

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 7, 2022

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ST. LOUIS-BASED ORGANIZATION SAINT LOUIS STORY STITCHERS ARTISTS COLLECTIVE is being funded to create innovative dances, songs, and stories that will harness the power of the arts to engage audiences and participants of all ages in overcoming COVID-19 and influenza vaccine hesitancy.

Saint Louis Story Stitchers is one of 30 recipients awarded funding that will support a national health initiative through the arts.

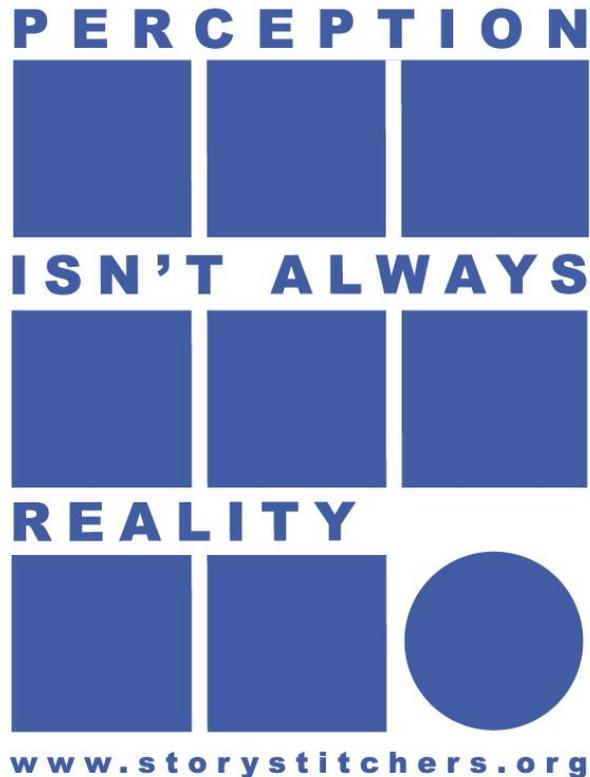
Funding for this effort is made possible through a subaward from the CDC Foundation and is part of a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) financial assistance award totaling \$2,500,000.00 with 100 percent funding from CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CDC/HHS or the U.S. Government.

The CDC Foundation helps the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) save and improve lives by unleashing the power of collaboration between CDC, philanthropies, corporations, organizations and individuals to protect the health, safety and security of America and the world. Since January 2020, the CDC Foundation, through the support of its donors, has addressed a wide variety of critical needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. This work has included providing personal protective equipment for frontline responders; care kits for schools, jails and the unhoused; studies examining the impact of COVID-19; work to strengthen communities and community-based organizations to improve vaccination uptake and address misinformation; more than 100 projects focused on health equity; and much more.

Saint Louis Story Stitchers, St. Louis, MO – Saint Louis Story Stitchers Artists Collective is composed of professional artists and minority youth ages 16-24, working together to create social change with a focus on gun violence prevention. Stitchers collect stories, reframe and retell them through art, writing and performance to promote understanding, civic pride, intergenerational relationships and literacy. Projects create a platform for community engagement through an artistic lens and with it the Saint Louis Story Stitchers work to shift perceptions and realities and bring hope to the Saint Louis community.

St. Louis Story Stitchers Artists Collective

presents



Perception Isn't Always Reality will engage Black teen and young adult artists to reevaluate messages they may have received about COVID and vaccinations and to evaluate the sources of the information. Through their own brand of urban storytelling that involves collaborative work in hip hop music and krump dance, videography, photography, and podcasting, the artists will produce a challenging body of work for the public to experience on urban canvases such as the sides of city buses and on the airwaves.

"We are excited to bring the arts and science together in a really powerful way with these partnerships," said Judy Monroe, MD, president and CEO of the CDC Foundation. *"Through their chosen art forms, these organizations will be able to create accessible and inspiring work that communicates essential health information about the safety and importance of vaccination in protecting communities from COVID-19 and influenza."*

See the [CDC Foundation Press Release](#).

The project, entitled "Perception Isn't Always Reality" is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$73,611 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

More details and a schedule of events for the Perception Isn't Always Reality project will be published soon.

About Saint Louis Story Stitchers Artists Collective

Saint Louis Story Stitchers Artists Collective is a non-profit organization engaged in urban storytelling. The mission of Saint Louis Story Stitchers is to document St. Louis through art and word to promote understanding, civic pride, intergenerational relationships and literacy.

Collective artists work alongside twenty 16-24-year-old urban youth to collect stories, reframe and retell them using the arts to promote a better educated, more peaceful and caring society. Saint Louis Story Stitchers are a resident organization at Kranzberg Arts Foundation where members rehearse, present and perform in the Foundation's first-class spaces. The Collective also maintains the Stitchers Storefront Studio in the historic Delmar Loop District for recording, editing and publishing. Current projects focus on public health issues including gun violence.

In 2022 Saint Louis Story Stitchers programs are supported locally by the City of St. Louis' Youth at Risk Crime Prevention Grant of 2021, Spirit of St. Louis Women's Fund, Kranzberg Arts Foundation, Missouri Arts Council, Regional Arts Commission, Missouri Foundation for Health through MoCap, and individuals.

Saint Louis Story Stitchers is supported in part by an 2021/22 award from the National Endowment for the Arts. On the web at arts.gov.

In 2022 additional support for Saint Louis Story Stitchers youth arts and humanities programs is provided by The Lewis Prize for Music Accelerator Award which provides \$500,000 for creative youth development in music, Lush Corporation's The Charity Pot, and March for Our Lives Aid & Alliance.

Learn more at www.storystitchers.org.

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