Creative New Jersey

The Start-Up Years

Creative New Jersey is dedicated to fostering creativity, innovation, and sustainability by empowering cross-sector partnerships in commerce, education, philanthropy, government, and culture, in order to ensure dynamic communities and a thriving economy.

Creativity. Innovation. Sustainability.

Creative New Jersey is a statewide initiative of The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and gratefully acknowledges their leadership support.

www.CreativeNJ.org
Overview

Creative New Jersey has seen an exciting year of expansion. We’ve doubled our programming in communities, surpassing milestones including our one-thousandth participant and 150th partnering organization. We increased our capacity which started with one part-time staff member and grew into one full-time and two part-time staff by 2015.

CNJ also launched its new website, grew a social media presence and strengthened the branding and messaging. Tools and resources for our communities to continue their self-organized work are nearing completion. CNJ Steering Committee members and external consultants have laid the groundwork for evaluation of current and future communities, which will result in data tracking tools and reports produced in conjunction with Higher Education institutions, such as The College of New Jersey.

CNJ staff have been active in assisting statewide partners and other regional organizations with projects and initiatives as facilitators, presenters, participants and communication conduits. CNJ Staff have supported the work of organizations such as The Citizens Campaign, National Consortium for Creative Placemaking, Regional Plan Association, Together North Jersey and the NJ Chapter of the American Planning Association, among others.

Since 2011, Creative NJ has produced and/or engaged:

- 152 partnering organizations around the state
- 1000+ individual participants
- 9 community convenings
- 3 regional convenings
- 4 statewide convenings

Communities

**2014-2015**

**Recent Communities**

Atlantic City
Elizabeth
Highlands
Trenton

Annual Statewide Convenings

**Communities In Process**

Cumberland / Bayshore Region
Skylands Region
Monmouth & Ocean Recovery Groups
Camden
Asbury Park
Frenchtown
Perth Amboy
Jersey City

**2011-2013**

MoCo Arts Corridor Partnership
Monmouth County
Morristown
Orange
Rahway
Annual Statewide Convenings
Championing Creativity through Community Engagement and Cross-Sector Collaboration

Our Vision (Why we do what we do):

✓ For all New Jerseyans to develop their capacities for imagination, creativity and innovation;

✓ For cross-sector partnerships to flourish and enhance creative problem-solving, and for New Jersey to establish more creative workplaces, schools, and communities; and

✓ For New Jersey to continue to attract the best creative minds and leaders who recognize and champion the value of creativity, innovation and sustainability.

We work in communities throughout the state - from single municipalities to counties to multiple-county regions. We work in communities where there is urgency to find creative and innovative solutions to seemingly intractable problems.

By championing creative thinking and establishing the conditions for collaboration among diverse groups of people, our work fosters creativity, advances dialogue, builds leaders, and weaves networks of individuals, who are thinking innovatively and creatively about social and economic solutions to their community challenges.

The underlying principle behind all educational, technological, scientific, and cultural advancement is creativity, and creative thinkers bring about tremendous insights and progress for the human race. Think: Steve Jobs, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Thomas Edison, Leonardo da Vinci and Wangari Maathai.
Our Process

Our process for inviting and convening people is unique in the state of New Jersey. Even those communities who have held multiple, large meetings over the years have never brought their community together in this way:

- Where individuals from all facets of community life are assembled to work together; and
- Where all convening participants take an active role in creating the meeting’s agenda together, and subsequently self-organizing to lead group discussions.

Our core programming consists of building Host Teams and launching community-wide, multi-day convenings called a “Call to Collaboration.” We build the Host Team with individuals from the community at-large. Diversity is essential - diversity of sectors and industries, ethnic, cultural, socio-economic and multi-generational diversity - for both the Host Team and the master invitation list for the convening. We bring the grass-tops together with the grass-roots.

Our community engagement process culminates in a “Call to Collaboration” convening. Each two-day convening creates catalytic opportunities for participant-driven, action-oriented discussions. These discussion spur creative thinking and innovative problem-solving about the issues of importance to the community.

“Creative Orange is becoming an umbrella for public and private initiatives [resulting in completion] of the first community mural and [the] unveiling of ten new multi-media oral history sites in the East Ward of Orange.” - Patrick Morrisey, HANDS, Inc., Creative Orange
Creative Ideas Taking Hold - Post-Convenings

The following are just a few examples of either new ideas that were born from our Calls to Collaboration or existing early-stage initiatives that took root and found their fuel as a result of our community engagement work.

**Live.Work.AC** was an immediate outgrowth of Creative Atlantic City. This website and Facebook group branding and business growth initiative is being spearheaded by a group of about 40 Creative Atlantic City participants led by Nick Palmisano of 11th Floor Creative Group and Joe Molineaux of Small Business Development Center, Stockton University.

The complete notes from **Creative Trenton's Call to Collaboration convening** were adopted by the new Mayor’s transition team (in May 2014) as a way to inform the new administration about issues of importance to the Trenton community.

**The MoCo (Monmouth County) Arts Corridor Partnership** is a driving force in sustaining Monmouth County’s tourism, arts, and local business industries. CNJ’s two county-wide Calls to Collaboration helped launch this burgeoning initiative whose key partners are Monmouth Arts, NJ Transit, Monmouth County’s Chambers of Commerce, Monmouth County Division of Planning, and several Tourism Councils. In March 2013, The MoCo Arts Corridor Partnership was cited as a case study in a presentation at the General Session of the United Nations by Bloomfield College’s Center for Creative Placemaking.

**Shaping Elizabeth** developed a Healthy Food Survey that gained wider distribution and a higher response rate through connections made at Creative Elizabeth.

**Creative Rahway for Education**: This group of Board of Ed members, arts leaders, and local business owners was launched on day two of Creative Rahway’s convening with the intent to identify and design ways in which Rahway schools can better connect with the arts and downtown businesses. This on-going monthly meeting also focuses on improving the image of Rahway public schools, using effective cross promotion, event coordination, and collaborative marketing.

**The Town of Morristown** used the Creative Morristown convening as a precursor for the development of their new master plan.
Hurricane Sandy Recovery Communities

As part of our New Jersey Recovery Fund work, Creative New Jersey is working with several disaster-affected communities by developing and producing community-engagement opportunities to assist residents, municipal leaders, state/local planners, business owners, local nonprofits, mental health professionals, and others in coming together to engage in critical dialogue around the issues of recovery and rebuilding.

In May of 2014, CNJ held a Creative Highlands one-day convening, with over 80 residents and local business owners of Highlands who came together to work on issues such as:
- Helping people find temporary housing during home elevation
- Resiliency and environmental sustainability
- Understanding and communicating risks of living close to the Bay
- How to inform current and future residents about the excellent Highlands schools

Conversations began with members of the Cumberland County/Delaware Bayshore communities in 2013 and ramped up in the fall of 2014, with CNJ staffers attending Cumberland Long Term Recovery Group meetings and strategy sessions between the LTRG, FEMA, NJ Future, the Army Corps of Engineers and other key stakeholders. We anticipate moving forward with Creative Cumberland County/Delaware Bayshore in 2015.

CNJ is working with other communities affected by Hurricane Sandy including Asbury Park, Perth Amboy and the Monmouth and Ocean Long Term Recovery Group Leaders.

Creative Atlantic City, a two-day convening held in February 2015, saw over 135 people gather at The Noyes Arts Garage at Stockton University. Participants included representatives from the Housing Authority, elected officials, law enforcement, small business development, healthcare, urban planners, arts and culture organizations, the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, ward leaders, residents and many more.

Over 44 breakout sessions covered topics ranging from encourage new business, using the Arts to attract residents and investment in AC, and fostering community involvement and a planning process that engages the minority community. Media response was strong in Atlantic City, with NJ Arts News and NJTV/THIRTEEN’s news coverage, Free Press of Atlantic City, The Atlantic City Times and WOND 1400 reporters covering the event and, in most cases, participating.

NEW JERSEY RECOVERY FUND
at the Community Foundation of New Jersey
Capacity Expansion
Support from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and the NJ Recovery Fund allowed CNJ to bring on two new part-time staff members - Program Manager Kacy O’Brien and Communications Coordinator Julie Gause - to work alongside Director Elizabeth Murphy. This staff expansion enabled CNJ to double its community engagement efforts throughout the state, build systems and infrastructure, and extend our reach and connections through our new website and expanded social media presence. In November 2014, the Program Manager position was expanded to a full-time position.

Infrastructure Building

Website
Steering Committee member Ennis Carter (Social Impact Studios) donated her skills and expertise to design a new CNJ website. Program Manager Kacy O’Brien worked closely with Ennis to create the content for the site, which launched in the spring of 2014.

CNJ’s website houses all public information about each convening, including the complete notes for each community, partners, sponsors, host team members, and the creative ideas taking hold in each community.

The addition of Communications Coordinator Julie Gause enabled CNJ to take a technological leap in the form of video interviews with community members as they experience the process of a Call to Collaboration. Julie’s editing skills have created an essential tool for CNJ to communicate what it is we do and what participants experience.

Our website has become a key, accessible tool for continuing connections throughout the state and helping new communities interested in joining our creativity movement understand who we are and what we do.
Communications
During the course of 2014, CNJ has seen our social media presence on Facebook and Twitter grow by 73% and 141% respectively. With 561 likes on our Facebook page and 804 followers on Twitter and 1079 subscribers to our email list, we continue to build bridges between our communities and share resources, information and creative, innovative work from around the world with them.

We create a Facebook Group page for each community we work with and have seen regular activity continue long after the Call to Collaboration is over. For example, Creative Trenton’s Facebook Group has been regularly active since January 2014.

Evaluation
Quantitative and qualitative data collection will help CNJ determine our impact, the needs for our programs and help tell the story of community connection, creativity and innovation in the state.

To that end, Steering Committee member Mary Reece (Foundation for Educational Administration) is chairing the development of assessment tools we will be able to use with all of our communities.

Fellow Committee member John Laughton (The College of New Jersey) is working to collate and analyze data from the Complete Notes of each community, alongside demographic data and the development of surveys to collect data from participants. In addition, Dr. Brea Heidelberg, (Rider University’s Arts Administration Program) will be working with us on a single community to do an in-depth assessment of our process from beginning to end starting in Fall 2015.

Tool Kit & Resources for Communities
Tools: Scheduled for release in spring of 2015, an online Tool Kit will be available to our communities to help guide them through the phases of engagement, organize a Call to Collaboration, and provide tips and tools for how to continue moving ideas and projects forward after the convening.

Resources: CNJ is working with regional and local community foundations on alternative ways to support community efforts. For example, at Creative Trenton the I Am Trenton Community Foundation adjusted the Foundation’s scoring system to grant additional points to projects that were fueled or born out of Creative Trenton. CNJ’s current efforts include piloting Creative Community funds in cooperation with our state’s community foundations.

Relationships: In addition to these tools for communities, CNJ helps to connect our communities with other state, regional and local partners including groups like The Citizens Campaign, Sustainable Jersey and the National Consortium for Creative Placemaking.
Partnerships / Outreach

CNJ staff have been active in assisting statewide partners and other regional organizations with projects and initiatives as facilitators, presenters, participants and communication conduits. CNJ Staff have supported the work of organizations such as The Citizens Campaign, MoCo Arts Corridor Partnership, National Consortium for Creative Placemaking, NJ Chapter of the American Planning Association, Regional Plan Association, Sustainable Jersey, and Together North Jersey.

CNJ’s Statewide Collaborators are: ArtPride NJ, NJ Arts Education Partnership, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Foundation for Educational Administration, NJ Theatre Alliance, Social Impact Studios, and Young Audiences of NJ & Eastern PA.
Creative Atlantic City (con’t)
Joe Molinari, Small Business Development Center at Stockton College
Ken Mosca, Atlantic City Electric
Phyllis Papa, Atlantic City Ballet
Cyndee Phoenix, Community Think Tank
Diane Ramftl, Caesars Entertainment
Chief Henry White, Atlantic City Police Department
Libbie Wills, 1st Ward Civic Association

Creative Elizabeth
Richard Bryant, Front of House Services
Susan P. Coen, Coen Consulting Group
Clara Fernandez, 20th Legislative District
Gordon Haas, Greater Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce
Pastor Robert Higgs, First Presbyterian Church of Elizabeth
John McEwen, NJ Theatre Alliance
Stanley Neron, City of Elizabeth Department of Health & Human Services
Abby O’Neill, Abby O’Neill Consulting, LLC
Jonathan Phillips, Groundwork Elizabeth
Alysia Souder, The Institute of Music for Children
Cheryl Shibler, Union County College
Hawa Washington, Union County Division of Youth Services
Kristin Wenger, NJ Arts Education Partnership

Creative Highlands
Danielle Acerra, Monmouth Arts
Lou Bajor, Highlands Borough Arts Council
Doug Card, Resident
Cynthia Fair, Highlands Board of Ed
Amy Goert, Resident
Barbara Iannucci, Resident
Lenore Kingsmore, Henry Hudson Regional School
Rev. William Lago, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church
Joann Lowry, FEMA Community Recovery
Pam Marvin, Monmouth Arts
Valerie Motecalvo, Bayshore Recycling
Steve Nelson, New Jersey Future
Kate Reed, Resident
Sandy Taylor, Monmouth Arts
Sarah Thoma, Friend of Highlands
Robert Ward, Inroads Consulting Group, LLC
Linda Weber, Sustainable Jersey
Ellen Williams, Highlands Borough Arts Council
Cindy Zipf, Clean Ocean Action

Creative MoCo
MoCo Arts Corridor Partnership
Monmouth Arts
Monmouth University
Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Creative Monmouth (con’t)
Sister Debbie Drago, Collier Youth Services
Mary Eileen Fournatt, Monmouth Arts
Tom Gilmour, Asbury Park Urban Economic Zone
Pat Hutchinson, Belmar Arts Council
Chuni Li, Monmouth Cares, Inc.
Wendy Liscow, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Pam Marvin, Two Rivers Meeting & Event
Planning/Monmouth Arts
John McEwen, New Jersey Theatre Alliance
Vaune Peck, Monmouth University
Courtney Perez, Two River Theatre Company
Danny Tamez, Monmouth Arts

Creative Morristown (con’t)
Phil Abramson, Jonathan Rose Companies
Carla Angel, Hyatt Morristown
Carol Armour, Greater Morristown YMCA
Kendra Arnold, Bike & Walk Morristown
Nancy Bangiola, Morris County Board of Ed
Leslie Bensley, Morris County Tourism Bureau
Reid Brockmeier, Gensler
Michael Butler, Morristown High School
Gina Cangialosi, Gensler
Larry Capo, Young Audiences New Jersey and Eastern PA
Kevin Coughlin, Morristown Green.com
Victoria Craig, Arts in the Atrium
Kadie Dempsey, Arts Council of the Morris Area
Mary Dougherty, First Lady, Morristown; Chair. Morris County Democrats
Marty Epstein, Marty’s Reliable Cycle/Gran Fondo NJ
Michael Fabrizio, Morristown Partnership
Toshiba Foster, Our Youth Their Future
Debbie Gottsleben, Morristown High School
Mark Gutkowski, Morristown High School
Vicky Hughes, Atlantic Health System
Ed Kirchendoerffer, Mayo Performing Arts Center
Jason Koontz, Filmmaker
Amy Koritz, Drew University - Center for Civic Engagement
Charles Lamb, County College of Morris
Allison Larena, Mayo Performing Arts Center
Chad Leinaweaver, Morristown/Township Library
Wendy Liscow, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Maria Lupo, Atlantic Health System
John Madden, Morristown High School
Bruce Medd, RevHealth
Danielle Merzatta, Artist
Chris Merzatta, Artist
Paul Miller, Sustainable Morristown

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Phil Abramson, Jonathan Rose Companies
Carla Angel, Hyatt Morristown
Carol Armour, Greater Morristown YMCA
Kendra Arnold, Bike & Walk Morristown
Nancy Bangiola, Morris County Board of Ed
Leslie Bensley, Morris County Tourism Bureau
Reid Brockmeier, Gensler
Michael Butler, Morristown High School
Gina Cangialosi, Gensler
Larry Capo, Young Audiences New Jersey and Eastern PA
Kevin Coughlin, Morristown Green.com
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Wendy Liscow, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Maria Lupo, Atlantic Health System
John Madden, Morristown High School
Bruce Medd, RevHealth
Danielle Merzatta, Artist
Chris Merzatta, Artist
Paul Miller, Sustainable Morristown

Creative Orange
Richard T. Bryant, ValleyArts Inc.
Louis Copeland, Arts Unbound
Keith Dent, Rising Tide Capital
Rebecca Doggett, HANDS Inc.
Dawn Fitch, Pooka Pure & Simple
Lorraine Gibbons, Garden State Urban Farms
Candace Goldstein, Orange Board of Education
Rev. Miguelina Howell, Church of the Epiphany
Elizabeth Jackson, Orange Police Department (retired)
Rosa Jackson, Church of the Epiphany
Dawn Jenkin, Orange Public Library
L. A. Jones, Church of the Epiphany
Molly Rose Kaufman, University of Orange
Mike Malbrough, ORNG Ink
Jessica Mathelier, HANDS Inc.
John McEwen, New Jersey Theatre Alliance
Patrick Morrissey, HANDS Inc.
Clifford Pierre, ORNG Ink
Dr. Michelle Scott, New Jersey Institute of Technology
Joy Simeon, FAMILY Connections
John Surface, FAMILY Connections
Dwayne Warren, Mayor, City of Orange
Dr. Kara Warren, City of Orange
Kristin Wenger, New Jersey Arts Education Partnership
Adrianna Wooten, City of Orange, Recreation Department

Creative Rahway
Nikki Ahmetaj, Resident/Allume Events
Ennis Carter, Social Impact Studios
Kristine De Jesus-Farrar, Resident/Montclair State University
Rachela Faillace, Resident/Rahway Arts District
Nilyne Fields, Resident/Park Square Manager
Sondra Fishinger, Resident/Friends of Rahway Library/Union County PAC Board of Trustees
Bobbi Fishman, Restaurant Owner, The Rail House 1449
Wendy Liscow, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

Creative Rahway (con’t)
Harry Simon, Simon Gallery
Reverend Dave Smazik, Presbyterian Church
Katie Smith, Artist
Rico Smith, Morristown Partnership
Scott Strine, 40 Park
Wendy Taffett, Enjou Chocolat
David Walker, Morristown Neighborhood House
Kristin Wenger, NJ Arts Education Partnership
Tom Werder, Morris Arts
Creative Rahway (con’t)
Pam Marvin, Monmouth Arts
Michelle McTamney, Resident/Liberty Harley-Davidson/Buell
Eric Miles, Resident/Rahway Library Board of Trustees
Angela Pryor, Resident/Creative entrepreneur
Vanessa Rozzelle, Resident/Rahway Library Board of Trustees
Danni Rumsey, Union County Performing Arts Center
Tony Walker, Resident/Entrepreneur

Creative Skylands
Mark Avondoglio, Perona Farms
Stephen L. Fredericks, The Growing Stage-The Children’s Theatre of New Jersey
Suzanne Ishee, Center for Creative Placemaking
Jared Janish, Mount Olive High School
Andrea Kirchuk, Mount Olive Area Chamber of Commerce
Courtenay Mercer, Regional Plan Association
Brian Mak, Mount Olive High School
Kristin Muller, Peters Valley School of Craft
Nancy Paffendorf, Centenary College
Jason Sarnoski, Warren County Freeholder
Jim Sheldon, Hackettstown Business Improvement District
Greg Stewart, Mount Olive Area Chamber of Commerce
Laura Szwak, NJ Conservation Foundation

Creative Trenton
June Ballinger, Passage Theatre Company
Larry Capo, Young Audiences of NJ and Eastern PA
Dan Fatton, I Am Trenton Community Foundation
Darren Freedom Green, Trenton Council of Civic Associations
Sam Frisby, Trenton YMCA
Kristin Gonzalez, Thomas Edison State College
Susan Haig, NJ Arts News
Maureen Heffernan, Young Audiences of NJ and Eastern PA
Elissa Horan, CARE Trenton
Jacque Howard, Trenton365
Princess Jenkins, I Am Trenton Community Foundation
Ayo Johnson, Westminster Community Life Center
Peter Kasabach, NJ Future
Katherine Kish, Einstein’s Alley
Lynn Lemyre, Artworks Trenton
Christian Martin, Trenton Downtown Association
Diana Rogers, City of Trenton, Department of Economic Development

Creative New Jersey Steering Committee
Larry Capo (Chair) - President & CEO, Young Audiences New Jersey & Eastern Pennsylvania
Richard T. Bryant - Executive Director, ValleyArts, Inc.; President, Front of House Services
Ennis Carter - Founder & Director, Social Impact Studios
Chuck Chiarello - Mayor, Buena Vista Township
Rose Gonnella - Executive Director, Robert Busch School of Design, Kean University
Susan Haig - Creative Director, NJ Arts News
Maureen Heffernan - Director of Arts & Education, Young Audiences New Jersey
Katherine Kish - Executive Director, Einstein’s Alley
John Laughton - Dean, School of the Arts & Communication, The College of New Jersey
Chuni Li - HR & Organizational Development, Monmouth Cares
Wendy Liscow - Program Director, Education, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Pam Marvin - Board of Trustees, Monmouth Arts
John McEwen - Executive Director, New Jersey Theatre Alliance
Robin Middleman - Senior Program Officer, Arts Education, New Jersey State Council on the Arts
Ann Marie Miller - Director of Advocacy and Public Policy, ArtPride New Jersey
Bob Morrison - Chairman, Quadrant Arts Education Research
Pam Mount - Councilwoman, Lawrence Township; Chair, Sustainable Jersey
Elizabeth A. Murphy - Director, Creative New Jersey / Principal, The Murphy Group, Inc.
Karen Pinzolo - Director of Community Engagement, ArtPride New Jersey Foundation
Mary Reece - Director of Special Projects, Foundation for Educational Administration
Steven Runk - Director of Communications, Lewis Center for the Arts, Princeton University
Willa Spicer - Former Deputy Education Commissioner, State of NJ
Leo Vazquez - Director, National Consortium for Creative Placemaking
Kristin Wenger - Director, New Jersey Arts Education Partnership

Creative New Jersey Staff
Elizabeth A. Murphy, Director
Kacy O’Brien, Program Manager
Julie Gause, Communications Coordinator