



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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MISSION

The Steel Yard's historic campus is a platform for professional artists, makers and the community to practice and learn the industrial arts. The organization fosters creative and economic opportunities, by providing workspace, tools, training, and education while forging lasting links to a local tradition of craftsmanship.

WHO WE ARE

The Steel Yard is a non-profit industrial arts organization in Providence, RI. Our professional workspace enables community access to welding, blacksmithing, jewelry, ceramics and the foundry arts. We believe in a world made by hand, where individuals, neighbors, businesses, institutions, municipalities and communities come together to enrich our private lives and public spaces through creative work.

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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OUR STAFF

Howie Sneider (he/him)
Executive Director

Zooey Kim Conner (they/them)
Development Director

Asaad Miller (they/them)
Communications Director

CJ Jimenez (they/them)
Studio Director

Adam Chuong (they/them)
Education Director

Tim Ferland (he/him)
Public Projects Director

Haley Peters (he/they)
Education Manager

Ti Dinh (she/her)
Client Relations Manager

John Nguyen (he/him)
Workforce Projects Manager

Rena Rong (she/her)
Metals Technician

Harry Cassell (she/her)
Ceramics Technician

Nubia Gomez (she/her)
Public Projects Apprentice

Justin Figueroa (he/him)
Public Projects Apprentice

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF OUR 2023 STAFF

Lauren Fortier	Amy Ramos	Ren Kelly
Islay Taylor	Lucia Perluck	Manuela Hincapie Vidal
Ben Filchak	Spocka Summa	Martin Gil del Real
Sally Turner	Denise Meza	Justin Brito
Kendra Plumley	Axel Loarca	Miranda Klein

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Sometimes I just need a reminder of why we do what we do, so I go for a walk around The Yard, and I am never disappointed. The work of the Yard is not abstract – it's for the benefit of the people in our community.

In just ten minutes, I see a former student who is now leading a public art project, supporting their creative career and making something beautiful for the community. A resident who traveled hundreds of miles for a month in the studio, dedicating their vacation to producing a new series of sculptures. A blacksmith practicing a new technique and developing courses to share their knowledge with the public. Professional or hobbyist, student or teacher, people at all different points in their creative journeys come to The Steel Yard to express themselves and hone their craft.

And something special happens when everyone's together.

In 2023 we ran paid trainings, summer camps, free events, and more. We offered open enrollment courses, and gave out more scholarships than ever. We operated year-round, giving our community access to the tools, creativity, and networks to expand their creative practices. We tested some of our limits, learned, and returned to our work with new rigor and intention every day.

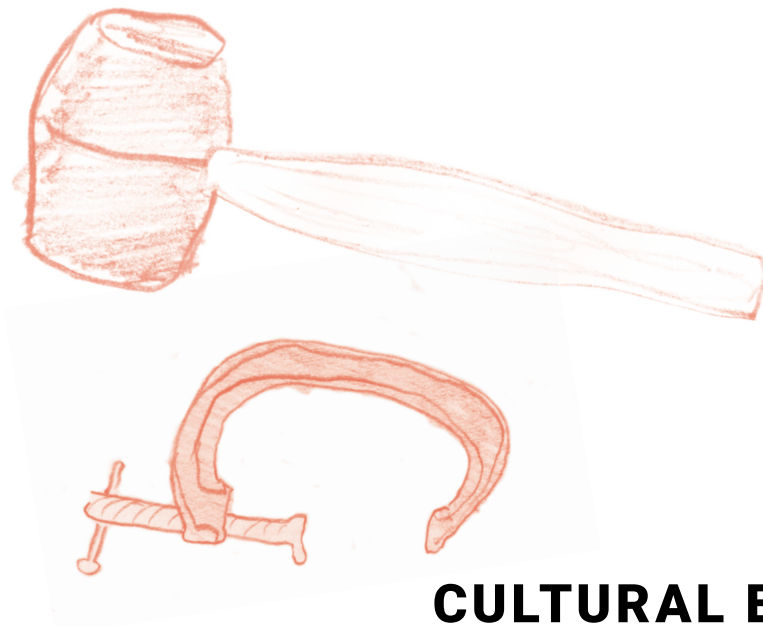
This report will shine a light on just some of the lives transformed here. It is a collection of stories from the people who make The Yard special, from students to staff, from our board to all of our supporters. You made this unlikely thing happen in 2023, and you continue to inspire us to challenge ourselves to be better, together.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Howie', with a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line extending to the right.

Howie Sneider
Executive Director

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, ACCESS & ANTI-RACISM



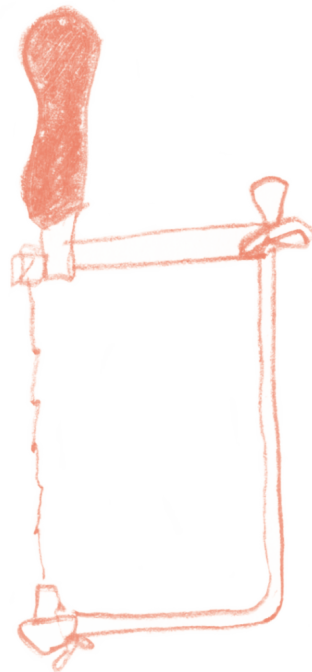
CULTURAL EQUITY & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is our belief that everyone deserves access to the education, skills, and equipment needed to directly improve their conditions and community, and it is our responsibility to explore and address barriers that prevent individuals from fully participating with our organization. We will continue to reimagine, rebuild, and develop programs and systems to counteract the harm caused by systemic racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, ableism, classism, xenophobia, religious prejudice, and other forms of oppression.

We engage in the continual learning and action needed to make our campus and programs safe, inclusive, equitable, and just. We encourage our supporters and affiliates to join us in challenging ourselves to consistently do better, to make the future of the industrial arts more diverse, empowered, and expansive. We invite feedback and participation, and strive to cultivate an environment where everyone can create.

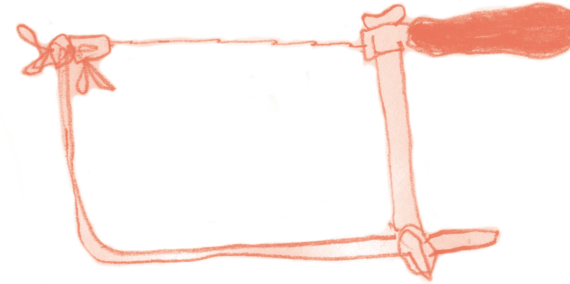
We make continuous improvements to ensure accessibility for all. Our facility is wheelchair-accessible, and we've designed and fabricated accessible infrastructure with the assistance of program participants. This includes an entry ramp to our studio and the fabrication and installation of wheelchair-accessible welding tables, jewelry benches and sinks. We've purchased accessible tools, including an adjustable ceramics wheel, and installed an assistive audio system. Restrooms are designed for accessibility and are gender neutral. Safety policies and other materials are translated into Spanish and our website is available multi-lingually.

The Steel Yard acknowledges that it resides on the occupied traditional homelands of the Narragansett Nation, including the Mashapaug, Nahagansett, and Wampanoag peoples. We celebrate the past and future contributions, and stewardship, of the Indigenous peoples of the Woonasquatucket Valley and surrounding lands; we acknowledge the oppression and genocide enacted by colonizers to forcibly remove Indigenous peoples from this territory.



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY & JUSTICE

HISTORIC PRESERVATION



The Steel Yard is committed to a healthy and sustainable environment. We inhabit a facility that has continually operated as a metals fabrication shop for over 100 years. During our over 20 years of stewardship, we've cleaned up that century of contamination and renovated our shop to be more sustainable. We know that it is our responsibility to understand the environmental impacts of our work and to make enduring changes for the good of our local and global communities.

All of our electricity is sourced renewably. Today, a 51 kilowatt solar array that sits atop our industrial arts facility generates approximately 60,000 kilowatt hours of electricity on an annual basis. In addition, we are one of seven partners in a historic 20-year hydroelectric renewable energy project wherein an average of 5,500,000 kWh of renewable energy will be generated annually.

The Steel Yard preserves crafts, traditions and spaces, while ensuring that they serve and address contemporary needs in the community. We place high regard on historic preservation and restoration, knowing that the most sustainable building is the one that has already been built, and that as a community we can repurpose materials and practices to address present needs while connecting to the past.



STUDIO & CAMPUS

"Having The Steel Yard as a community resource has given my personal practice and technical skills a great lift in terms of self confidence and forward momentum. The Yard being a safe, inclusive environment that actively worked against sexism and condescension in traditionally industrial spaces has helped me come into my own as a maker."

- Rena Rong, Metals Technician

Our 100+ year old studio is a hub of creativity for artists working with metals and ceramics. Artist residents, students, youth, and staff all utilize our studios for their careers and artistic practices, contributing to The Yard's vibrant, collaborative culture.

On a typical day in the studios, you may see one of our staff leading a demonstration on the safe use of one of our tools; artists-in-residence creating new works for an exhibition out of metal and clay; or a student testing out a new skill during our Open Studios. All of this activity requires regular maintenance of our facilities and tools, as well as continuous accessibility improvements to ensure our space is safe and supportive for as many artists as possible.

The studio also supported our annual Iron Pour, which was once again free to attend in 2023. A dedicated team of volunteers built massive sculptures from scrap iron, to the delight of close to 5,000 community members who came out to see our spectacular public performance of fire!



ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

The Steel Yard’s Residency Program supports artists working in the industrial arts: foundry, sculpture, metalsmithing, blacksmithing, jewelry and ceramics. We recognize that access to space and time is critical to emerging artists, and that the expense of maintaining an industrial arts practice can be a barrier due to the cost of tools, consumables, and overhead. Residencies are designed to diminish or eliminate financial barriers to ensure that participants have access to studios necessary to their practice. Residencies range from 1 to 12 months; accepted artists receive access to community studio space, tools, equipment, teaching opportunities, community engagement, peer exchange, and enrollment in courses and workshops.

In 2023, we had 23 resident artists share workspace in our 12,000 square foot industrial arts studios. In addition to offering this opportunity at no cost to all accepted residents, 100% of our year-long residents received stipends in support of their creative practice. We also held our first ever winter art show in 2023, which exhibited and celebrated our residents’ amazing work at the Pawtucket Arts Collaborative.

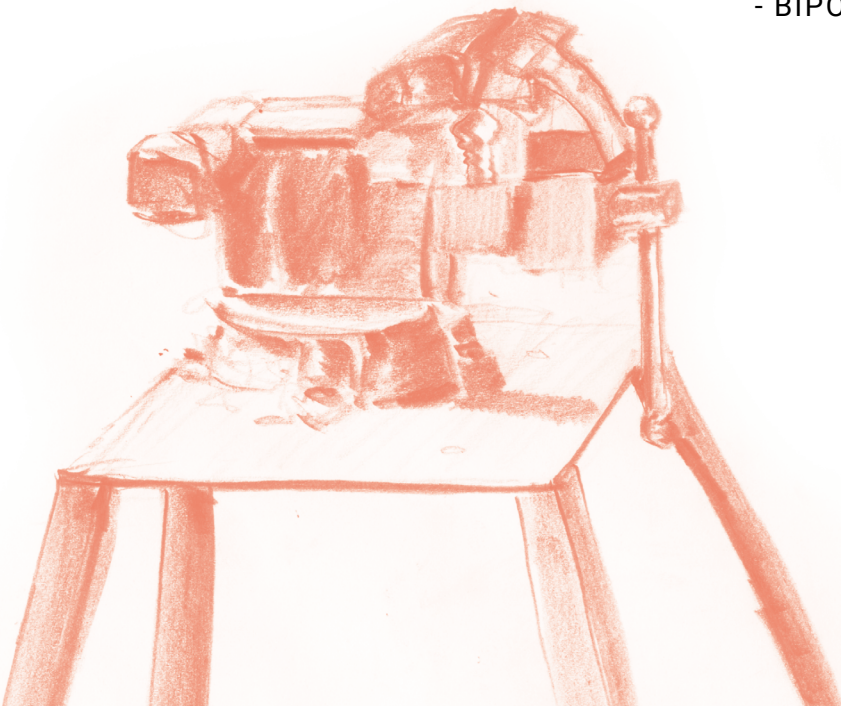
2023 RESIDENTS

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Martin Baggarly | Ti Dinh | Sarah Leiva |
| Traé Brooks | Naomi Dodds | Emilia Schonthal |
| Harry Cassell | Nyala Honda | Aina Sullivan |
| Hernan Chavez | Michelle Huang | Grace Varner |
| Brittany Dias | Prinshu Gautam | Madeline Young |

TEACHING & LEARNING THE INDUSTRIAL ARTS

"It means so much to me that I have a weekly space to gather that celebrates other people of color! In class we laugh together, and sometimes even cry as we connect with ways many of our ancestors created and made artistic meaning of the world around them."

- BIPOC Ceramics Student



The Steel Yard offers unique open-enrollment courses in the industrial arts for learners of all skill levels. Courses are small, with an average of five to eight students per course, ensuring a quality experience. Students receive hands-on experience working with the tools of the trade in a safe and creative environment, and walk away with something they made by hand.

Courses are instructed by talented professional working artists and tradespeople who are deeply invested in their craft. Every day they share their knowledge, mentorship and experience throughout our studios.

We perpetually strive to expand our student base with a focus on equity. In 2023, we continued equity and justice initiatives including sliding scale tuition with courses centering BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students and a sliding scale tuition program for people with disabilities. We awarded 130 scholarships, totaling nearly \$50,000 and expanding access to the industrial arts for our community.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

RACE / ETHNICITY

- White: 73.2%
- Asian: 8.2%
- Black: 7.7%
- Native American: 1.0%
- Hispanic / Latinx: 9.5%
- Multiracial: 5.5%
- Other: 3.2%

GENDER / IDENTITY

- Female: 37.8%
- Male: 44.6%
- Non-binary/Genderqueer: 15.4%
- Other: 1.5%
- Average Age: 31 years old
- 12.8% Adolescents



YOUTH CAMPS

Youth Summer Camps at The Steel Yard are 2-week long day programs instructed by professional working artists. Each camp offers educational workshops and studio time in a real working industrial shop for young people ages 14 – 18. We're here to encourage creativity in a safe, respectful environment, as well as offering an unforgettable summer experience for every participant.

In 2023, we were able to continue our expanded programming, offering Camp Metalhead (metals camp), Camp Mudhead (ceramics camp), Camp Sparkle (metals camp for LGBTQIA+ youth), and our first ever BIPOC Camp Metalhead (metals camp for BIPOC youth). Our identity-focused camps provide a welcoming, safe environment where young artists can explore and express their identities within the space of making, and have quickly become staples of The Steel Yard's summer programming.



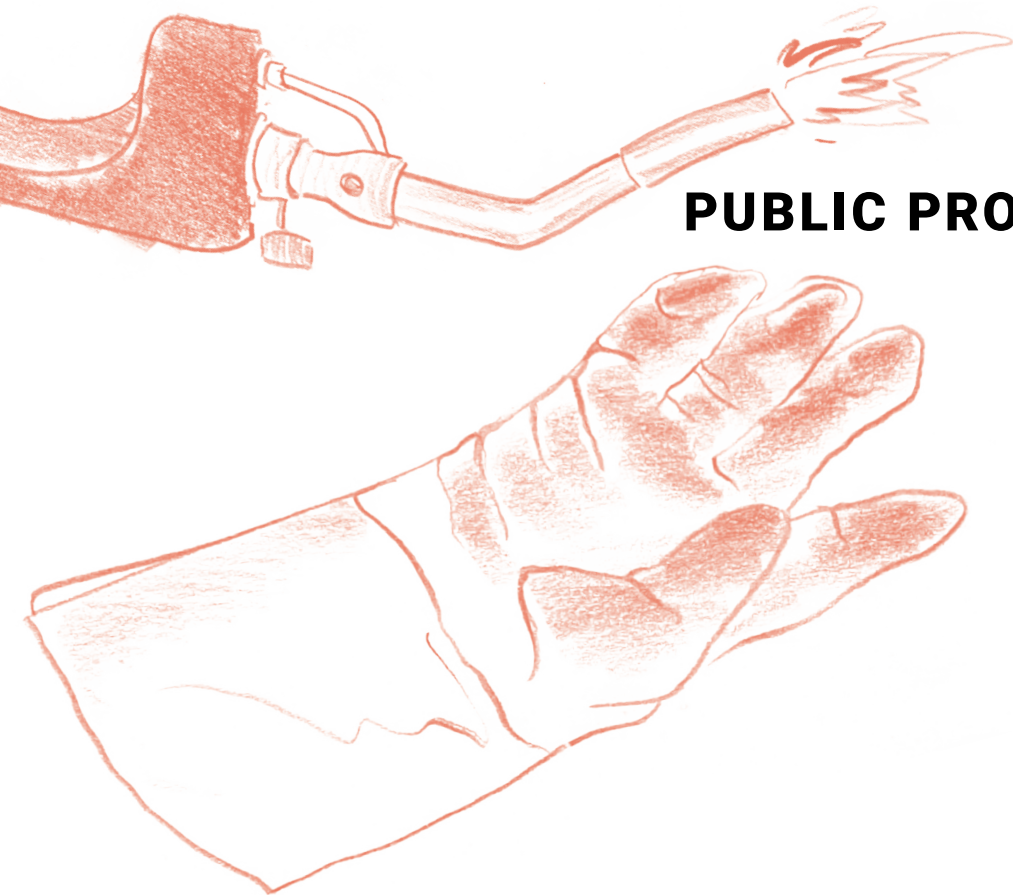
WORKFORCE TRAINING & INTERNSHIPS



In service to our mission of providing access to education, training and facilities in the industrial arts, The Steel Yard's Workforce Training program offers paid training to Rhode Islanders who have faced barriers to employment and financial stability. This program provides hands-on training in welding and industrial skills, as well as instruction in design thinking, client interactions, and project budgeting.

Graduates of each introductory program are hired as interns in our Public Projects department. The Internship program is built around the fabrication of community-based public art, while providing further opportunities for on-the-job training. All participants are paid to fabricate public projects for local installation, gaining hands-on experience through our shop.

In 2023, we successfully graduated eight participants from our one week training programs. Of those graduates, five completed our paid Internship, and almost all participants were hired on a per-project basis for fabrication work in our Public Projects department. Additionally, in 2023 we hired a recent Workforce Training graduate and former Public Projects fabricator as our full-time Customer Relations Manager.



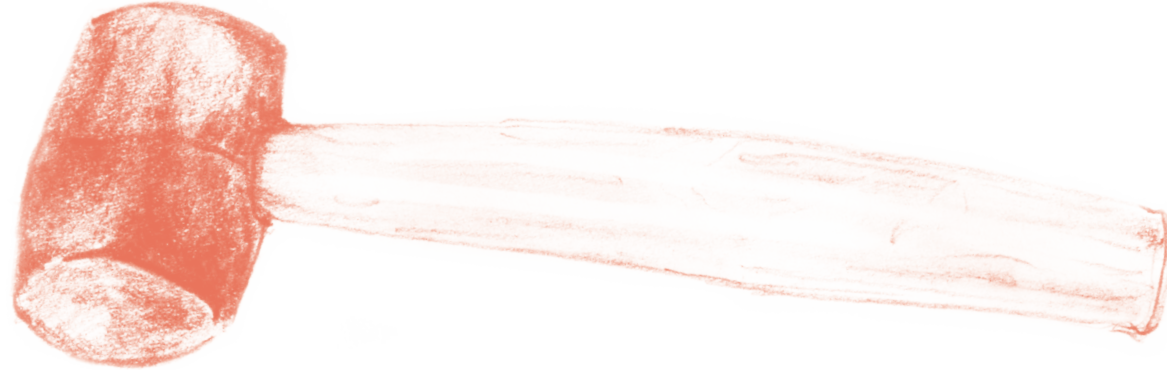
PUBLIC PROJECTS



The Steel Yard's Public Projects department works directly with municipalities, neighborhood organizations, businesses and nonprofits to produce public art and creative functional amenities that are accessible to everyone. Our Public Projects department is proud to support the arts economy by hiring independent artists to design and fabricate locally inspired custom products, while offering beautiful and functional public amenities for anyone to enjoy.

Highlights from 2023 included:

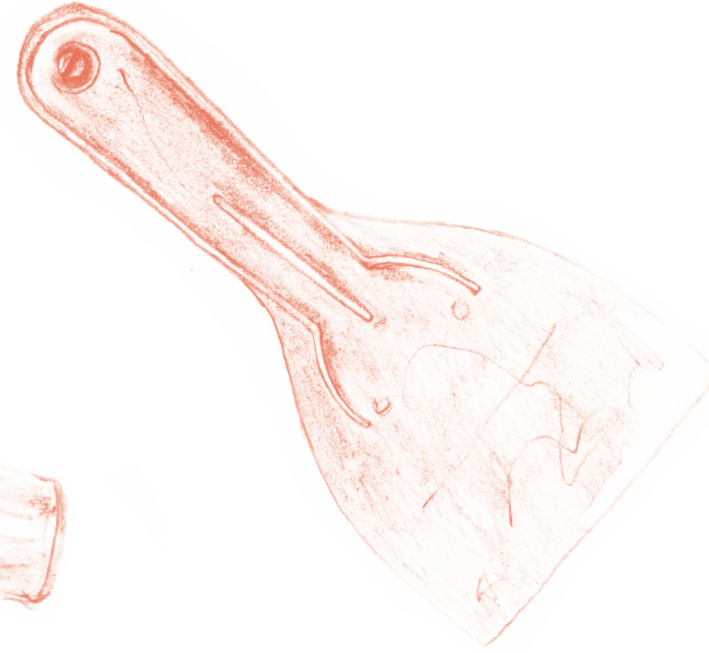
- Over 300 feet of fencing fabricated for Dorcas International's campus. The fence features over 30 different languages, welcoming clients and visitors to the site.
- Public amenities for Rocky Point State Park in Warwick, including fencing, benches, and trash cans. The Public Projects team worked with the City of Warwick and the RI DEM to design functional amenities that drew attention to the park's new fishing pier, and reflected the park's role as a way for visitors to connect to nature. Our designs drew inspiration from the park itself, and the fence and trash cans utilize motifs of local wildlife and the coastline, while the benches reflect on the movement of the ocean.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

"My heart feels full of creative energy getting to create in all these different mediums outside of what I'm used to working in, and I'm so grateful for this opportunity."

- NUA/Crafting The Future partnership participant



The Steel Yard partners with schools and organizations to expand our network, support and uplift community organizations, and offer program participants additional opportunities to explore the industrial arts.

Partnerships in education feature a workshop or class with a curriculum customized to meet organizational learning goals. 2023 partnerships included collaborations with Onward We Learn, Project Open Door, and One Gun Gone. We also began a new biennial partnership with our neighbor, New Urban Arts, and national organization Crafting The Future. This partnership gave BIPOC New Urban Arts alumni an opportunity to explore jewelry and small metals while building community through social events.

TENANTS & PARTNERS AT 27 & 55 SIMS AVE



The Steel Yard rents space in our Community Art Building at 27 Sims Ave. and the 'Potato Palace' at 55 Sims Ave., to small creative businesses, supporting their growth, networks and opportunities. They pay below-market rate rents for the neighborhood and give back heartily to the cultural vitality of our community.

TALLEY STRINGS

Talley strings is a maker-owned and operated, stringed instrument repair shop that has been in business since 2001.
www.talleystings.com
*Tenant since 2022

WEST SIDE SEWING STUDIO

Patti Barnatt, artist and maker, has been running sewing classes year-round since 1997. All classes are individualized instruction; each person works at their own level and speed, making whatever they choose.
www.westsidesewingstudio.com
Tenant since 2012

TRY CAPS

(4H Creative Art & Problem Solving Program)
Youth ages 10 and older buddy-up with volunteers, parents, and mentors to show their leadership skills in action as they explore the great opportunities at TRY CAPS Creative Art and Problem Solving Program.
www.trycaps.com
Tenant since 2015

RISD CERAMICS DEPARTMENT

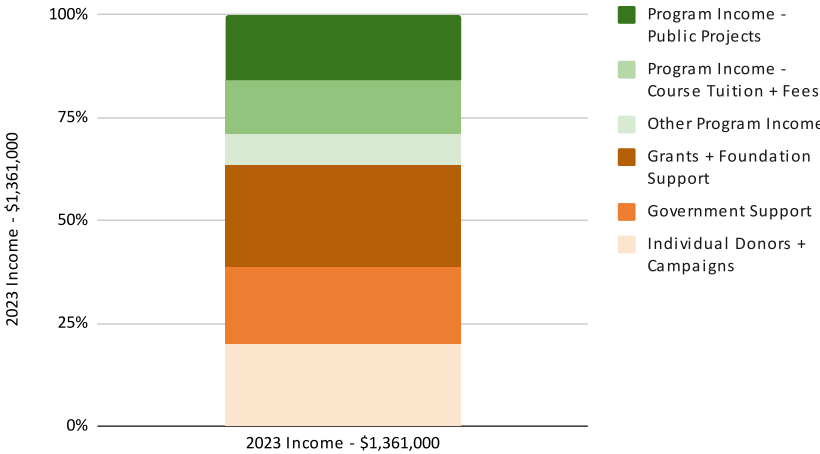
RISD's ceramics department promotes a rigorous, hands-on investigation of clay as a multifaceted medium with great expressive possibilities. RISD Ceramics has partnered with The Steel Yard to build and maintain a soda kiln and wood-fired anagama kiln that are shared with the community.
Tenant since 2014

**In support of a creative neighbor, The Steel Yard is proud to act as fiscal agent for Buena Grafica Social Studio, a 501(c)3 non-profit founded in 2020. Buena Grafica Social Studio is a BIPOC, multilingual, and multi-disciplinary team of graphic designers, printmakers, and community advocates. www.buenagrafica.com*

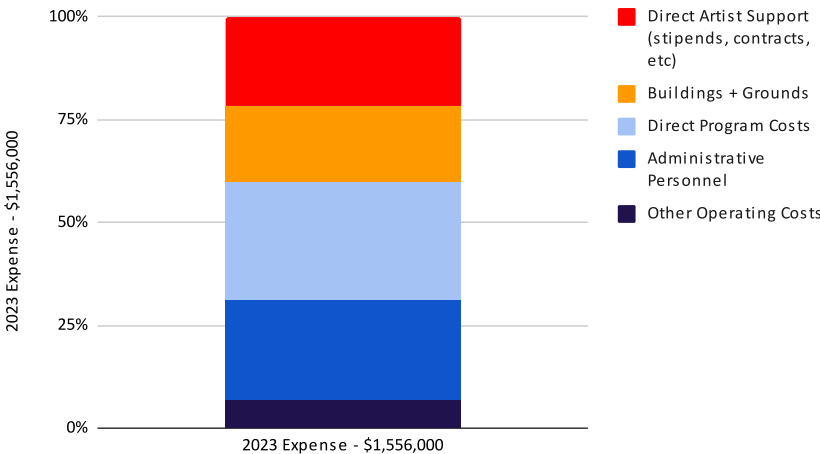
BUDGET REPORT

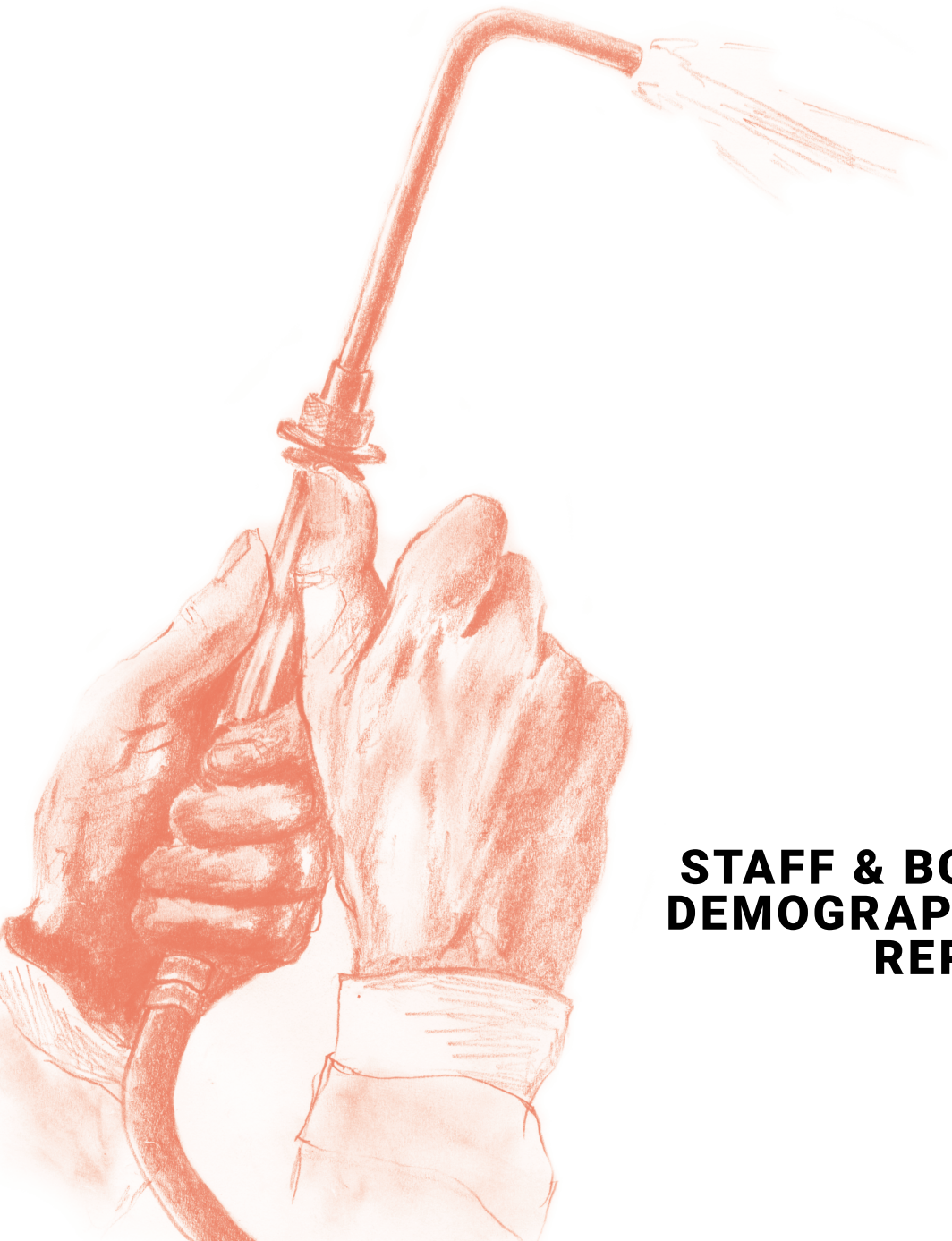
In 2023 our programming expenses reached a new high and we operated near capacity year-round. Cash on hand helped us to balance a deficit, and individuals and foundations combined to raise over half of our total income. Artist fees accounted for an astonishing 20% of our budget, fulfilling our mission thorough direct reinvestment in the culture bearers and crafts people in our community.

2023 INCOME - \$1,361,000



2023 EXPENSES - \$1,556,000





**STAFF & BOARD
DEMOGRAPHICS
REPORT**

This data is collected on an optional basis from our board and staff, in the interest of prioritizing an inclusive and equitable workplace.

RACE / ETHNICITY

- White: 16%
- Asian: 32%
- Black/African-American: 8%
- Latinx: 4%
- Multi-Racial: 12%
- Prefer not to answer: 28%

GENDER / IDENTITY

- Male: 32%
- Female: 40%
- Non-binary/Genderqueer/Third Gender: 16%
- Prefer not to answer: 12%

SUPPORTER RECOGNITION

To all of our supporters who kept us going with your gifts of time, talent and money and the Foundations who generously support our programs, you sustained us and broke down barriers to access for everyone in our community.

The following represents all of our donors and funders who supported us in 2023. Thank you for your love of the industrial arts, and for believing in what we do. We couldn't have done it without you!

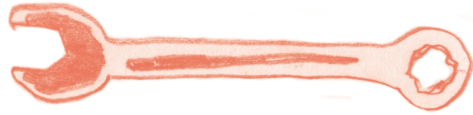
Please contact Zooey Kim Conner, zooey@thesteelyard.org, if there are any errors or omissions in this document. Thank you!



BUSINESSES, ORGANIZATIONS, & FOUNDATIONS

- 50 Sims Ave. LLC
Adler's hardware
BankRI
Bauta Family Foundation
Bullard Abrasives, Inc. USA
City of Providence Community Development Block Grant
City of Providence, Department of Arts, Culture & Tourism
Cross Insurance
DiSanto, Priest & Co.
Friskie Fries
Gotham Greens
Grow Smart RI
H. T. Ewald Foundation
Heather and Ronald Florence
ISCO
June Rockwell Levy Foundation
Knead Doughnuts
Masa Taqueria
Mid-City Steel
National Endowment for the ARTs
New Harvest
Ocean State Charities Trust
- October Hill Foundation
Oliver S. and Jennie R. Donaldson Charitable Trust
Pannone Lopes Devereaux & O'Gara LLC
Polaris MEP
Providence Project
Providence Tourism Council
Raether-Schoettle Charitable Fund
RISCA
Robert D. Wray Trust
Robincrest Risk Management LLC
Roy A Hunt Foundation
Taco / The White Family Foundation
Textron Charitable Trust
The Foundry Associates L.P.
The Papitto Opportunity Connection
The Rhode Island Foundation
Troop PVD
UNFI Cafe
Windgate Foundation
Zoe Adelstein Fund

SUPPORTER RECOGNITION

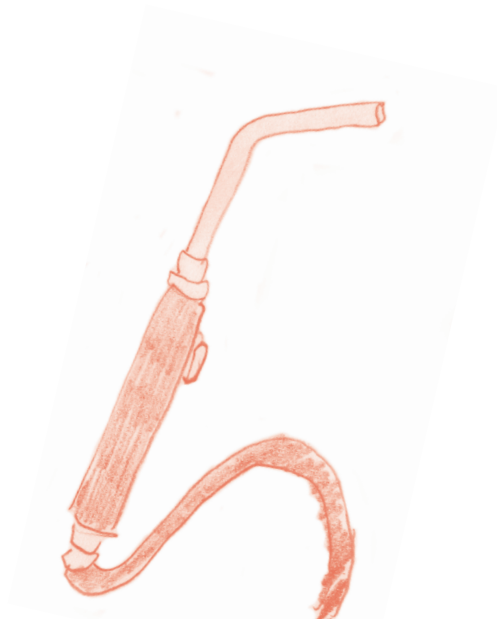


INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

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SUPPORTER RECOGNITION



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 Linda & Chuck Hughes
 Lloyd Slonim
 Louis & Nora Gitlin
 Lucia O'Reilly
 Lynne Harlow

SUPPORTER RECOGNITION



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Marilyn Salvatore
Mark Kaplan
Mary Jo Roberts
Maryellen Goodwin
Matt Grigsby
Matt Soehl
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Merrill W. Sherman
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Micah Thanhauser
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Nancy Reiter
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Pamela Hughes
Patti Barnatt
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Pusa Soh
Raj & Bernadette Venkataraman
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Robert Bright

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Rupa Datta
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Thomas Terceira
Tim O'Rourke
Timothy Toolan
Uzma Malik
Wendy Mcgaw
Yarrow Thorne



The Steel Yard’s work is made possible through a combination of program-related earned income, private and government grants, corporate giving and individual philanthropy. 2023 operations are funded in part by a grant from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, through an appropriation by the Rhode Island General Assembly, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and private funders.



**ACCESSIBILITY
WELCOME GUIDE**



**51 KWF
SOLAR ARRAY**



**DONATE TO
THE STEEL YARD**





PROVIDENCE, RI

27 SIMS AVE. PROVIDENCE, RI 02909

<https://thesteelyard.org/>

(401) 273 - 7101

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Printed at the Binch Press / Queer.Archive.Work Studio

