

Education Center

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**Gallery & Gift Shop**

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Now that we have reached the halfway point of both the calendar year and our strategic plan (one that was completed in the depths of the pandemic and has helped to guide us through a quicker and greater resurgence than we could have anticipated), I wanted to take a pause from a busy summer to share an update on our year so far.

The big news is, without a doubt, our agreement with the City of Dunwoody to partner on our long-awaited expansion, on-site, to provide 7 additional classroom spaces and properly equip Spruill for more than a decade of future growth. Funding in the amount of \$1 million from the city will help us to actualize our \$2.3 million construction initiative and provide additional space for existing programs in ceramics, glass, jewelry, painting and drawing. It further allows us to create a greatly improved blacksmithing studio from the ground up and initiate a new wood turning program. A double-sized community room will be able to hold larger lecture and classes while providing access to the open courtyard plaza in a true community space for the public. This also provides us with the space necessary to expand our existing community programs such as our after school curriculum, painting and drawing adult classes, and summer camps.

Just this past week, we opened our fifth of seven exhibitions at the Spruill Gallery, *Progression*, which was preceded by: *Homecoming* by Ilona Cutts, The Pottery and Art Sale, *True Form* by Dave Lasker, and *Matri-ARC*. These shows have met with both public and critical acclaim; resulting in sales for artists and visible exposure among Atlanta area art critics. Our AMPLIFY public art installation call for artists has been met with great acclaim and we eagerly anticipate this year's unveiling planned for October 15 at our annual Spirits for Spruill celebration.

Our Education Center has been hopping as well. We opened with our hallway exhibit, "A Method to Our Madness," which featured the work of Spruill instructors and showcased their unique and individual styles. We held our traditional jewelry market after a two-year hiatus and had more than a dozen artisans in attendance. We were thrilled to bring back our Artistic Affair fundraiser to our campus and more than 250 hearty guests braved gale force winds to inaugurate the party while raising more than \$90,000 towards our programs and operations.

Summer Camps have been a bright spot of youthful joy and enthusiasm for the Arts since late May. Our partnership with Stage Door Theatre has been fruitful in cultivating a Community Arts Center for creative kids throughout metro Atlanta, with more than 1,000 enrolled in Spruill programs and another 200 in theatre camps. Our teen studio camps were filled throughout the summer, with a total of 20 different offerings in mediums ranging from jewelry, painting, video, ceramics, and more.

For artistic adults, we have offered 381 classes in the first half of the year and seen enrollment of more than 2,800 students - an increase of 35 percent from a year prior. Another 1,000+ students partook in our ceramics open studios.

Spruill and the Arts truly thrive outside of our building and into the community. Our outreach efforts so far this year include working with the Dunwoody Community Gardens to bring art and vibrancy to SnapDragon's Garden, and providing crafts at the Dunwoody Farmers Markets, Food Trucks, Dunwoody Arts Festival and Lemonade Days. We were honored by the recognition of these efforts and the support of our mission by receiving the "Best of Perimeter" award for the Best Non-profit Organization.

And we've got big plans as we look forward to the remainder of the year! With funding from benefactors, we begin in August with our Spruill Peer Artist Network to help our artists and instructors further their learning of business and management skills. We'll host the first of two Pop-Up in the Plazas - a free community event featuring music and artists demonstrations while showcasing the programs of those cultural nonprofits we share space with: the Chattahoochee Handweavers, Dunwoody Library, and Stage Door Theater. September brings our annual Atlanta Celebrates Photography show at the Spruill Gallery followed by the unveiling of this year's AMPLIFY winner and the community favorite Holiday Artists Market. September is also Back to Spruill Week at our education center, with an open house and more than 20 workshops across all departments. We'll continue making our space LOOK like an arts center, with the installation of our steel butterflies on the front facade, ceramic totems in the front gardens, and the addition of nine new mosaic mandalas to complement the existing three at our back entrance. This fall we'll host two visiting artists - one from Florida and one from Kentucky. And, excitedly, the build out of our glass and ceramic kiln room will begin in the coming weeks and the full expansion project is planned to break ground in January of 2023.

If you've made it this far (it's been a busy year, right?!?!) let me just take a final moment to thank you, our supporters, who help to make all of this possible. Your ongoing commitment to Spruill, to the vibrancy of the Arts in our community, is felt throughout the year. We're looking forward to an incredible second half of the year and are glad to have you along for the journey.



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