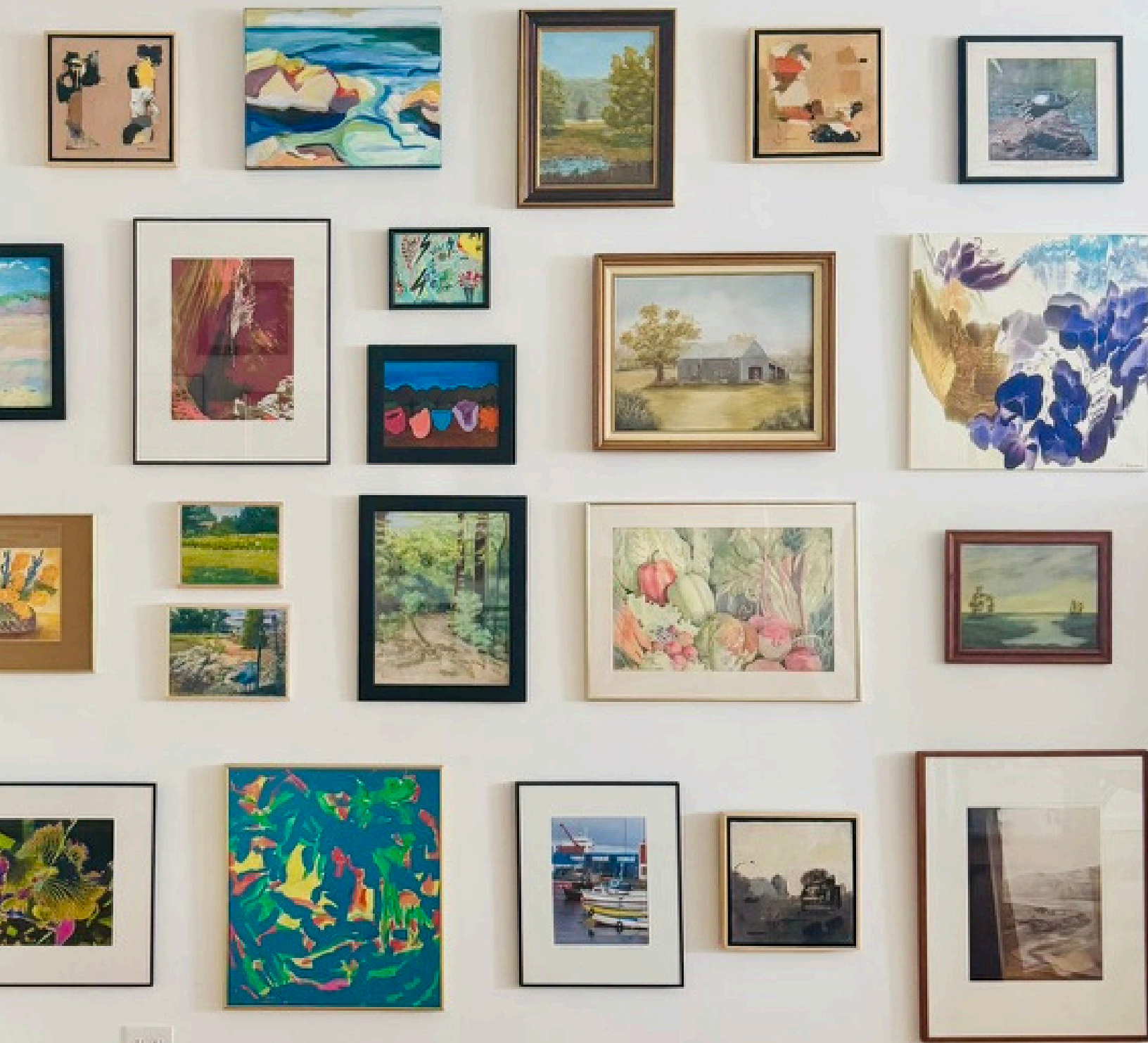




ARTConnection
RHODE ISLAND
Connecting Lives with Art | artconnectionri.org

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026

Table of Contents



Letter from the Board	3
Community	4
Art & Mental Health	8
Youth Art Workshops	9
Art Teacher Spotlight	10
Fundraising	11
Art Placements	12
Partnership Spotlight	13
ACRI Highlights	14

LETTER FROM THE BOARD

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Fifteen years ago, we began with a simple idea: creating equal access to art across Rhode Island communities. In 2025, this vision reached new heights and as we moved into our anniversary year in 2026, the momentum has only grown.

Since its founding in 2011, Art Connection Rhode Island has placed **2,323** original works of art across **94** nonprofit organizations through **144** art selections. After launching Youth Art Workshops in 2017, ACRI has partnered with libraries and community centers in Providence, Pawtucket, and Newport, reaching **460** children, preteens, and teenagers through hands-on art classes.

We're grateful to the **334** local artists who have donated to our Art Placement Program, sustaining ACRI's mission and making a lasting impact across their community.

Last year also marked a significant milestone: ACRI moved to a dedicated art studio and launched our ACRI Art Gallery, showcased at the 15th anniversary fundraiser on April 30, 2026, "A State Connected By Art" where we raised **\$8,500** for the organization.

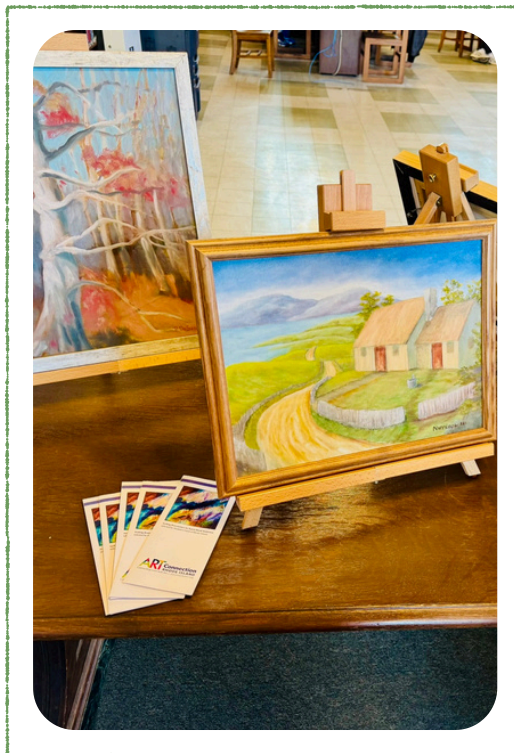
This report covers our accomplishments in 2025 and early 2026, a period of expansion, deepened partnerships, and community celebration. Together, we're building a more connected and creative Rhode Island.

With gratitude,
The ACRI Board



COMMUNITY

ABC At Knight



Art Connection Rhode Island kicked off 2025 as the featured nonprofit at ABC at Knight, a monthly series at [Knight Memorial Library](#) that brings community leaders together.

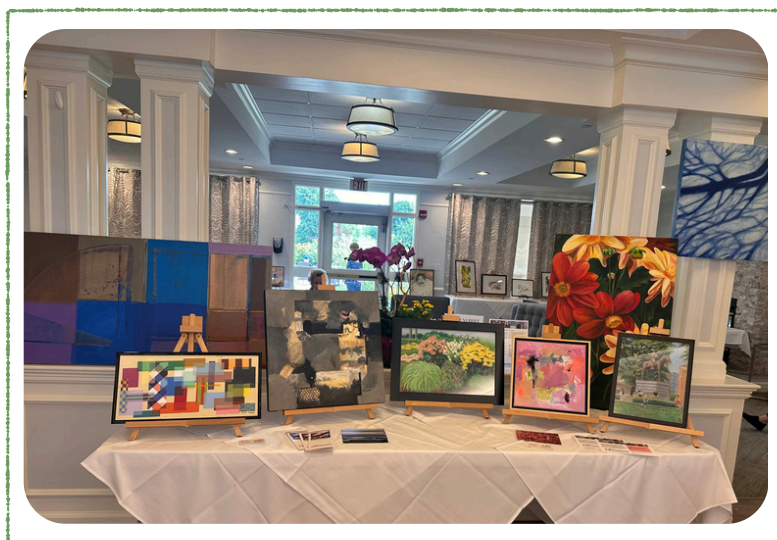
The library was transformed into a pop-up art gallery featuring donated works by local Rhode Island artists. The evening opened with a conversation between Doug Victor, President of Knight Memorial Library, and Wendy Ingram, ACRI's Founder and Board Chair.

Edilberta Trejo of South Providence Community Library described how she first connected with ACRI to launch youth art classes, a partnership that later led to an art selection and has since reshaped the library's atmosphere. Following the event, several pieces from the pop-up gallery have since been placed at nonprofits community spaces throughout Rhode Island.



COMMUNITY

Pop-up Art Exhibit at Wingate Residences



In the summer of 2025, ACRI collaborated with the Wingate Residences on the East Side for a special two-part pop-up art exhibit held July 17–21 and September 8–15. The shows featured artwork by senior residents alongside original pieces from ACRI's Art Placement Program.

"Our partnership has been a meaningful opportunity to celebrate creativity, connection, and community," said Maggie Kuriakose, MHA, director of sales and marketing at Wingate Residences on the East Side. "The exhibits we hosted last summer brought people together in inspiring ways, creating spaces for conversation, learning, and shared experiences. It was rewarding to see the impact these programs had on the Wingate community, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration to create opportunities that enrich and engage residents for years to come."

After the event, residents donated some of their work to our Art Placement Program. Several pieces have since been placed across multiple nonprofit partners.

COMMUNITY

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at PVD Dept. Public Works

Last August, ACRI was honored to attend two partnership installation events that brought original art into community spaces across Providence.

On August 5, we joined the Providence Department of Public Works (DPW) for the ribbon-cutting ceremony at their new headquarters on 75 Chapman Avenue. ACRI placed JH 3-4 Spring Waters by artist David Kupferman, a warm, contemplative piece that now welcomes staff and visitors in the main lobby.

The event featured remarks from Mayor Brett Smiley and DPW Director Trish Coyne-Fague, who reflected on the essential role of public works and the importance of investing in inspiring, dignified workspaces for those who serve our city.



COMMUNITY

Art Installations with Providence Housing Authority

Later that month, the Providence Housing Authority (PHA) hosted an installation exhibit featuring the works they selected by local artists from ACRI's Art Placement Program. Now permanently displayed in the PHA community room, the artworks create a warm, welcoming environment for residents to gather, supporting well-being and healing through the power of art. PHA tapped ACRI again in the fall to partner on enriching their Dominica Manor Housing Building, ultimately placing **40** pieces of artwork across PHA facilities to uplift shared spaces for residents and staff alike.

At ACRI, we believe original art should be accessible to all. These installations are a beautiful reminder of how art can transform and enrich the spaces where communities come together. We're deeply grateful to DPW, PHA, and the artists whose generosity brings daily inspiration and joy to these spaces.



ART & MENTAL HEALTH

Newport Mental Health Partnership

ACRI reconnected with a past nonprofit partner, Newport Mental Health (NMH) to help enrich their new facility. NMH submitted an application for artwork with the goal of enhancing the environment for both clients and staff by making it more welcoming and therapeutic.

‘As a behavioral health organization, we recognize the significant role visual art can play in reducing the institutional atmosphere of our facilities, improving morale, and cultivating a warmer setting that supports healing and community engagement.’ Tyler Wilkinson, Chief Operating Officer.

NMH selected **20** pieces for their new facility. In March of this year, they hosted a Community Open House, where the artwork was showcased and highlighted for all to see.

“The artwork has not only enhanced the aesthetic appeal of our facility but also created a more welcoming and calming atmosphere for everyone”. David Boscia, Chief Clinical Officer



Butterfly

Oil Painting by Laurie Mackenzie
Placed at Newport Mental Health

YOUTH ART WORKSHOPS

Meeting Street Partnership



A meaningful Youth Art Workshop unfolded at Meeting Street earlier this Spring. A staff member who had partnered with ACRI in a prior role, reached out to request art classes for the school's youngest students. The workshop series was lead by Art Teacher, Hollis Hickerson who guided **60** preschoolers and toddlers through the creative process over 8 weeks.

In 2025, Art Connection Rhode Island partnered with the MLK Community Center in Newport and the South Providence Community Library to inspire youth through art. At MLK, kids explored mural-making, and at the South Providence Library, the art classes gave children a space to express themselves and create pieces to take home.

Since 2017, ACRI has partnered with libraries and community centers in Providence, Pawtucket, and Newport, reaching **460** children, preteens, and teenagers through hands-on art classes.

ART TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Hollis Hickerson

Hollis received the Youth Art Educator Award at ACRI's 15th anniversary fundraiser for her amazing work over the years in teaching art to Rhode Island youth.

Hollis is a multi-disciplinary artist working in fiber arts and illustration, practices united by themes of transformation and identity. Teaching and collaboration are inseparable from her artistic practice.



Over the past decade, she has developed workshops across Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut for students of all ages, emphasizing hands-on experimentation in fiber, printmaking, papermaking, and bookbinding with a focus on accessibility and sustainability. She believes that when participants engage directly with materials, they access deeper parts of their own stories and that the act of creating becomes a form of empowerment, a reminder that art is a tool available to everyone.

ACRI is so grateful to Hollis for their continued partnership. 'It's been a joy sitting in on the Youth Art Workshops that Hollis teaches, you can tell the kids are having fun, they're learning something new, and the art is making an impact on everyone in the room.' Wendy Ingram, Board Chair

To review Hollis Hickerson's portfolio, visit hollishickerson.com.

FUNDRAISING

15th Anniversary Fundraiser, 'A State Connected By Art'

Art Connection Rhode Island celebrated its 15th anniversary with "A State Connected By Art" on April 30 at the ACRI Art Gallery in Pawtucket. The event honored the late artist Roberta VanDerMolen with a spotlight gallery, and presented Hollis Hickerson with the Youth Art Educator Award for her work through ACRI's Youth Art Workshops.

The evening was a true success, raising **\$8,500** for the organization, including **\$1,400** from a silent auction bidding war. The evening featured a gallery of donated artwork from the Art Placement Program, entertainment, refreshments, and an interactive art piece.

Fifteen years ago, we began with the hope of creating equal access to art across Rhode Island. Today we celebrate a statewide network of nearly **94** organization's generosity and desire to enrich their community space with art.

Special thank you to our event sponsors, Bank Newport and the Iona Dobbins Art Fund, for supporting this event and for their continued support for Art Connection Rhode Island's mission.



ART PLACEMENTS

Hattie Ide Chaffee Home

56 pieces selected | Riverside, RI

South Providence Library

9 pieces selected | Providence, RI

RI Free Clinic

9 pieces selected | Providence, RI

One Neighborhood Builders

8 pieces selected | Olneyville, Providence, RI

McAuley Village

18 pieces selected | Providence, RI

Blackstone Valley Community Health Center

13 pieces selected | Pawtucket, RI

Providence Housing Authority

40 pieces selected | Providence, RI

PVD Department of Public Works

1 piece selected | Providence, RI

Newport Mental Health

20 pieces selected | Middletown, RI

Knight Memorial Library

20 pieces selected | Providence, RI

Providence Community Health Center

14 pieces selected | Providence, RI

Rhode Island Tutorial

9 pieces selected | Providence, RI

Thrive Behavioral Health

15 pieces selected | Warwick, RI



Since January 2025, ACRI has placed **233** original works of art across **14** nonprofit organizations through **17** art selections.

We extend our sincere thank you to the artists, donors, staff members, and community partners who made these meaningful installations possible.



PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

Hattie Ide Chaffee Home



Our partnership with Hattie Ide Chaffee Home began with a successful art installation in early 2025. Later in the Fall, we collaborated on another art placement for their newly renovated rehabilitation wing.

Our partnership continued to grow after attending our 15th anniversary fundraiser this past April. They selected 15 more beautiful pieces for their community spaces. To date **56** artworks have been donated to the Hattie Ide Chaffee Home's community and health spaces.

"The joy you've brought to our home means more than words can express." said Heather Fraga, Director Of Life Enrichment at Hattie Ide Chaffee Home.

Heather's words reflect the broader sentiment among ACRI's nonprofit partners who know the impact that original artwork provides to our greater communities. We are grateful to Hattie Ide Chaffee Home and all our nonprofit partners who continue to engage with ACRI's art selections, new and old.

For more information on Hattie Ide Chaffee Home, please visit: hattieidechaffee.org



Photos shown are part of the artworks donated to Hattie Ide Chaffee Home

Donors

Debbie Dobbins
Deborah Clearman
Deming Sherman
Dr. Altenhein
Elinor Thompson
Elizabeth Buckley
Ellen Kellner
Emily Mugge
Erica Levin
Eveline Luppi
George Goodwin
Hannelore Crossgrove
Harold Mackinder
Herman Brewster
Janet Alling
Janice Libby
Jean Patiky
Jessica Coleman
Jim Cain
Joseph Jamroz
Karen Rand Anderson
Kimberly Rivera
Lauren Pearlman Sugita
Leonard Rumpler
Liz Martino
Mary Shepard
Pamela Stanton
Robert & Mary Brewster
Sarah Gleason
Sarah Morenon
Suzanne Peyton
Tom & Dotty Blair
Vera Gierke
Wells & Marguerite Pile
Wendy Ingram

Board

Chair, Wendy Ingram
Secretary, Vera Gierke
Treasurer, Herman Brewster
Director, Lauren Pearlman Sugita
Director, James Cain

Staff

Program Manager, Rhea Levin
Development Manager, Bob Malley

ACRI Mission



Art Connection-RI believes that everyone should have access to art regardless of socioeconomic background. We provide community service organizations in Rhode Island original works of art created by local artists at no cost so that it may enrich and inspire those they serve.

ACRI 15yr Impact



334

Artists

144

Art
Selections

94

Nonprofit
Partners

2,323

Donated
Artworks Placed

460

Children Attended
Art Workshops

2025-2026 Sponsors

Iona Dobbins Art Fund

Carter Family
Charitable Trust



June Rockwell
Levy Foundation

IDA Ballou
Littlefeld
Memorial
Fund



RI House of
Representatives & Senate
Legislative Grants

Awards



ACRI supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

