

Lancaster art project selected for state grant

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Carlos Graupera stands in front of SACA's exterior mural on 545 Pershing St. in Lancaster. (Photo: Esmeralda Hetrick)

An art project in Lancaster County has been chosen from more than 100 applicants to be part of the **Pennsylvania Council on the Arts** (PCA) pilot phase of the agency's Creative Communities Initiative (CCI).

The Lancaster-based **Spanish American Civic Association** (SACA) and **Millersville University** proposed creating community-based arts programming in the southeast neighborhood of Lancaster City. The program would employ a team of artists representing the Latino, African American and refugee residents in the community to plan and create public art projects, performing arts events and community arts education projects.

The CCI was designed to support community arts projects to serve as a stimulant for livability, economic development and connecting communities. Each of the projects selected, including the one in Lancaster, will receive \$25,000 a year for four years.

"The PCA's Creative Communities Initiative is an exciting opportunity for community and economic development and creative industries across Pennsylvania to collaborate on work that will benefit the priorities and identities of our cities and towns," said Gov. Tom Wolf. "I look forward to seeing how these innovative projects create a lasting mark on their communities."

A total of 105 communities wrote letters of interest for the program, according to officials, from which 15 projects were selected for site visits by CCI program staff. Ten of these sites were selected for the application phase, and the four communities were ultimately selected. The CCI selection committee was composed of community and economic development experts from the public and nonprofit sectors.

"Arts-based community and economic development projects help foster community member's sense of belonging and deepen their connection to where they live," said Karl Blischke, executive director of the PCA. "These projects nurture, support and celebrate local artists and highlight their invaluable contributions to healthy, vibrant, livable communities."



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