Who We Are

The Pennsylvania Black Arts and Entertainment District, Inc. affectionately known as the Black Arts District is a non profit organization focused on celebrating and supporting African American cultural productions.

**Mission:**
To continue the revitalization efforts of West Baltimore through culture, arts, and entertainment.

**Vision:**
The Pennsylvania Avenue Black Arts & Entertainment District is THE choice destination for high-quality arts, culture, food, and entertainment in Baltimore. Our rich culture and legacy of community building and black autonomy continues through enhanced cultural production, historical preservation, and social development. Our work is centered in Love, Unity, Shared Purpose, and Respect for our People.
Greetings Everyone,

It is crazy to think that our first year as a nonprofit was amidst all that occurred in 2020. What a tumultuous time. Still, I am proud to say the Black Arts District fought to survive, to grow and to support Black artists, creative and cultural bearers despite it all.

During 2020 the Black Arts District held over 10 different events and activities as an effort to keep the artist community engaged and working when so many others were facing cancellations and postponements. Though we had to pivot to online platforms, we are grateful that so many of you still attended and supported our events. We also helped to provide artist specific Covid-19 relief to hundreds of creatives in Baltimore City in partnership with Baltimore Office of Promotion and Arts and the Baltimore Creatives Acceleration Network.

None of our work would be possible without the continued support of our partners, funders and most importantly community. Thank you for believing in us and for co-creating a future that is vibrant and viable not only for West Baltimore, but for Baltimore’s creative community as well.

Peace,

"Lady" Brion Gill
Executive Director
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Board of Directors
Staff Members & Interns
Overview
Financials
Programming
Highlights of the Year
A Glance Ahead
Awards & Recognition
Community Partners
Funders
Donors
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Shvila Rasheem
PRESIDENT
CREATIVE ALLIANCE

John Harris
VICE PRESIDENT
ARCH SOCIAL CLUB

Mikkyo McDaniel
TREASURER
MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Todd Marcus
SECRETARY
INTERSECTION OF CHANGE

Dayvon Love
LEADERS OF
A BEAUTIFUL STRUGGLE
Candace Chance
THE VPI FIRM:
BALTIMORE COLLABORATION LAB

Anthony Pressley
DRUID HEIGHTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Dr. Kevin Daniels
MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
PASTOR, ST. MARTIN’S CHURCH

Janetta Gilmore, Ed.D
STRATEGIC HUMAN CAPITAL CONSULTANT

Kayenecha Daugherty
CREATIVE NOMADS

Michael Cornish
DADS UNITED ORGANIZATION
STAFF MEMBERS

KENNETH MORRISON
PROGRAM MANAGER

BRION GILL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CANDACE HANDY
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

CREATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

COHORT #1

DUKE PORTER
EVENTS COORDINATOR INTERN

JHA'NEAL STOUTE
EVENTS COORDINATOR INTERN

COHORT #2

DERICK EBERT
EVENTS COORDINATOR INTERN

JOY BARNES
MARKETING AND PROMOTION INTERN

GRACE GIVENS
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INTERN
2020 Overview

The Black Arts District is officially one year old!

Brand officially launches!

$132,900 raised

501(c)3 status granted!

Virtual events

40+ artists supported

2,3k Instagram followers
1,8k Facebook followers

11 virtual events

10k+ in artist Covid relief
FINANCIALS

EXPENSES

Total $109,319.68

- Staff and Overhead $78,459.03 (72%)
- Program and Events $15,835.02 (15%)
- Marketing and Advertisement $1,325.65 (1%)
- Artist Relief $10,000.00 (9%)
- Sponsorship $3,700 (3%)

INCOME

Total $132,900.00

- Foundations $65,000.00 (49%)
- Gov’t Grants $49,700.00 (37%)
- Individual Donations $12,000 (9%)
- Fee For Service $6,200.00 (5%)
PROGRAM UPDATES
The Black Arts District provides programming dedicated to supporting people and places throughout West Baltimore. All programming falls under one of the four pillars: Events and Activities, Training and Development, Advocacy and Education, and Creative Placemaking. With COVID-19 altering our everyday lives, the Black Arts District quickly adapted and virtually provided the Baltimore community with support and entertainment. Our current programs include:

**Historical Photography Project**
This is a creative placemaking initiative being piloted in West Baltimore in partnership with T. Rowe Price, Arch Social Club, Druid Heights CDC, Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts, and Maryland Historical Society. The purpose of this project is to support the revitalization of West Baltimore by attracting people, encouraging reinvestment, preserving culture through storytelling, and celebrating its people and places.

**Creative Internship Program**
The Black Arts District offers paid six month internship opportunities for emerging professionals in Baltimore. Our internships are designed to both support the development of Black creatives while helping to continue the revitalization efforts of West Baltimore through culture, arts, and entertainment. Our internships positions include: Events Coordinator, Marketing and Promotion, and Community Engagement. Our interns have been an integral part of planning and promoting events, managing our social media accounts, engaging with community members and Black creatives, and gathering community input through surveys and focus groups. They bring a fresh energy and great ideas to our team!
The Black Artist Fair is an educational and interactive event designed to connect Black creatives from the Greater Baltimore Area to resources and services to further enhance their crafts and careers. Over the course of a weekend, artists will be invited to explore professional and creative workshops, consultations, panel discussions, and keynotes speakers. The fair will also highlight the work of local artists across genres. Our organization believes it is necessary to curate a space specifically for Black Creatives to combat the issues of equity around access to these types of resources and opportunities.
PROGRAMS IN THE WORKS

The following programs and projects are in the planning phase. Due to the pandemic, these programs have been put on hold. We hope that we are able to debut these programs to the community soon!

Vertical Pole Banner Program
Branding the Black Arts District will help increase awareness and outline the district's footprint. Broken or missing brackets will be replaced with dual-designed banner poles at intersections and midpoints of extended blocks. We hope by branding the district we increase community pride, attract visitorship, and shift negative perceptions. The design of these banners will be a collaboration between the community and the district.

Culture Crawl Series
The Cultural Crawl is a monthly curated art walk that increases tourism and highlights local businesses in the district footprint. This series will benefit artists, entertainers, cultural bearers, business owners and West Baltimore residents. Increased tourism and cultural activities have been proven to decrease crime and increase economic activities for residents.
HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS
On February 16, 2020 the Pennsylvania Black Arts and Entertainment District was debuted to the community during our Brand Launch. The event took place at the Shake and Bake Family Fun Center. We celebrated with the community and invited them to come learn more about the organization while enjoying skating and bowling.

HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Provided over $10,000 in emergency relief funding to creatives in response to the Covid-19 pandemic
- Supported the creation of the Emergency Artist Relief Fund that provided over 300 micro-grants to creatives across Baltimore City in partnership with Baltimore Office for Promotion & the Arts and Baltimore Creative Acceleration Network
- Sponsored five Baltimore-based open mics to curate 20 in person/virtual cultural events
- Hosted two cohorts of emerging professionals in our Creative Internship Program

Hosted the Mini May Concert Series - a 4-part virtual concert series featuring some of Baltimore’s top performing artists which attracted over 5,000 viewers

- Curated 10 virtual events - these included online poetry slams, face to face competitions where two artists go head to head, and open mics to promote Baltimore’s thriving cultural scene
- Hosted two city-wide art competitions that featured 60 Baltimore artists - Reflect the Times Competition and the James Baldwin Poetry Slam.

The Pennsylvania Avenue Black Arts & Entertainment District has been granted 501(c)3 status!
A GLANCE AHEAD
THE SANAA CENTER
The Sanaa Center Campaign

The Sanaa Project is proposed to be a 13,000 SF new construction building for a mixed use co-working and arts incubator space with 4,300 SF of a surface parking courtyard in the 1900 block of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The word Sanaa, means art in the East African language, Kiswahili, which as a coastal language, traveled to America and is often used in African American vernacular.

The Sanaa Center is proposed to be a ground up development on Pennsylvania Avenue designed to be a Black arts incubator space that will provide private, coworking, shared, and performance spaces, in addition to professional, creative business development and startup incubator services.

The Sanaa Center’s primary role is to provide resources, networking opportunities, as well as training and development to burgeoning and practicing Black creatives in Baltimore. It is proposed to also provide rental, rehearsal and medium-sized performance space. Ultimately the Sanaa Center is intended to bolster economic stability and prosperity by focusing on creatives rather than businesses. We believe that strengthening the creative economy and developing creative resource strategies will lead to a more vibrant and attractive city, overall.

The Development of the Sanaa Center will support the expansion of the Harris Marcus Center which has been a critical driver since 2008 to revitalizing arts programming and the legacy of Pennsylvania Avenue. The Sanaa Center seeks to support cultural heritage-oriented development on the Pennsylvania Avenue business corridor and promote existing cultural heritage development.
As a creative business incubator space, the Sanaa Center will support the Historic Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street’s goals which includes: enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings and supporting new construction, building a consensus and cooperation among many groups and individuals who have a role in the revitalization process, and marketing the traditional commercial district’s assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses and visitors.

The Sanaa Center aims to fill an unmet need for Black led start-ups, creative enterprises and arts entrepreneurs on Pennsylvania Avenue. Its mixed-use approach with multiple cultural community partners will complement existing projects and embrace the goals of the Pennsylvania Avenue Black Arts & Entertainment District, as well as other fellow community organizations and institutions.

The project represents a critical initiative for Pennsylvania Avenue and follows trends throughout the city and nation to develop collectively used spaces to engage start-ups, creative enterprises and arts entrepreneurs. The project will be more unique however in its emphasis as a project that is Black-led with a focus on a predominantly Black community. This aspect offers an opportunity to present a model to other communities throughout the country to counter historic modes of disinvestment in similar Black communities.
AWARDS AND RECOGNITION
AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Our Executive Director, Brion Gill, has been recognized for her work with the Black Arts District. She is honored to be seen as a leader in the movement for equity in the arts and culture space in Baltimore.

Baltimore Community Advocate of the Year Award, 2020
This award recognizes an individual who has been a champion for their neighbors and place and demonstrated advocacy, vision, leadership, and inclusivity.

Progressive Leader of the Year in Arts and Humanities, 2020
This award is given to someone who is "supporting and recognizing agents of change in our community. Our class is deeply inspired by your work and your commitment to advocating for Maryland citizens. We believe that you embody progressive leadership, and we look forward to celebrating you for the impact that you have had within our community."

THE BLACK ARTS DISTRICT IN THE NEWS!

- 2/16/2020 "Pennsylvania Avenue becomes Baltimore's fourth Arts and Entertainment District" Fox45
- 2/21/2020 "Black Arts District launches in west Baltimore". WBALTV11
- 5/18/2020 "Mini May Concert Series". Afro News
Thank you!
We know that the work we do is not possible without collaboration with community. The Black Arts District would like to give a special thank you to the members of the community that have supported us thus far. We do not take your support for granted. We are excited for what is to come and cannot wait to continue this journey with you!
A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

ARCH SOCIAL CLUB

intersection of change

Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts

DRUID HEIGHTS
Community Development Corporation

the Avenue Bakery

Penn North Community Association
A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS