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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Missouri House Representative LaKeySha Bosley honors CAM ArtReach Students with House Resolution Recognizing Students from Vashon, Sumner, and Clyde C. Miller Career Academy High Schools



From left to right: Lisa Melandri, Executive Director at CAM, Angela Carr, ArtReach participant and student at Vashon High School; State Representative LaKeySha Bosley; Miriam Ruiz, Education Manager at CAM; and Michelle Dezember, Director of Learning and Engagement at CAM.

June 21, 2024 (St. Louis, MO)—Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) recently held a special reception on June 14 in celebration of the exhibition *ArtReach: The Art of Caring* and to welcome Missouri House Representative LaKeySha Bosley (D-79) who recognized students whose work is on view in the exhibition. Student artists from Vashon, Sumner, and Clyde C. Miller Career Academy High Schools received House Resolution 6748 presented by Rep. Bosley to recognize their artwork and contributions as a part of Missouri's living history. The event included remarks by CAM Executive Director Lisa Melandri and CAM Education Manager Miriam Ruiz, and Rep. Bosley highlighted the significance of art curriculum in our communities.

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“CAM, through their *ArtReach: The Art of Caring* project, has provided these students with the opportunity to express their views on social justice and healing within their own communities, state, country and even the world through artwork—equipping these young scholars with the tools to better help them conquer challenges they may face in the future,” said Rep. Bosley. “I believe it is important to not only honor students with House Resolutions for the hard work they put into this exhibition, but to show these students that their artwork is a valuable part of the community in St. Louis as well as the state of Missouri.”

The [ArtReach initiative](#) started in 2017 as a collaboration with Vashon High School, providing weekly art classes throughout the year to ensure consistent art curriculum is available for students. Classes are taught by CAM’s Resident Teaching Artists as well as museum educators. CAM expanded its ArtReach Partnership program in 2021 to include the historic Sumner High School, which came as part of a broader revival effort that CAM and other community partners infused into Sumner—the first African American high school west of the Mississippi—to prevent its closure.

“I’m incredibly proud of CAM’s longstanding dedication to nurturing the creative talents of our youth,” said Melandri. “This conversation began earlier this year when a few of our CAM staff members had the privilege of meeting with Rep. Bosley in Jefferson City during Arts Advocacy Day. We were delighted to hear of her idea to honor each and every student with an individual House Resolution, recognizing the transformative power of art in their lives and in the St. Louis community.”

The *ArtReach: The Art of Caring* exhibition is on view in CAM’s Education Galleries through August 11, 2024. For more information, visit camstl.org/exhibitions/artreach-the-art-of-caring/.

About the Exhibition

ArtReach: The Art of Caring is the product of a semester-long focus on questions of social justice and healing with visual art students at Sumner and Vashon High Schools. Using the media of performance, photography, graphic design, and printmaking, Resident Teaching Artists Colin McLaughlin, Jeremy Rabus, and Rodrick Whetstone facilitated student exploration and consideration of key questions: *What makes a problem a societal issue? Why do these problems persist? What roles can visual art play in addressing these issues?* Students were asked to consider these questions and the role that they could play. The outcome is a collection of Nick Cave-inspired wearable art pieces, narrative photography, and both digital and print posters that document the students’ research and the societal problems that concern them the most.

Participating Artists from Clyde C. Miller Career Academy High School: Dontay Couch, Cory Dunn, Laila Grandberry, Joslinn Liggins, and Allison Ruiz

Participating Artists from Sumner High School: China Edwards, Jhace Green, Jakobi Griffin, Delijah Harris, Kennedy Harris, Mora Hawkins, Kyren Johnson, Precious Johnson, Trevon Johnson, Kayia Johnson, King Jones, Sharron Kimble, Jenna Vaughn, Frankie Williams, and Ronnell Williams



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Participating Artists from Vashon High School: Trevon Ballinger, Brandon Bolden, Mariah Bradbury, Angela Carr, Dariah Collins, Nishay Davis, Timberly Frison, Malik Harris, Tylissa Howard, Daniel Little, Jamon Martin, Gekyle McNeal, Semaj Mitchell, Jakesse O'Kelley, Donta "Tay" Owens, Tyler Owens, Deja Pernell, Shaniyah Powell, Geremiah Pittman, Zariah Shanklin, Christopher Walker, Myasia Walker, Te'niyah Washington, Tyawna White, Kevon Witherspoon, and Nakylan Woodfork

ArtReach: The Art of Caring is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Miriam Ruiz, School and Community Partnership Manager.

ArtReach Sponsors

ArtReach is generously supported in part by Berges Family Foundation, The Strive Fund; Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; Ann Yeatman Sheehan Charitable Trust; Ferring Family Foundation; Nancy and Ken Kranzberg; Anonymous; Crawford Taylor Foundation; The Saigh Foundation; Caleres Cares Charitable Trust; The Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation; Reinsurance Group of America, Inc. (RGA); and The Terry and Phyllis Weiss Children's Education Fund.

About the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis creates meaningful engagement with the most relevant and innovative art being made today. Founded by civic and cultural leaders in 1980, the Museum transformed from a small gallery into an internationally recognized arts institution, now permanently housed in a flexible, open, and inviting building designed by renowned American architect Brad Cloepfil. CAM's distinct architecture reflects the organization's values and supports a dynamic range of exhibitions, public programs, educational initiatives, and community collaborations. The only museum in the region solely dedicated to contemporary art, CAM is one of the preeminent non-collecting institutions of its kind in the United States. We are a site for discovery, a welcoming space, free and open to all. For more information, visit camstl.org.

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