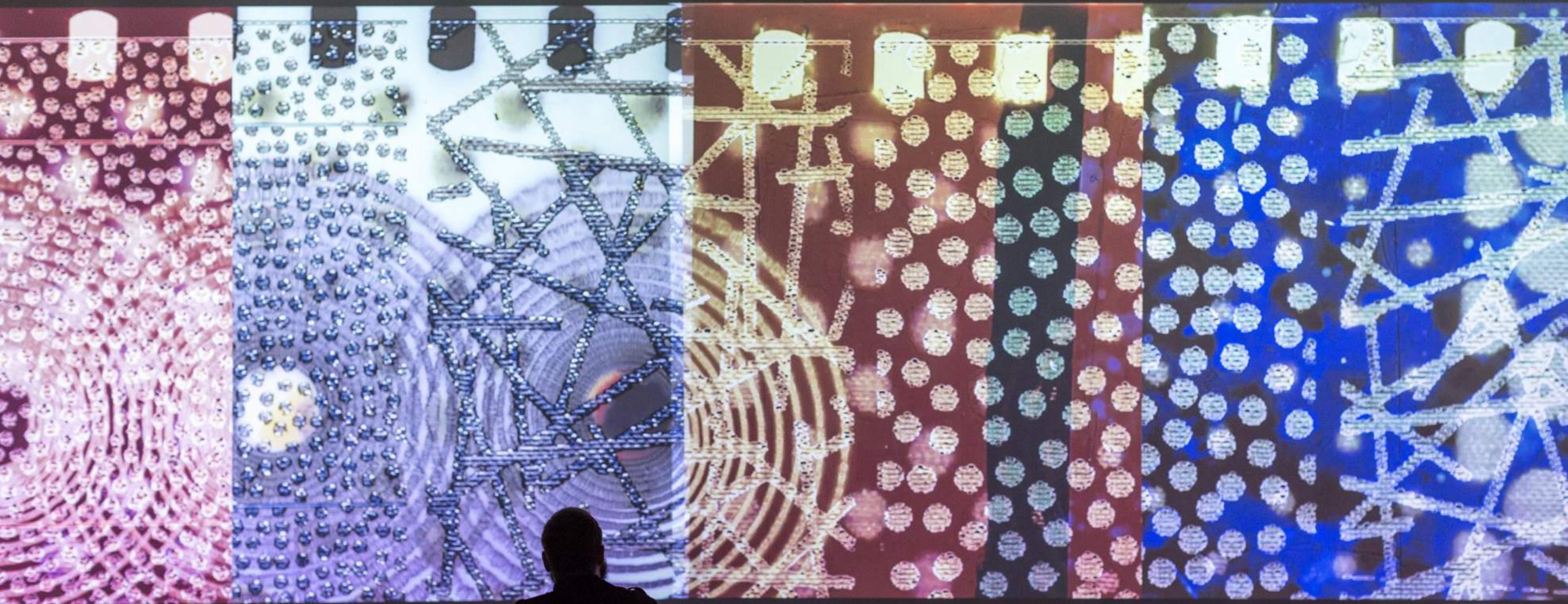


ART LEAGUE HOUSTON

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-26





'Flicker Futures' Bill Brown & Sabine Gruffat, 2019



**SERVING AS A CREATIVE
HUB, FOSTERING
VIBRANCY, AND
CELEBRATING CREATIVITY
IN THE BROADER
HOUSTON REGION**

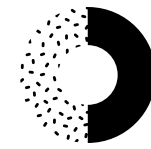
Our Mission

The mission of Art League Houston is to connect the community through diverse, dynamic, and creative experiences that bring people together to see, make and talk about contemporary visual art.



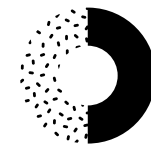
ART LIVES HERE

OUR CORE VALUES



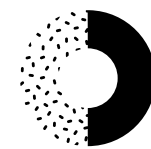
Inclusivity

We welcome all members of our diverse community and seek opportunities for interaction and access. Art - and therefore Art League Houston - is for everyone.



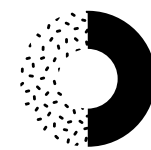
Creativity

We are passionate about the power of creativity to inspire individuals to action and to facilitate understanding among people. Creativity is at the heart of everything we do.



Learning

We provide opportunities for people to learn about art, themselves, and each other. Learning permeates all of our programs.



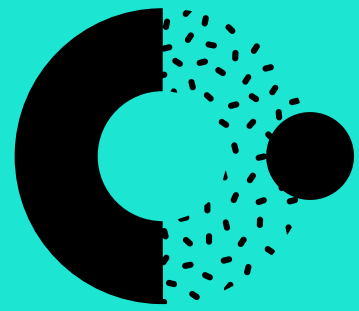
Evolution

We change and grow with our city and the arts landscape. We look to the future while celebrating our past.

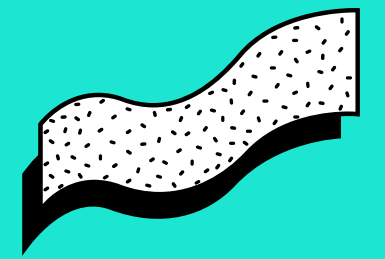


AND IN
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'The Journey to Me' Vicki Meek, 2021

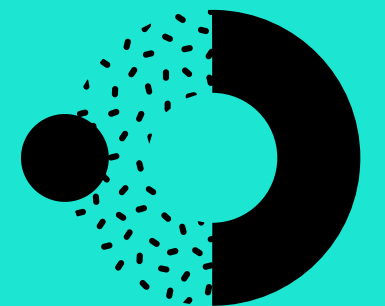
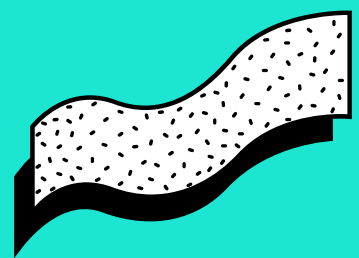


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Having successfully navigated organizational and financial challenges brought on by COVID and presented with rapid technology changes and compelling concerns related to racial justice and equity, Art League Houston (ALH) finds itself facing new and dynamic challenges. Reflecting its commitment to meaningfully serving and supporting the community of artists and art-enthusiasts in the region, ALH is inspired to meet the moment by leveraging and nurturing its core strengths while addressing organizational limitations.

Over the next five years, ALH's primary focus will remain the effective cultivation of the art community while expanding its reach to engage new and diverse populations and audiences. In this pursuit, ALH will enhance the capacities of its unique building in Montrose to allow for a re-imagined art school curriculum that will push the boundaries of equity for artists, and lively events for art students, local artists, organizations, and community members. Additionally, ALH will build upon the dedication of passionate staff and leadership to innovate and strengthen its organizational capacities.

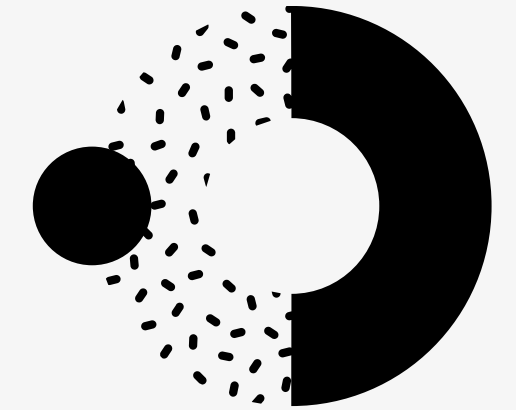




'Rethinking Your Neighborhood: A Collaborative Experience' Violette Bule, 2021

STRATEGIC DIRECTION & KEY GOALS

2021-2026



Over the next 5 years, ALH will have cemented its role as a creative hub for arts in Houston by serving new and diverse audiences across the region while expanding and ensuring equity for artists. We will reach this destination by achieving these key goals:

Re-Imagine the Art School

We will re-imagine the school to prioritize arts access, racial equity, and economic justice. By 2025, we will have diversified curriculum offerings, increased BIPOC representation among teaching artists and students, and transitioned towards a Contribute-What-Can pricing model for classes.

Revitalize the Campus

We will maximize the capacity of the Montrose campus through facility improvements that will improve accessibility for all audiences and enhance visitors' creative experience. We will also implement a mortgage reduction plan to be ready to launch a capital campaign in 2027.

Increase Our Organizational Capacity

Through a larger full-time staff and upgraded technology, we will increase our capacity to support innovations in our school, community, and exhibition offerings while deepening our impact and reach.

'Piñatathetic' Justin Favela, Josué Rawmirez, and Giovanni Valderas, 2020



THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Background Review

Stakeholder Focus Groups and Surveys

Blue-Sky Session I

Vision & Goal Development

Action Plan Development

Approval of Strategic Plan

1. Background Review

Review of existing documentation and research provided by ALH.

2. Stakeholder Focus Groups and Surveys

Input from diverse stakeholders (artists, teaching artists, students, board, staff funders, etc.) through surveys, interviews, and focus groups, as well as an equity assessment and conversations with board and staff.

3. Blue-Sky Session I: Review Research

Review findings of the research in a way that allows the board and staff to participate in 'blue sky thinking' – open-ended thinking, imagining, thinking flexibly, and taking responsible risks – about what can be possible for the future of ALH.

4. Blue Sky Session II: Vision & Goal Development

Having considered all the research and taken into consideration the impacts of the pandemic, the board and staff set the overall strategic direction and goals for the next five years.

5. Action Plan Development

Having developed the overall strategic direction and goals for the next five years, the board and staff set the action steps for reaching each goal with related assignments and timelines.

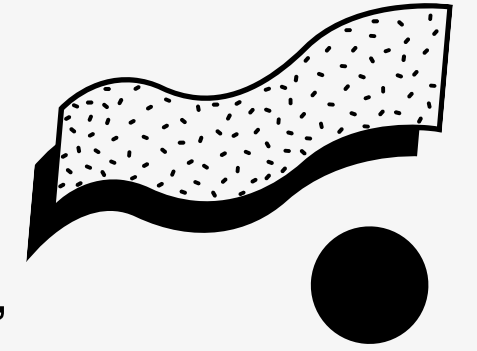
6. Strategic Plan

The strategic plan was approved by ALH's Board of Directors.



'In & Out' Bradley Kerl, 2022

CRITICAL LEARNING



Once all the data was collected and prior to goal development, ALH board and staff participated in an extensive “Blue-Sky” session to review the information gathered and explore new ideas. The data review and stakeholder discussions surfaced three critical themes that informed the strategic direction of the five-year plan:

**Embrace ALH’s
Reputation
as a Vital and
Dynamic
Organization**

**Prioritize Equity
and Invest in
Upgraded
Technology**

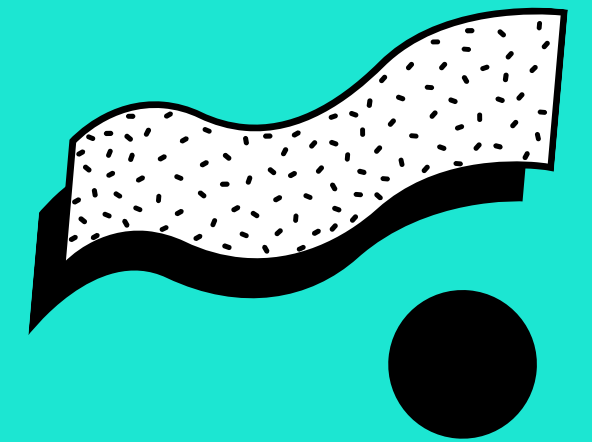
**Balance
Organizational
Vision with
Capacity**



'Abstract Painting: Beginner Workshop' Erika Garrett, 2021

“ALH IS WHAT MOST ART ORGANIZATIONS WANT TO GROW UP TO BE.”

– STATEWIDE ARTS LEADER



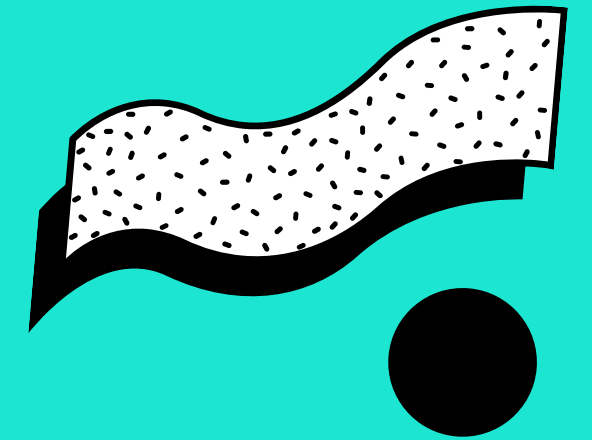
Embrace ALH's Reputation as a Vital, Dynamic Organization

ALH is viewed as a strong and reputable organization by key stakeholders in recognition of its innovative leadership and efforts around artist advocacy, as well as providing a vibrant and inspiring environment for students to make art. Community stakeholders expressed interest in seeing ALH's continued commitment to ensuring the vitality and diversity of Houston's local artist community and sounded a call to action for the organization to better articulate the power of art to evoke positive social change.



'The Journey to Me' Vicki Meek, 2021

“ALH HAS MADE THEMSELVES IN SOME WAY A PART OF THE POLITICAL AND SOCIETAL CHALLENGES, MAKING THEMSELVES MORE THAN JUST AN ARTS INSTITUTION.”



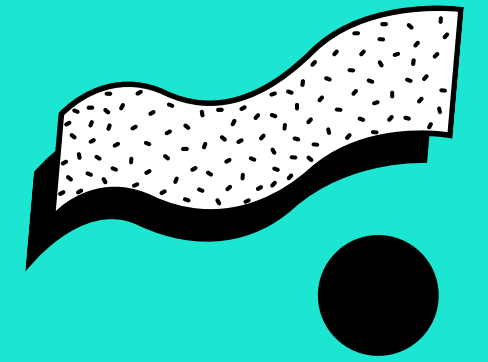
– LOCAL ARTIST

**Prioritize Equity
and Invest in
Upgraded
Technology**

Both internal and external stakeholders noted growing trends in equity-focused advocacy - both socially and politically - and the need for greater Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) representation in the non profit arts sector. The increased need for prioritizing diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion was a consistent theme throughout the stakeholder engagement process. There was also widespread interest, and enthusiasm for, using technology more effectively and as a tool for accessibility in the school and throughout the organization



“ART LEAGUE HOUSTON ALWAYS HAS AMAZING INTENTIONS FOR ITS WORK. THE BIGGEST STUMBLING BLOCK IS THE (LIMITED SIZE) STAFF AND FINANCIAL ABILITY TO FOLLOW THROUGH CONSISTENTLY ON ALL ITS GOALS.”



– ALH STAKEHOLDER

**Balance
Organizational
Vision with
Capacity**

Two key internal opportunities emerged from the stakeholder assessment: 1) Address issues related to staff capacity; and 2) Strengthen the engagement and ability of the board of directors to stimulate more philanthropic investment and achieve more local and national recognition for being an arts hub that fosters a diverse community of artists and art students.



'Backbone' Brian Ellison, 2022

Following the Blue Sky sessions, the Strategic Planning Committee, comprised of both staff and Board members, then met for two consecutive weekends to set the strategic direction for the organization over the next five years. Five key themes emerged:

Push the boundaries of equity to increase BIPOC representation and accessible opportunities for new artists in every aspect of ALH programming.

Take risks and radically experiment in re-imagining art school programming and new community-focused activities to bring diverse and accessible offerings to new audiences.

Revitalize the Montrose campus such that it becomes a vibrant creative hub, fostering the exchange of ideas and celebrating creativity through mixers and lively events.

Continue to be a voice and direction of leadership for all arts organizations by articulating the critical role that art plays in our lives, and the many contributions it makes to improve our lives.

Increase the capacity of the organization to meet the new goals by increasing staff support, improving technology infrastructure, and enhancing board and fundraising efforts.



2021 Summer Intensive for Teens

STRATEGIC VISION 2022-26



ALH staff shaped the strategic direction and key themes into three comprehensive, SMART, and manageable goals with related objectives, priority levels, and assignments. The following strategic goals, objectives, and timeline were reviewed by the Board and formally approved for implementation in January 2022.

GOAL 1

**Re-Imagine the
ALH Art School to
Foster Equity and
Impact Positive
Social Change**

GOAL 2

**Revitalize the
Campus and
Implement a
Mortgage Debt
Reduction Plan**

GOAL 3

**Increase
Organizational
Capacity and
Invest in
Technology**



'Oakbrook Gateway' Art Shirer & Sherry Owens, 2020-21

STRATEGIC VISION

GOAL 1

**RE-IMAGINE THE SCHOOL TO
PRIORITIZE ARTS ACCESS,
RACIAL EQUITY, AND ECONOMIC
JUSTICE BY DIVERSIFYING
CURRICULUM OFFERINGS,
INCREASING BIPOC
REPRESENTATION AMONGST
TEACHING ARTISTS AND
STUDENTS, AND TRANSITIONING
CLASSES TO A CONTRIBUTE-
WHAT-CAN PRICING MODEL**

OBJECTIVES

- Establish a Art League School Mission Statement
- Shift to a Tuition-Free Education Model
- Re-think the ALH Membership Model
- Diversify and Increase the Impact of Art League School
- Build a Greater Sense of Community
- Leverage Existing Community Partnerships to Provide Off-Site Art Classes in Target Communities

Objective 1

Establish an Art League School Mission Statement

- Establish school committee
- Announce new school mission statement

Objective 2

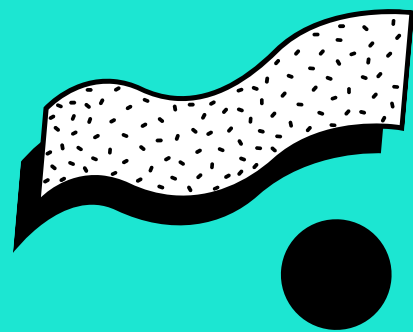
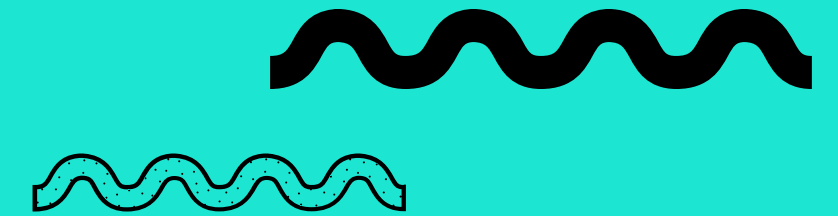
Shift to a Tuition-Free Education Model

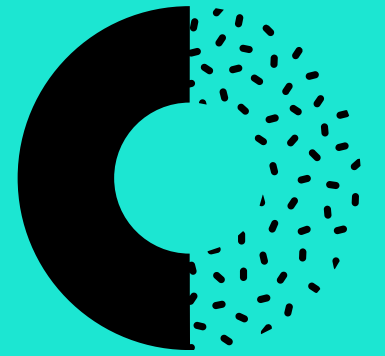
- Analyze current ALH art class pricing model and research new pricing strategies
- Establish a fund to support a Pay-What-You-Can model
- Develop a store credit fund with local art supply stores to enable student discounts on materials
- Pilot a new Pay-What-You-Can revenue structure

Objective 3

Re-think the ALH Membership Model

- Increase the accessibility of the membership program





Objective 4

Diversify and Increase the Impact of Art League School

- Increase the racial, economic, and gender equity amongst teaching artists and students
- Research evolving needs of the community/conduct research to identify opportunities for diversification
- Clearly define new target audiences and identify needs and interests of prospective new students within these audiences
- Grow the innovation of our educational offerings
- Support the artistic growth of teaching artists
- Develop more opportunities for exchange between exhibiting artists and students at the ALH School
- Develop an equitable recruitment/training process to engage new teaching artists
- Increase professional development opportunities for teaching artists (expand skill share program)
- Increase the stability and quantity of employment opportunities for teaching artists
- Improve technological infrastructure
- Grow the number of digital/online educational offerings





Objective 5

Build a Greater Sense of Community

- Develop events that foster engagement between teaching artists and the ALH community
- Organize twice-a-year “make and take” events for ALH students and the public
- Build an active and supportive network between teaching artists and the Teaching Artist Guild
- Grow the number of collaborative events between ALH and Canary Montrose
- Increase impact of the organization’s K through Gray programming
- Design and implement new studio visit program between local artists and curators

Objective 6

Leverage Existing Community Partnerships to Provide Off-Site Art Classes in Target Communities

- Develop new programs that build on existing relationships within the community, exhibition, and public art programs in undersupported communities



'360 Degrees Vanishing' Selven O'Keef Jarmon, 2019




STRATEGIC VISION

GOAL 2

**REVITALIZE THE CAMPUS BY
MAKING FACILITY
IMPROVEMENTS AND
IMPLEMENTING A MORTGAGE
DEBT REDUCTION PLAN TO BE
READY TO LAUNCH A CAPITAL
CAMPAIGN IN 2027**



OBJECTIVES

- Raise \$250,000 for Facility Improvements
 - Fund Needed Repairs, Upgrades, and Maintenance for Building
 - Increase the Visibility of the Montrose Building and Leverage the Parking Lot and Esplanade to Enhance the Creative Feel of the Campus
 - Develop and Implement a Mortgage Debt Reduction Plan to Pay Off Mortgage by 2027
 - Begin conversations with capital campaign consultants to prepare for a capital campaign in 2027
- 



Objective 1

Raise \$250,000 for Facility Improvement

- Create a three-year facility improvements plan that prioritizes accessibility and innovation
- Establish a fund to support facility improvements
- Establish a Patron Circle

Objective 2

Fund Needed Repairs, Upgrades, and Maintenance for Building

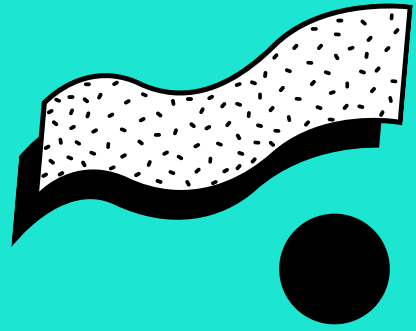
- Phase I: Make the building accessible to all audiences (ADA accessibility, etc.)
- Phase 2: Increase storage and organization in studios (re-evaluate space use)
- Phase 3: Improve SG lighting and walls and upgrade galleries to be more efficient and flexible

Objective 3

Increase the Visibility of the Montrose Building and Leverage the Parking Lot and Median to Enhance the Creative Feel of the Campus

- Install a large-scale exterior building sign on Montrose
- Design a more appealing and accessible main entrance
- Utilize the parking lot as a platform for creative experiences
- Re-establish public art projects on the Montrose esplanade





Objective 4

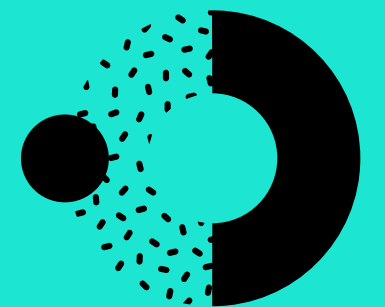
Develop and Implement a Mortgage Debt Reduction Plan

- Establish a five-year plan to pay off mortgage debt
- Establish a fund to pay off mortgage debt

Objective 5

Begin Conversations With Consultants to Prepare for a Capital Campaign in 2027

- Once the mortgage is paid off - prepare for a capital campaign to expand the ALH campus








STRATEGIC VISION

GOAL 3

**INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL
CAPACITY THROUGH A LARGER
FULL-TIME STAFF AND
INCREASED TECHNOLOGY
CAPACITY**

OBJECTIVES

- Develop and Implement a Technology Infrastructure Plan
 - Hire Staff Needed for Growth
 - Increase Board Capacity and Diversity
 - Improve Standardized Collection of Demographic Data on Students, Membership, and Program Participants
 - Increase Staff Retention
- 



Objective 1 **Develop and Implement a Technology Infrastructure Plan**

- Develop budget and fundraising plan for upgrading staff devices and software
- Update and improve the website for increased language accessibility and improve access to services
- Research and maximize capacities of software being used internally and in the art school

Objective 2 **Hire Staff Needed for Growth**

- Hire a part-time Facility Manager
- Hire a full-time Teaching Artist Fellow
- Hire additional administrative staff

Objective 3 **Increase Board Capacity and Diversity**

- Review and update board of directors policies and procedures to prioritize equity
- Increase the number of board members to between 12-15.
- Increase racial, economic, and gender equity on the board of directors
- Fully implement the board fundraising initiative, annually





Objective 4

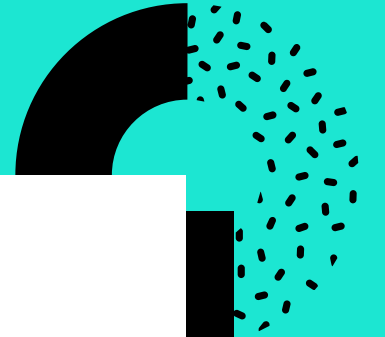
Improve Standardized Collection of Demographic Data on Students, Membership, and Program Participants

- Research improvements to demographics data collection process
- Develop an equitable process to collect and analyze demographic data
- Implement a plan to collect and analyze data

Objective 5

Increase Staff Retention

- Certify the organization for instruction by TEA
- Establish a pathway for staff advancement





Some stories stemmed from trips to the Golden State on trains, he jumped on in El Paso, during the depression years. My favorite stories dealt with The War when he was moved across the world and throughout Europe, again, mostly by train. Little do we know that colic couplings may well become the main ingredients required to survive.



'Obras' Celia Álvarez Muñoz, 2020

Timeline

2022

- Develop Re-Imagined ALH School Transition Plan
- Develop Community-Focused Public Programs
- Develop Facility Improvement Plan
- Re-Think ALH Membership Structure
- Develop Technology Upgrade Plan
- Increase Board Capacity
- Develop Mortgage Debt Reduction Plan
- Launch Fundraising Initiatives to Support Strategic Goals

2023

- ALH School Transition Plan: Phase 1
- Launch New Community-Focused Public Program
- Facility Improvement Plan: Phase 1
- Pilot ALH Membership Structure
- Technology Upgrades: Phase 1
- Strengthen Board Capacity
- Mortgage Debt Reduction Plan: Phase 1
- Continue Fundraising Initiatives to Support Strategic Goals

2024

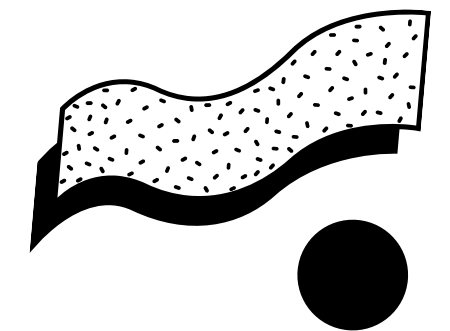
- ALH School Transition Plan: Phase 2
- Facility Improvement Plan: Phase 2
- Technology Upgrades: Phase 2
- Strengthen Board Capacity
- Mortgage Debt Reduction Plan: Phase 2
- Continue Fundraising Initiatives to Support Strategic Goals

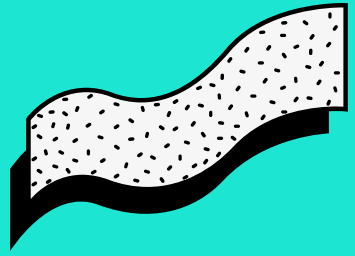
2025

- ALH School Transition Plan: Phase 3
- Facility Improvement Plan: Phase 3
- Technology Upgrades: Phase 3
- Strengthen Board Capacity
- Mortgage Debt Reduction Plan: Phase 3
- Increase Staff Capacity
- Launch New Studio Visit Program for Local Artists
- Re-launch Rotating Esplanade Project
- Continue Fundraising Initiatives to Support Strategic Goals

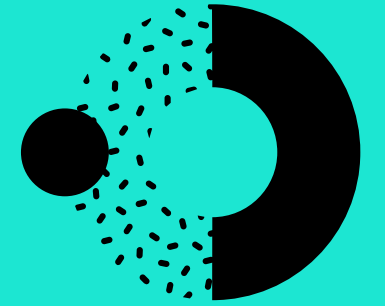
2026

- Complete ALH School Transition Plan
- Complete Facility Improvement Plan
- Complete Technology Upgrades
- Complete Mortgage Debt Reduction Plan





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Board of Directors

Audra White

President

Nima Farzaneh

Vice President

Lauri Wray

Treasurer

Zachary Gresham

Secretary

Phillip Pyle, II

Chair, Artist Advisory Board

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Finance Manager

Erin Carty

Communications & Program Associate

Jimmy Castillo

Director of Exhibitions & Curatorial Projects

Eepi Chaad

Director of Community Engagement

Maureen Lax

Evening Program Associate

Susan Reedy

Grant Writer

Consultants

Working Partner

Special thanks to Erin McClarty for facilitating valuable equity conversations with ALH board and staff.

Photography

Alex Barber

Page 2, 6, 10, 12, 16, 18, 20, 24, 29, 33, 37, 40

Erin Carty

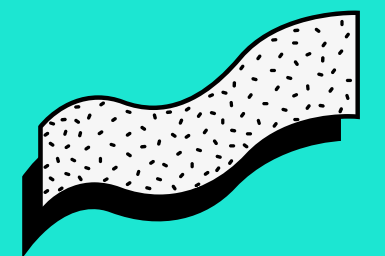
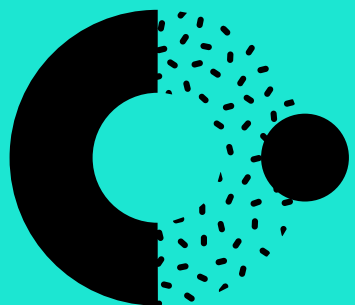
Page 4, 22

Britt Thomas

Page 8

Marcelese Cooper

Page 14





place position

2019 Summer Intensive for Teens Exhibition