



The Village of Arts and Humanities

Executive Director

Philadelphia, PA



Who We Are



Our Mission

The Village of Arts and Humanities is an iconic, 36-year arts and community development organization rooted in Philadelphia's deeply disinvested Fairhill-Hartranft neighborhood. Our mission is to support artists and Black community residents to imagine, design, and build a more just and equitable society.

Background

The Village was born in response to systematic and racially motivated disinvestment in our Fairhill-Hartranft neighborhood of North Philadelphia, home to our organization since our founding in 1986. The

Village is a sacred space of practice and learning within a 36-year-old web of relationships, artworks, memories, and histories. The Village's creative campus—a network of non-contiguous art parks, gardens, and buildings spanning 4.5 acres of urban land—has bent and molded itself to respond to our community's ideas, creative products, and experiences. For more than 70 years, the space has been well used and well-loved by thousands of artists, community members, activists, educators, and entrepreneurs. It has witnessed and held performances, community dinners, showcases, exhibits, celebrations, rehearsals, and creative production.

More than 40 years ago, Arthur Hall, a renowned dancer and civil rights activist, erected Ile Ife Black Humanitarian Center on the site of what is now The Village's main building. He invited any neighbor to become an expert in dance and drumming regardless of skill. Twenty years later, Village founder Lily Yeh worked with community members to infuse and evolve Ile Ife's aesthetics within arts programming and the physical landscape. Together they built murals and undulating walls that referenced symbols of the African diaspora and used novice-friendly media like mosaic and concrete to enable neighbors to participate in the building process, thus rendering spaces sacred through shared creation.



During the last decade, new leadership has transformed this iconic arts and culture organization into a neighborhood reinvestment powerhouse. The team has raised, designed, and begun to deploy more than \$10m in arts-rooted neighborhood investments that will create permanently affordable, high quality housing for residents; support community members to design and implement alternatives to policing; provide job skills training in ceramic tile setting and production; employ hundreds of teens in creative internships; and restore The Village's iconic creative campus to serve generations to come.

Select Awards and Recognition

2023 - Rothko Chapel Óscar Romero Award for The Village's People's Paper Co-op

2021 - Mackenzie Scott, Major Contribution and acknowledgment

2018 - Yerba Buena Center for the Arts YBCA 100 List which honors 100 people, organizations, and movements that are shifting culture through ideas, arts, and activism

2018, 2014 - ArtPlace America Creative Placemaking Grants

2017 - Philadelphia Cultural Fund Councilman David Cohen Award for excellence at the intersection of art and social justice

2017 - Center for Civic Innovation A3C Action Award

2017, 2014 - Philadelphia Cultural Fund Youth Arts Enrichment Award

2016 - Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations Blue Ribbon Award

2014, 2013 - Knight Arts Challenge Award for SPACES Program and CREDPhilly Magazine

2014 - George Bartol Arts Education Award

2013 - Impact 100 Award for Cred Philly Youth Magazine Program

Vision, Programs, and Impact

The Village envisions a thriving Fairhill-Hartranft neighborhood of Philadelphia where Black neighborhood residents are leaders, stewards, and ultimate beneficiaries of reinvestment, recovery, and revitalization.

To achieve this vision, we engage more than 1,500 community members annually through programs and projects in three focus areas that combine art with Social Justice, Youth Leadership, and Equitable Revitalization.



Art and Social Justice

- **People's Paper Co-op:** a women-powered, women-centered art and advocacy project that creates safe and supportive employment opportunities for women in reentry who serve as essential experts in transforming the current criminal justice system.
- **The Civic Power Studio:** the recent transformation of three vacant rowhomes into a gathering space and media lab at the center of our creative campus where community members, artists, and advocates study how power operates and design new systems of power that are rooted in care rather than control.
- **Spaces Artist in Residence Program:** our rapid prototyping lab for creative placemaking projects, which awards paid residencies to teams of neighborhood residents and artists who work together to pilot new community resources and systems that reflect the community's expressed needs, dreams, and ideas.
- **Care, Not Control Campaign:** a coalition of young people and youth advocates who have created a vision for and action steps towards ending youth incarceration in Pennsylvania; The Village is a founding member of this coalition, which also includes the Youth Art & Self-Empowerment Project (YASP), the Youth Sentencing & Reentry Project (YSRP), and Juvenile Law Center (JLC).

Art and Youth Leadership

- **Village Industries:** our pre-employment program for middle-school youth that combines art and justice with social enterprise to build self-sufficiency and actualize creative power, serving more than 350 teens per year through creative studios that produce high-quality products and services for local clients who wish to offer, feature, or leverage youth perspectives.
- **Impact Studios:** an entry point for youth ages 9-19 to engage in project-based courses taught by professional artists across artistic disciplines including: Mixed Media Arts; Video Production; Comic Book Design; Creative Writing; Hip Hop Dance; African Dance; Music Production + Songwriting + Recording; Fashion Design; Urban Agriculture + Sustainability; Photography; Graphic Design; Digital Storytelling + Radio + Podcasting.
- **Philly Earth:** our STEAM-based environmental education, urban farming, and agricultural workforce development program in which youth ages 9-19 engage in project-based learning in agroecology and sustainable design while developing familiarity with opportunities for employment and postsecondary education in agriculture-related fields.



Art and Equitable Neighborhood Revitalization:

- **Germantown–Lehigh Commercial Corridor Stabilization and Revitalization:** a partnership with Philadelphia's Commerce Department and North Central Empowerment Zone, through which The Village employs arts-based community and economic development tactics to create a vibrant and safe Germantown/Lehigh Commercial Corridor adjacent to our creative campus.
- **Creative Campus:** the 4.5 acres of public art parks, gardens, and programmatic buildings created over 36 years by artists and community members as testament to the role art-making can play in restoring urban landscapes and fostering community cohesion.
- **Futures Gallery and Apprenticeship Program:** an addition to our main cultural building that will include an indoor/outdoor gallery space—the Futures Gallery—which will serve as a powerful cultural and economic tool—for community residents past-present-future, for The Village, and for Black working artists across the City—one that combats the physical and cultural erasure of Black communities. Through the gallery, we will train and employ community young adults in art handling and installation.
- **TileWorks:** our future center for ceramic tile-setting skills training and tile production, this creative workforce and economic development initiative will prepare low-income residents for long-term employment as dedicated and knowledgeable professionals whose competence in installing and producing tiles is verified to meet specific tile industry standards.
- **Black Artists' Studios:** a once-vacant commercial property and frequent site of crime, this restored and revitalized building will soon house a “Civic” Laundromat in the ground floor and 11 Black artists' studios above leased at below-market-rate rents.

Through these efforts, The Village strives to impact four overarching objectives:

- To preserve, evolve, and amplify our neighborhood's history of Black centered arts, activism, and community development
- To prepare young people to enter the workforce and postsecondary education as creative problem solvers and social innovators
- To model and promote neighborhood revitalization efforts that deliver opportunities for shared equity ownership, establish permanent affordability of public property, and create beautiful, green, and aspirational public spaces
- To help organize community groups that design and implement strategies for care-based public safety and justice



Position

Reporting to the Board of Directors, The Village seeks a strategic and community-oriented Executive Director to provide mission- and values-driven leadership, and management across all aspects of the organization. This person will oversee a \$2.5–3.5M annual budget, a team of 16 full- and part-time team members, and a body of more than 20 teaching and visiting artists per year.

This is an exciting opportunity to join an organization, deeply rooted in its neighborhood, that is nationally regarded as an exemplar in the critical work of blending art with social justice, youth leadership, and equitable revitalization.

The ideal person for this role has a breadth of experience in building a community's power to transform itself and a proven track record raising funds to support innovative arts-based programming. They are culturally competent with experience serving Black and Brown communities and/or communities experiencing multigenerational poverty. They are deeply relational and seek to amplify the strengths and contributions of their entire team. They are committed to preserving The Village's role as guardian of its sacred creative campus. They are artistic and approach problem solving with a solutions mind-set. As a leader, they are courageous and not afraid to take risks, challenge assumptions, or make difficult decisions; simultaneously, they bring excellence in execution and reflection. As a manager, they exude compassion and genuinely care about the wellbeing of the people doing this work.

Responsibilities

Strategic Vision & Leadership

- Provide strategic vision to The Village in service of its history and mission, and lead the organization into its next phase of development and impact.
- Drive community engagement through a commitment to listening and learning and by serving as a trusted and accessible partner to the community.
- Ensure that The Village's vision and values are expressed in every aspect of the organization, including its culture, personnel, and programs.
- Provide inspirational leadership to staff by modeling compassion, creativity, and accountability and creating and rewarding opportunities for growth, collaboration, and co-authorship of Village programs and projects.
- Serve as a thought leader and advocate for The Village's work both within and outside of the organization.
- Build and nurture strong relationships with all Board members evidenced by open communication and responsiveness to issues affecting the Village's strategic direction.



Development & External Affairs

- Seek diverse funding opportunities to sustain operations, deepen impact, and catalyze growth. Ensure that the flow of funds permits The Village to make continuous progress towards the achievement of its mission and is allocated properly to support present needs and future opportunities.
- Create and lead a development strategy that engages donors around a compelling mission through strategic partnerships, private foundation philanthropy, and/or individual giving.
- Provide strategic guidance on branding, messaging, and marketing efforts to raise awareness of The Village's work and increase support from major donors, including but not limited to, high-net worth individuals and foundations.
- Cultivate and maintain positive relationships with all stakeholders including but not limited to, community leaders and young people, partner institutions, government agencies and elected officials, and new and existing individual funders.
- Meaningfully engage multi-generational community residents of Fairhill-Hartranft and other stakeholders in the ongoing growth and stewardship of the organization.

Strengthening Infrastructure & Operations

- Provide direction and vision to The Village team and organizational structure while ensuring all staff have clear roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure clarity and consistency throughout the organization's strategy, operational methods, and internal processes at the Board and staff level to support the continued development and management of a professional and efficient organization.
- Oversee the financial health of the organization by developing long and short range financial plans, monitoring the budget, and ensuring that sound financial controls are in place; set financial priorities accurately to ensure the organization operates in a manner that supports the needs of programs, staff, and long-term stewardship of The Village's creative campus.

Must-Have Qualifications

- Experience in arts, education, youth development, and/or power building is a must.
- A fundraiser with a track record of cultivating and soliciting gifts from major donors including foundations and individuals.
- Experience working in economically disadvantaged communities of color; cultural competency and ideological alignment with The Village values is a must.



- Experience building and leading highly effective teams with diverse, complementary skillsets and experiences is a must.
- Curiosity and respect for The Village's past and history of place and an interest in building upon or evolving existing programs and initiatives.
- A creative and innovative mindset; open-mindedness and a desire to learn; the ability to be nimble and pivot when needed.
- Understanding of community organizing principles and frameworks.
- A firm understanding or experience in the financial stewardship of, and regulatory reporting requirements applicable to, similarly sized nonprofit organizations
- An empathetic, people-person with excellent interpersonal and communication skills; the ability to instill trust and build authentic relationships with a variety of stakeholders.
- Experience strengthening an internal infrastructure to support a mission.
- A charismatic and compelling communicator and storyteller with high energy and enthusiasm.

Compensation & Benefits

This is an outstanding opportunity for a highly motivated experienced leader to join a highly respected and rapidly growing organization. The Village is prepared to offer a very attractive compensation package, including a competitive base salary between \$120,000-\$135,000.

How to Apply

We encourage all applicants to review our online presence to fully familiarize themselves with The Village and its full range of programs before applying. Please explore villagearts.org and @thevillagephilly on Instagram as well as published media stories and video documentation on vimeo.

Equal Opportunity Statement

The Village provides equal employment opportunities to all team members and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetics. In addition to federal law requirements, The Village complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training. Any form of workplace harassment, discrimination, or retaliation because of age (40 and older), race,



color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex (including gender identity and gender expression), pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), veteran status, uniformed service member status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law is expressly prohibited.

We are committed to a diverse workforce. We value all team members' talents and support an environment that is inclusive and respectful. We are strongly committed to this policy and believe in the concept and spirit of the law.

This position description is based upon material provided by the Village, an equal opportunity employer.

To apply to this position, please click [HERE](#).

Yasmine Coccoli, Talent Consultant

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