



TEACHING
ARTIST
PROJECT



TEACHING ARTIST INSTITUTE OF ROCHESTER 2020 FINAL REPORT



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SUMMARY

The 2020 Teaching Artist Institute of Rochester was a multi-day intensive workshop for creative writers, visual artists, musicians, dancers, multi-media artists, and theater artists to expand their teaching practice, explore social justice pedagogy, get resources on the business of teaching artistry, and connect with educators and cultural centers in Rochester as well as New York City.

With funding thanks to the New York State Council on the Arts, Community-Word Project's Teaching Artist Project staff created this training in partnership with arts community members from the Rochester and upstate New York area. The Institute's training curriculum was based on Community-Word Project's Creative Process exploration methods, teaching practices and arts-in-education philosophy developed over the last 22 years. The training was free for teaching artists and, in fact, we were able to provide artists a small stipend for participating.

This report offers a snapshot of the Institute during the fall of 2020. The program statistics and evaluations shared here were gathered and interpreted by TAP staff. Our analysis demonstrates continued promising results and also reviews program challenges and areas for improvement. We reflect on our progress to date primarily for the purpose of continuing to improve our curricular and training design, staffing structure, and program model. Insights shared are intended to update and engage a range of stakeholders, from program participants and leadership to peer organizations in the arts-in-education field.

Lastly, Institute participants were not immune to the hardships caused by COVID-19. Many areas of the program were impacted. However, TAP staff quickly pivoted to a virtual setting, allowing many more Teaching Artists to participate in workshops than previously possible. The original program was slated to be an in-person, three day, intensive that would take place at local Rochester arts spaces in fall of 2020. It became clear in the planning process that this would not be possible or safe for participants. In conversation with the steering committee, TAP staff shifted the model to a series of virtual workshops over the course four months.

The Teaching Artist Institute of Rochester pedagogy was created by Facilitators Adriana Guzmán, Javan Howard, and Director of TAP Katie Rainey, in partnership with community members from the Rochester area. Special thanks goes out to our steering committee members: Annette Ramos, Founder & Executive Director of the Rochester Latino Theater Company; Daystar Rosalie Jones, Founder & Artistic Director of Daystar Dance; Jack Langerak; Reenah L. Golden, Founder & Artistic Director of The Avenue Blackbox Theatre; Sally Bittner Bonn, Director of Youth Education at Writers & Books.

This report was assembled and designed by Katie Rainey, TAP Director.

ABOUT

Over the course of four months (August-December), 28 teaching artists participated in seven virtual workshops with Teaching Artist Project staff.

“The single most important thing I am taking away from the training is the confidence and validation I need to continue this as a viable, enriching experience for myself and those who learn from me.”

“I have been inspired by the community of TAs involved and will be looking for opportunities to maintain those connections. I want to help revitalize the interest of the greater Rochester area's schools, educators, libraries, community centers, etc. in collaborating with these talented and giving people.”

“I was incredibly impressed with the content, the kindness, and the structure.”

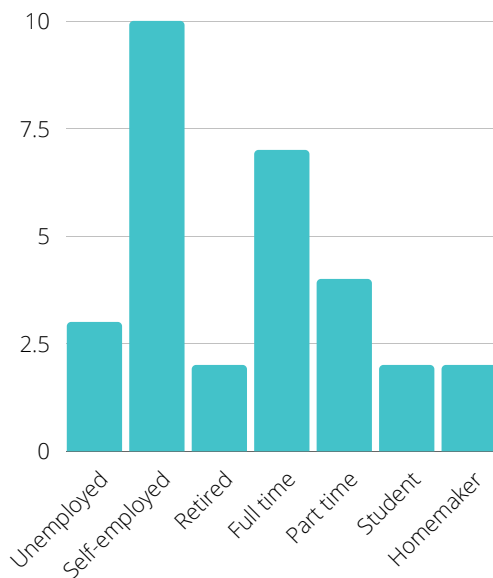
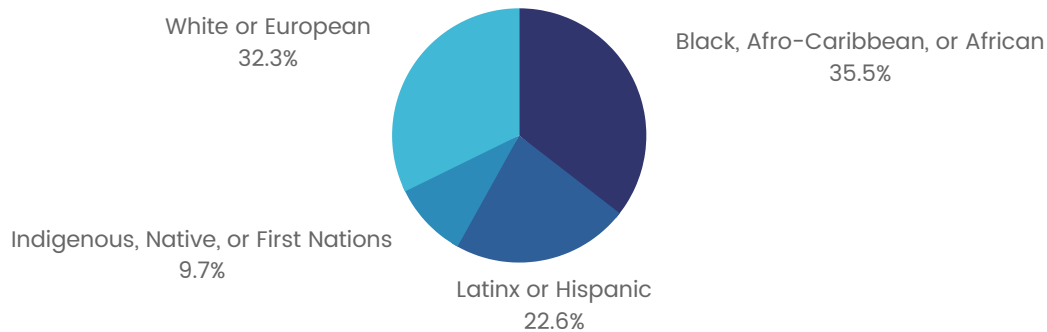
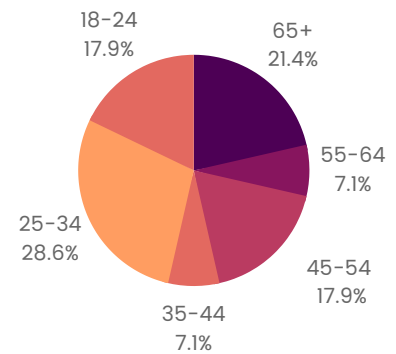
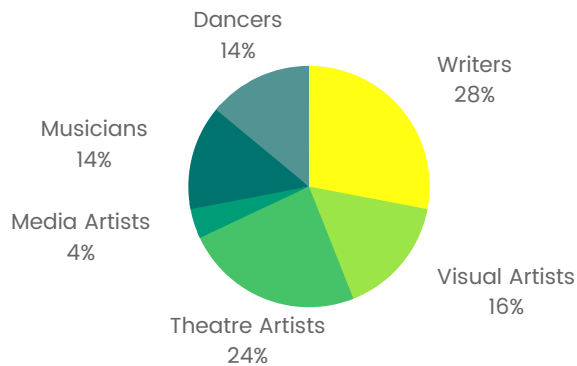
“I really appreciated the sharing on working with students with disabilities by Stacy and Sally. Disability advocacy is not something that I have focused on but it is something that I would like to consider in greater depth.”



PARTICIPANTS DEMOGRAPHICS

28

Teaching Artists
Trained



75%
Women & Gender
Variant/Nonconforming



Languages Spoken:
Spanish, English, Portuguese, American Sign Language, French



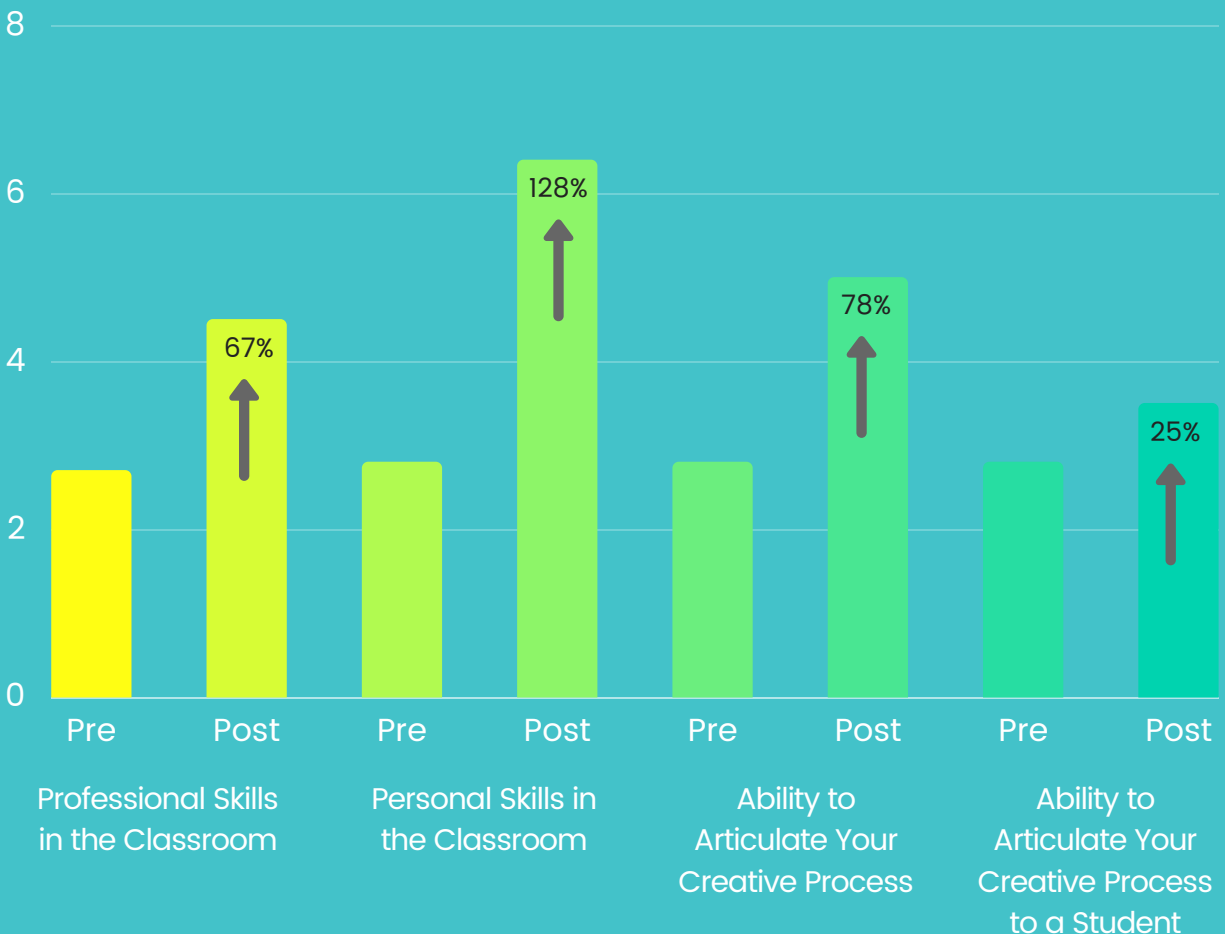
PROGRAM OUTCOMES

TAP's beliefs about teaching and learning are based on the idea that everyone has a unique voice with the potential to impact their community and the larger world. TAP trainees develop the skills necessary to model creative expression, collaboration, and teaching for social justice through meaningful and innovative multidisciplinary arts lessons. Trainees develop the skills necessary to implement TAP's four Teaching Artist Outcomes: Self Exploration, Building Strong Artistic Communities, Culture, and Collaboration/Justice-Oriented Process:

- **Self Exploration:** Trainees will explore how their lived experience and personal creative process informs their teaching practice. They will come to understand their own implicit biases and how that power and privilege plays out in the classroom. They will also learn to practice self-care and balance in their teaching artistry, and will actively process and practice self-reflection in their work.
- **Building Strong Artistic Communities:** Trainees will build community based on the theory of student-centered learning—the idea that their students should be at the center of their teaching and should be involved in decision-making. They will build on this theory by investigating and developing skills in inquiry-based learning, Multiple Intelligences, developmental stages, care and relational learning, lesson planning and facilitation, justice-oriented curricular design, and healthy mentorship.
- **Culture:** Trainees will experience art as culture in the program. They will participate as researchers in their learning, develop participatory action research skills, and engage ethically in communities that are not their own.
- **Collaboration/Justice-Oriented Process:** Trainees will explore the concepts of shared power, leadership, and decision-making. They will experience the synergy of sharing expertise while pushing their own growing edges in order to build collaborative, justice-oriented teaching practices.

Evaluations: Classroom Skills

Rochester participants self-identified and evaluated their skills both before and after participating in the training. Pre- and post-surveys aim to understand a participant's self-perception related to overall classroom and career preparedness as well as specific skills related to curriculum design, teaching for social justice, and classroom culture. In these surveys, participants ranked themselves on ability from an introductory understanding to a master at each skill. For instance, participants identified a 67% growth in their professional skills in the classroom.



↑29%
Increase

Trainees demonstrated a significant growth in ability to craft a curriculum

↑36%
Increase

Trainees demonstrated a significant growth in ability to create a positive classroom culture

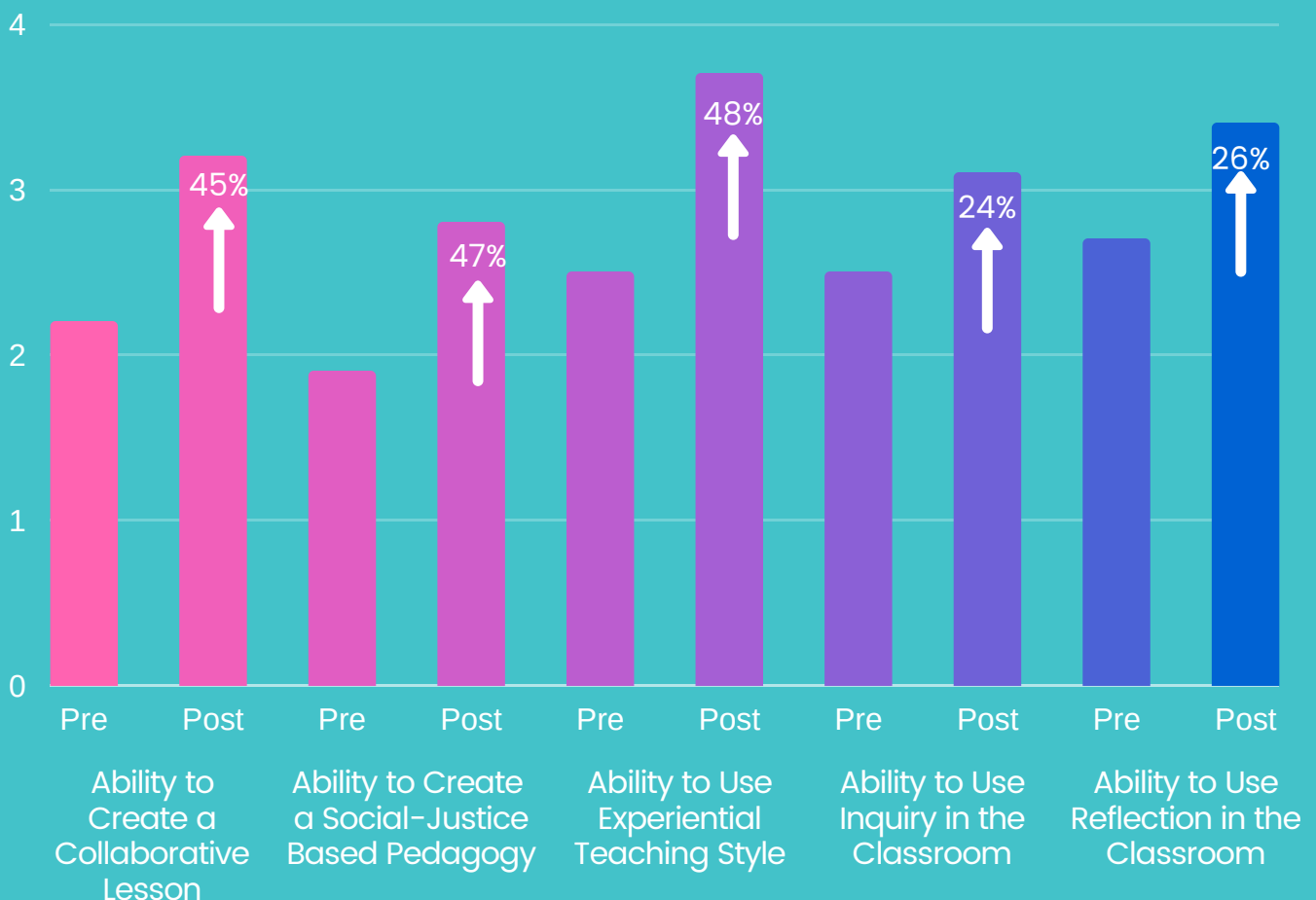
Evaluations: Teaching Styles

↑ **36%**
Increase

Trainees Report an Increase
in Teaching Their Art Form
Through a Social Justice Lens

↑ **32%**
Increase

Trainees Report an Increase in
Ability to Teach Their Art Form
to Multiple Intelligences



TRAINEE VOICES

“THIS WAS SUCH A WELL THOUGHT OUT, COMMUNITY-ORIENTED, ENRICHING TRAINING.”

“On a personal level, I really appreciated the feeling + adjective + body part art activity, as it gave me some good insight into some things going on with me. On a professional level, I loved the SEL focus. While that is an area in which I feel very well-versed, I'm always excited when it gets emphasized for others. I think the world should get on board seeing education through an SEL lens.”

“DEVELOPING A TEACHING PLAN AND GAINING WISDOM AND EXPERIENCE FROM OTHER INDIVIDUALS WAS ONE OF THE MOST HELPFUL ASPECTS OF THE TRAINING.”

“I enjoyed being part of the process during our group breakout as we had to come up with at least two activities for a class, I noticed how each teaching artist's ideas inspired the other to compliment the activity w/, and even taking the time to experiment with those activities to feel it out.”

“I FOUND MOST HELPFUL THE INSIGHTS ON PROCESS AND ADDING EXPERIENCE TO VIRTUAL LEARNING -- THE CREATION OF AN ACTIVITY WHERE WE APPLIED OUR ELEMENTS AND DIFFERENT LEARNING MODALITIES TO CREATE TOGETHER.”



COMMUNITY HAIKU

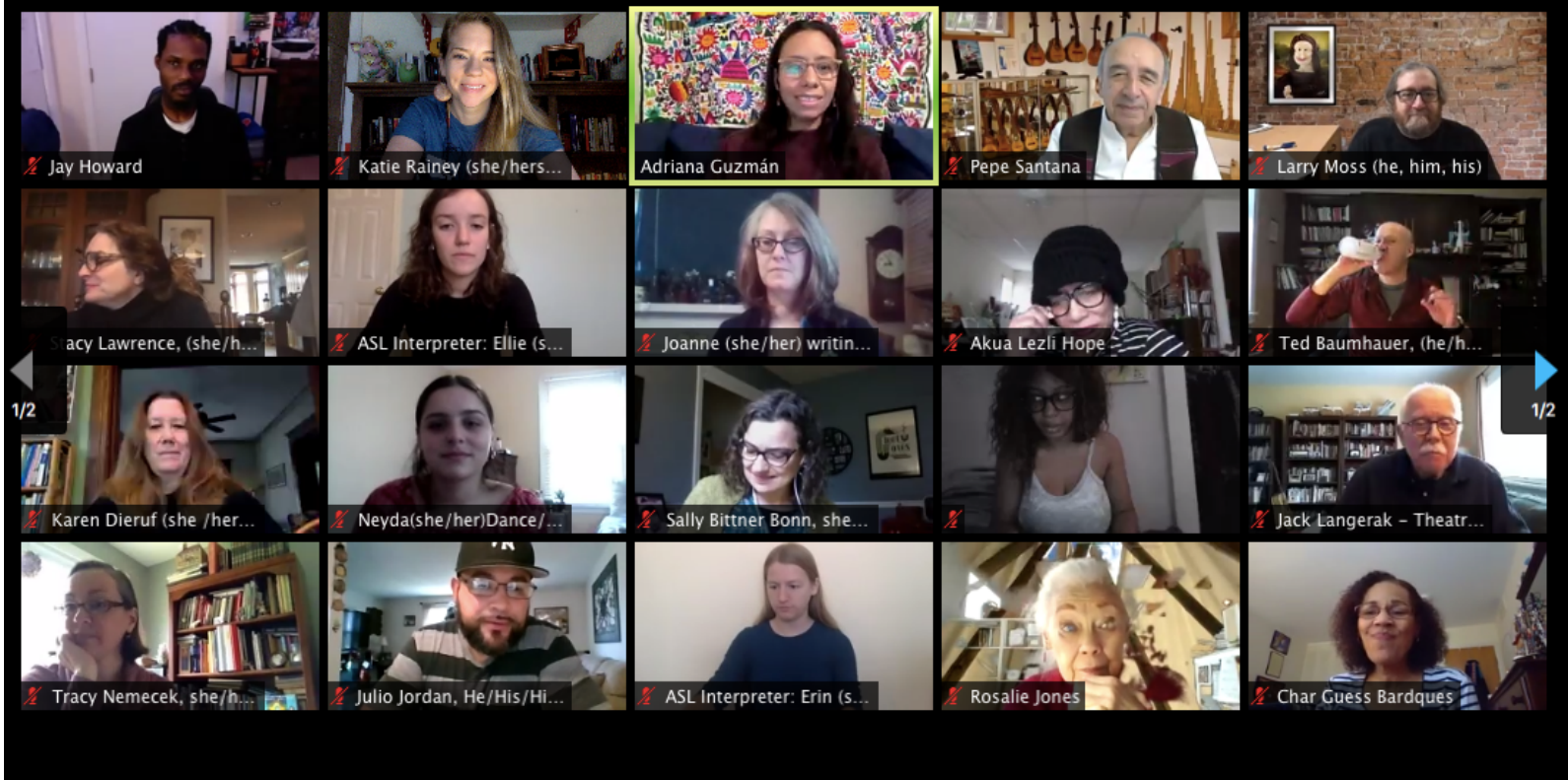
Dear Rochester Community,

We come in colors, We are a race of people, Divided by thought
Feeling powerless/turn insight into action/be the change, here, now
Breonna Taylor. Her life stolen unfairly. The system failed her. Or - The system failed *us*
Women bring life. Stop abusing and using them
Breathlessness : your air/becomes smogged, full of burnings/or banished by cop
Yesterday is gone, Tomorrow is yet to be, Today we must now act
Trauma creates addiction. Affliction, mind is conditioned.
The gateway is trauma.... Trauma- will to survive
Who can hear the screams, of the invisible when, the machine whispers
This is my body. My choice to give life or to refrain. I am a woman
My hands till the soil. I feel joy beneath my feet. whispering a prayer.
Man versus nature. Adversarial. Still? Now?! A people undone.
Frederick Douglass, your voice must still prevail, Rochester 2020!
Breathe, Center MySelf - Receive Images, Thoughts, Feelings - Visualize into Being the Im-Possible
If all discovers true love. The world will be a better place. You will see me, not race
Race + Change vs. Tradition: Because of my skin. I cannot confide to them. But my skin is me.
I am black and queer. there isn't a space for me. I shall make my own
Here is my body/curves, lines, developing, and/it is surely mine
Lie in state, woman/She defied lies of state/We must carry on
Defamation, negative bias, discrimination, prejudice have come upon me.
But, I am responsible, resilient, respectful, and right! This is my resistance.

Sincerely,

TEACHING ARTIST INSTITUTE OF ROCHESTER 2020





AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

While overall the training was a success, feedback and trainee focused reflection is invaluable to the intermediate and long term development of our programming. Through our participants evaluations of each workshop and the pre- and post-surveys, we have identified areas of improvement. TAP staff is committed to improving in the following areas:

- Adjusting the time and length of online sessions
- Creating opportunities for participants to share experiences, teachable moments from current residencies or workshops
- More time for small group work between participants
- Facilitating more out-of-workshop community building opportunities
- Having a post-training plan to maintain the community built during the training aside from Community-Word Project related alumni opportunities
- Balancing the wide range of experiences among participants. Varying experience levels actually made it more difficult to focus on one particular area as there was a lot to cover
- Meeting in-person for future events when the pandemic ends
- Connect more with potential clients like school administrators

Conclusion

It is evident from the outcomes of the training that more community-driven training is needed in Rochester. The teaching artist community in Rochester is growing rapidly and newer teaching artists are looking for ways to develop the necessary skills to work in the classroom, while veteran teaching artists need more community and skill-sharing between artists. Additional professional development opportunities in the area will help to create a more sustainable career path for teaching artists as well as provide a more visible platform for the arts education field therein.

This training was met with unprecedented events with the COVID-19 pandemic and, while Teaching Artist Project staff pivoted to respond and meet the needs of participants, there were many challenges along the way. We continue to honestly and holistically assess our growing edges and will make necessary adjustments to the training, should we implement the program again in Rochester. Additionally, we are committed to reshaping our programs to better serve the arts education field in Rochester while it endures the hardships COVID-19 has brought. We can do this by:

- Cultivating a strong, diverse TA community through strengthening partnership with artists of color, the LGBTQ+ community, and artists with disabilities
- Explore and implement strategies to address program accessibility as it relates to the intersections of race, class, gender, ability, and more
- Augment TAP programming with additional resources and trainings for Teaching Artists who are currently working in the field and are facing the additional challenge of remote teaching and virtual learning
- Expand the work we do with the alumnx community & creating more opportunities for our alums to participate in the training & expand their career opportunities
- Assist Rochester community leaders with developing a formal platform for TAs to stay in connection with each other
- Inviting community members to a live session with our teaching artists and having a panel session made publicly available for a larger audience.



A Division of Community-Word Project
New York, NY