few artists of color in the glassblowing world, networking and what it takes to succeed as a creative. After detailed instruction, each youth, working with a partner, shaped their own drinking glass. Although it was hot and hard work, our emerging artists were thrilled with the experience and as one said, "I will treasure my glass for the rest of my life."



Art Mentoring: RiNo Youth Creative Career Day

Summer 2024

In partnership with RiNo Arts District, artist/instructor Devin Urioste produced an event for 16 Arts Street emerging artists, ages 16-23. To attend, young adults had to apply to a call for entries and were chosen based on their applications. The day included working with Denver professional artists to learn valuable skills that would benefit them in a career in the creative industries. Each artist held an individual session where the youth artists were able to create art, learn new skills and build connections with professional artists. Artists presenting were; Victor Escobedo, Moe Gram, Erica Astbury, and JayCee Beyale. Information included how to become a tattoo artist, developing a portfolio and public art proposals. Participants included: Parker A., Ace J., Mylea R., Lyla M., Kayla M., Eli G., Angel S., Makiya G., Isabella M., Daniella T., Crishawn C., Vanessa M., Yozmi R., Noah M., Attilina T., and Justine T.



Sand Dunes Youth Retreat

Fall 2024



In September, we had a special multi-day outing with a select group of YEA participants to the Sand Dunes in southern Colorado. The trip was exciting and included learning about geography, geology and wildlife biology. In addition, the focus was on combining art, nature and mental wellness and how art and nature can contribute to gaining skills in improving mental wellness for all of us. Led by Youth Advisor, Destini Montez, our young adults discussed emotions versus feelings, used photography to express emotions and created self-portraits that reflected their identity. All who went on the trip said that it was an amazing experience they would never forget with others reporting that the mental wellness program at YEA has taught them how to calm their anxiety and they have learned how to talk about their emotions more. They expressed that the trip made them feel free and opened their minds to new ways of thinking.

