



WEST END ARTS DISTRICT 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Every time I sit down to write about 2020 I find myself struggling not to fall into clichés. We have all lived through the same traumas, but for arts nonprofits the challenges have been acute. West End Arts District (WEAD) services revolve around gathering people, building community, and showcasing the arts and in 2020,, we had to find alternative ways to do that.

While our services have not been able to touch people in such great numbers this year, our impact has been felt even more strongly by our closest community. The creation of the Healing Garden space allowed residents of the West End to safely participate in a project which brought hope, joy and color to our community, as well as being a physical expression of our support for the Black Lives Matter movement.

Looking forward to 2021, as we continue the fight against the pandemic, we are excited to be able to focus our programming around the Healing Garden. Having a visible, central, outdoor space in which to host music concerts, dance shows, arts markets, and family events, means that we can continue to safely integrate the arts into the fabric of this community, bringing much needed inspiration and entertainment.

Without the support and generosity of our sponsors, donors and volunteers, none of this would be possible. We are so grateful to you all for recognizing the importance of the arts in our community and for working with us to realize our dream: a dynamic and diverse arts district in West Alameda.

Tara Pilbrow

Vice President and Treasurer



GROWTH

PROGRAMS

- Created the **Healing Garden**, a new community gathering space which hosted a **BLM art exhibition**, **the Alfresco Dining Park**, live music, dance rehearsals and music classes.
- Launched the **Webster Gateway Mural Project**, a two year project to create a 2000sq ft mural at the corner of Webster St and Pacific Ave.
- Directed preparatory work for **'Breathe,'** a full length, site specific dance performance for the Healing Garden space.

"During an incredibly difficult year, West End Arts District gave me my first and only safe performance job. To be offered well paid, challenging work in a format that made everyone involved feel safe and seen was an incredible feeling!"

Hannah Westbrook,
Dancer,
choreographer,
educator



DEVELOPMENT

- Raised over **\$50k** in donations, sponsorships and grants.
- Welcomed **two new board members** and created the Community Advisory Board
- Introduced **Quarterly Newsletters** to all of our subscribers.
- Created a **Racial Equity Statement** to voice our commitment to combatting inequities and promoting equality for all.
- Rebranded by creating a **new logo, new website**, and a new look.

*Michael Towne
From Volunteer and Donor
to Board Member*



"I got involved with West End Arts District because of its responsiveness to the Black Lives Matter movement. Last summer, a neglected parking lot in my neighborhood blossomed into a gallery and garden that showed how art can change hearts. WEAD sponsored murals dealt with the very real issues of racial inequity and this created a community dialogue for neighbors who had never previously met. I was drawn in by the validation that art and beauty are the right responses to the challenges of our times. As a west end resident, I saw how West End Arts District projects are transforming Alameda into a vibrant community with art and people at its core and I wanted to be involved."





IMPACT

COMMUNITY

- Brought together more than **70 volunteers** in a project to beautify our neighborhood.
- Made the Alfresco Dining Park available to more than **2000 people** to enjoy outdoor dining and music.
- **Supported local businesses** by providing a bringing activity to unused outdoor spaces on Webster Street

“Being able to support local restaurants in a safe space for my family and the wider community was so appreciated! The fact that it wasn’t my own four walls would have been enough but the Healing Garden itself is such a wonderful space, can’t thank the volunteers enough for their efforts to turn wasteland into a site for the community to come together and celebrate what makes Webster St such a thriving part of Alameda.”

Laura Bodiley,
West End Resident.

ARTISTS

- Provided paid opportunities to more than **40 Bay Area Performing Artists** at a time of incredible need.
- Started the **Webster Gateway Mural Project**, our first major commission for a public art piece.
- Curated an exhibition of art by **10 visual artists** in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

ADVOCACY

- Voiced the needs of arts organizations and artists at the **City and State level**.
- Pushed for clarity on **health requirements and reopening plans** for live performance events.
- Ensured that our community and our elected officials were constantly reminded of the **centrality of the arts** to our economic, social and cultural well-being.

"When our world and our island community sheltered in fear from an invisible threat of pandemic, during a cultural revolution across the county steeped in race and our racial awakening, West End Arts District brought us together to share a beacon of hope and of love with The Healing Garden.

I support West End Arts District and arts programming in our community because I believe in the power of the arts to show us to ourselves: to communicate, to transport and to resonate.

West End Arts District is the West End's own arts organization bringing its mission into the public arena, right here in the west end of Alameda."

*—Amos White, Donor and Vounteer
West End Alameda
Black Resident, Poet,
Founder of 100K
Trees for
Humanity*





PARTNERSHIPS

One of the most positive notes in the chaotic discord of 2020, was to see how people came together to find new ways forward. At WEAD we were incredibly grateful to continue to develop relationships with these fantastic partners:

WEST ALAMEDA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

RHYTHMIX CULTURAL WORKS

BAY AREA MUSIC PROJECT

THE FIRESIDE LOUNGE

ATOWN AGENCY

FEATHERED OUTLAW

WEST END MERCANTILE

THE MENAGERIE ALAMEDA

"WEAD literally saved our program this year. They generously provided us a space for an outdoor classroom where students could safely meet in-person for their music lessons, thereby keeping families enrolled. For some of our most vulnerable kids, having a creative outlet and staying connected to their friends and mentors has been essential during such a challenging time. We are so grateful for this meaningful partnership!"

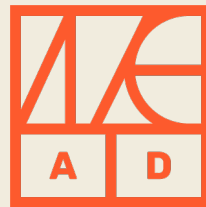
Lorrie Murray
Founder, Executive
Director, Bay
Area Music Project





MISSION

We provide a platform for artists to create vibrant art experiences on the West End of Alameda that bring together local and regional audiences around the visual and performing arts. Our events and programs offer new perspectives, spark conversation, and engage with the landscape we live in.



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