



AGENDA

GOVERNANCE GROUP

December 18, 2020 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Zoom: [Meeting 997 1692 8085 - passcode 273318](#)

| <u>Time</u> | <u>Agenda Item</u> | <u>Facilitator</u> |
|-------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 2:00 | Welcome | Andrea Akita |
| 2:03 | Consent Agenda <i>Objectives: review and approve the December 18th agenda and notes from November 20th Meeting</i> | Michael Brown |
| 2:03 – 2:20 | Grounding & Equity Moment <i>Objectives: Ground us and acknowledge the bright spots coming from the last year</i> | All |
| 2:20 – 2:50 | Best Starts for Kids Renewal <i>Objectives: Learn about proposed timeframe and plans for Levy Renewal; engage in discussion with Best Starts leaders</i> | Sheila Capestany Marcy Miller |
| 2:50 – 3:20 | RFP for Black-led Systems & Policy Change <i>Objectives: Review process; receive recommendations and approve funding award docket</i> | Dionne Foster |
| 3:20 – 3:35 | COVID 19 Anti-Hate and Stigma Digital Art Campaign <i>Objectives: Learn about and appreciate local artists' work to promote messages of care, resilience, and health</i> | Whitney Johnson |
| 3:35 – 3:50 | Updates <i>Objective: share pertinent information across the group</i> | All |
| 3:50 – 3:58 | Appreciation | |
| 4:00 | Adjourn | |

Governance Group Members

Lydia Assefa-Dawson
Michael Brown
Vazaskia Crockrell
Deanna Dawson
Kacey Guin

Ubox Gardheere
Matelita Jackson
Paola Maranan
Jenn Ramirez Robson
Yordanos Teferi

Marguerite Ro
Sili Savusa
Tony To
AJ McClure

COMMUNITIES OF OPPORTUNITY GOVERNANCE FOUNDING

RESULTS STATEMENT

Create greater health, social, economic and racial equity in King County so that all people thrive and prosper, regardless of race or place.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Consistently demonstrate the values of equity, respect and partnership.
- Ensure low-income communities and communities of color affected by inequities develop and own the solutions.
- Advocate for and change institutional policies and processes to support equity goals.
- Encourage investments (both funding and in-kind resources) in long-term community capacity building and in systems, policy and practice changes that lead to greater racial and economic equity throughout King County.
- Catalyze alignment of funding streams and partner across issues and sectors to seek preventive strategies that address root causes of today's inequities.
- Be transparent and show how data and community expertise inform initiative strategies.
- Continuously learn, improve and share work publicly.
- Focus on geographic communities with the greatest needs, while simultaneously sharing lessons learned and building relationships across King County – *We are one King County.*

VALUES

We commit to guide Communities of Opportunity using these values:

Equity: work intentionally to eliminate racial, ethnic, socio-economic and geographic disparities in health and well-being

Process Equity: an inclusive, fair and open process

Community Engagement: authentic community engagement that involves listening to and understanding the unique histories of communities

Driven by quantitative and qualitative data: Data will track and report progress, as well as support given for promising and evidence-based practices

Innovation: Recognize that change involves risk and value an adaptive approach that views failure as an important part of the learning process

2 – Communities of Opportunity – Governance Group Meeting Notes

Friday, September 18, 2020

2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Zoom Call

Members Present: Lydia Assefa-Dawson, Michael Brown, Vazaskia Crockrell, Ubox Gardheere, Paola Maranan, AJ McClure, Marguerite Ro, Jenn Ramirez Robson, Sili Savusa, Yordanos Teferi

Facilitator: Alessandra Zielinski

Staff: Andréa Akita, Cristina Gonzalez, Whitney Johnson, Blishda Lacet, José Camacho Martinez, Aaron Robertson

Guests: Sian Wu (Resource Media), Haregu Kidane (RV Partnership), Kris Hermanns

Consent Agenda: Governance Group (GG) approved the consent agenda with meeting minutes from the October 16, 2020 meeting and the November 20, 2020 agenda. Motion was made by Lydia Assefa-Dawson and seconded to approve with a correction of the sentence on page 5. Consent agenda was approved with correction.

Learning from Community Stories RFP:

COO staff determined that the total awards for the RFP could be increased from four to five grantees. Governance Group was asked to approve an increase to funding for a total of \$497,000 to five awardees (Coalicion de Pueblos Originarios, King County Equity Now, Tesfa Program, Washington Dream Coalition and Centro Cultural Mexicano).

Motion was made by Lydia Assefa-Dawson to increase funding allocation to \$497,000 and seconded by Michael Brown.

Discussion: Four of the five organization were informed of the funding awards; staff were waiting for GG appropriation approval to notify the fifth grantee. Funding recommendations represent the amount requested by each applicant.

Motion was unanimously approved.

Grounding and Equity Moment: In lieu of the regular reading of the COO principles, there was a request from Ubox Gardheere to hold space and celebrate the lives of two exceptional leaders who have inspired so many people on this call and in our community. The group shared in a moment of silence for Yemane Gebremichael and Tony Lee, followed by remembrances of these leaders and others, including Dwight Mizoguchi, all who passed away recently.

The COO Narrative: Connect specific audiences, messengers, and tactics and develop a set of COO “elevator pitches”. Sian Wu introduced the presentation on [elevator pitches: identifying gaps and tailoring messaging](#). Below is the overview of topics covered.

- Review of what we’ve done so far
- Definitions
- Hearing from community: your elevator pitch
- Elevator pitch anatomy brainstorm
- Gaps discussion
- Creating tailored messaging

Sian went over what’s been done so far by the group: story interviews, empathy mapping, values mapping, strategic communications and audience engagement and messengers. Sian said, as a reminder the goal is having policy makers understand COO as an essential part of the BSK levy renewal. The group will continue to work on these strategic communications and messaging. As part of the presentation, individuals were sent homework assignments, any thoughts on that are appreciated.

Sian next covered what's a narrative analogy. The two analogies discussed were balance (to describe the world as we see it) and basket (to describe COO and how it works). Explaining the broad level view of how we want to see. The work that we do and interdependence, they can be used in initial communications. Sian continued with what is (short, succinct and accurate description of your organization and what you do) and what isn't an elevator pitch (communicate everything you do). What is essential messaging in order to achieve the goal and effective messaging components. Messaging can be adapted to who you are talking to.

Next, we are going to try some elevator pitches. Start to focus more on how we shift our mindset. Sian went over the elevator pitch review: what was said that resonates with you and what was said that wouldn't work for you, your programs, or your audiences?

Three Governance Group members shared their elevator pitches with the group. Jenn Ramirez Robson highlighted.... centering on the communities that are most impacted by the policies and decisions.

Sian offered this thoughtful assessment of Jenn's pitch. Liked starting off and thinking about the asset. Was curious about when thinking about policies and communities most impacted by, is the idea that more they are susceptible to the inequities of policy. Jenn answered that policy decision are often looking at data, maps and comprehensive plans and creating policy around that. If we are starting with the voices of those who have been excluded. If we are starting with the voices of those who have been excluded. It's too far downstream to think about the strategic plan and then go talk to the community, we need to go further upstream.

Sian added that we recognize the need to ask how are you communicating that and amplifying the knowledge on the team?

Chris then shared her elevator pitch, framing the work as COO depending on, they are talking to. A portion of Chris' pitch is included here: COO is a unique and creative partnership, bridging philanthropy and government in new ways. Working to provide critical investments, to create community connection, build thriving neighborhoods around this area. There's a need to advance fundamental systems and policy changes, focus on housing and economy – what local residents identify as essential needs. At the core is collective learning and action, civic engagement, policy and systems change towards advancing ESJ for a more vibrant community and (insert name here) there's more room at the table to join in.

Jenn reflected, the call to action was at the end, in inviting others to join in. If you are talking to funders, they have a hard time seeing themselves, but I really liked the calling out and inviting in.

Comments shared about Jenn and Chris' elevator pitch was seeing the core message and how the messages were tailored in such a subtle way for very different audiences.

Paola was volunteered and graciously gave her short pitch. She opened by explaining to the group that elevator rides in Olympia are very short. COO is an innovator engaging the expert folks in the community itself. COO brings power together around community expertise.

Alessandra gave Paola some feedback. Your opening sentence which is aspirational is for investors who want to see themselves, I'm at the cutting edge and ending with community expertise. Elevating the expertise and wisdom of the community.

Others commented that they appreciated the differentiator, the unique value added that COO (private/public partnership) has and how the words nimble and flexible resonated with them.

Whitney assisted with conducting an [elevator pitch brainstorming session](#) on Miro.com (see below for the sample exercise). She shared a Mad Libs structure that individuals can use to practice their pitch.

- **For** benefiting audience **who has** urgent public need
- **COO is a** category descriptor **that** one key benefit
- **Unlike** competitive/other program **COO** unique differentiator



A member shared a NYTimes article on [Student Loan Forgiveness](#) as an example of policy maker challenge and the general public that influences them.

Discussion centered around types of communication and messaging that goes into the community especially when others can't relate to COO. A private/government partnership where government takes the back seat to what community is saying about their needs. How to utilize the power of community that helps to shift communications with funders and allows us to close the disparities around data.

Whitney introduced the idea of creating tailored messaging, sharing these questions: Who are you talking to and what do they care about? At what level of engagement are they right now and where do you need them to move? As your developing your messaging, at what level of engagement are they? Talk about a specific program or investment strategy, timeline, or common core value. What's an urgent problem? What is a solution that is effective? What is that call to action by the audience? With key elements you are getting all aspects of your messaging across.

Members engaged in a robust discussion sharing these points and questions:

- Engage in value messaging and recognize individuals need help to understand what COO is.
- Overcome the mental model that equality equals the highest goal and equal means the same individually. The mental model upholds white supremacy at the policy maker level, and this could be an argument for a different approach. How do you shift thinking when everyone wants their economic piece of pie? Concerns around "them" and "us", and how to navigate that landscape. Especially as this county has been about "individualism".
- Values and messages need to be in alignment. How do we go from a place of equity to that of belonging? Move messaging to one of belonging and develop a visualized concept.
- How do we think of the long-term when we are still in crisis response mode? Shift the system, dismantle, rebuild, it's something we need to better message and convey. At the policy level

too, they are the system in which we are trying to rebuild and dismantle. Have a long-term approach/strategy rather than a quick fix.

- COO is a way that impacts systems and policies, holds government accountable, and is accountable to the community. COO and the work we do is about collaboration and partnership and there will be tension until the culture changes. The work cannot be to perpetuate a broken system that created deep inequities. Messaging needs to directly connect COO to KC's ESJ policy and declaration of racism as a public health crisis. What is the degree to which we can acknowledge that and connect?
- Utilize Dr. Chen's report to update councilmembers, partners and other officials. What examples should be used to create these opportunities? Results and outcomes, what's been achieved? How do we assess? What data is being collected?
- What is the benefit of private/government work – ability to offer and reach out and become a part of the process. Groups who have been funded and leading this work because a COO investment has helped them to grow. Flexibility and access to resources, real interest in how community based smaller organizations have been able to participate in BSK.
- Being strategic with stories that are concise and compassionate. Having community show up and out when decisions are being made by councilmembers. The effectiveness of an elected official is tied to their community investment, connection and experience. What is an effective strategy that is community focused to target decision makers and stakeholders with?
- Recognition that investments are made in south KC but BIPOC are spread throughout KC.

Updates

Seattle Equitable Development Initiative –

- Yordanos announced that MCC executed a purchase agreement in Hillman City. This opportunity came up in large part to the Seattle Equitable Development funds. There are a number of East African businesses that are working there currently. MCC is in the process of due diligence and gap financing and hopes to early next year.
- Ubox added that EDI and COO have co-invested in many projects. Rainier Beach Action Coalition closed two weeks ago on their project and the Ethiopian Community of Seattle is preparing for construction on their property. EDI team is also excited about the unicorn project – Rainier Valley Midwives – originally funded as a capacity building project, they now have an opportunity to purchase a property in Rainier Valley. There has been a lot of amazing work and they are seeing outcomes hoped for over the past three years.

Positions at King County Housing Authority –

- KCHA is recruiting for deputy director of housing advancement, the announcement should be out the first or second week of December. Jenn noted there will be a new position, Director of Equity and Inclusion, who will lead increased focus on housing and racial equity. She noted that Lydia has participated on the diversity team to help shape the future of KCHA.

COVID 19 –

- Marguerite provided an update on community mitigation strategies on COVID and the grim current situation with increasing infection rates. King County's goal was to see fewer than 25 people per 100,000 testing positive – but we are about 305 cases per 100,000. We are hearing from a couple of hospitals; they may not have any more capacity very soon. Risen over 75%.

- She reminded people to continue to follow mask, distancing guidelines, and stay safe. Marguerite is available to be on phone calls and share information on which communities are being affected.

DRAFT

3- Staff Report

The December 11, 2020 Governance Group Meeting agenda includes:

Meeting Briefing & Discussion: **Best Starts for Kids Levy Renewal**

Sheila Capestany and Marcy Miller will join us to provide an overview on the plans for the levy renewal. Best Starts held several Community Conversations across the county over the summer/fall and received feedback. Last week, the Council approved the Best Starts Assessment Report and the Best Starts team is preparing submittal of the Blueprint Plan and Ordinance for a renewal process.

Action/Decision: **Black-Led Systems & Policy Change Grant Awards**

The RFP for Black-led Systems & Policy Change closed on October 27th and we received 28 partnership applications. Review panelists and staff met with 10 applicants in virtual site visits in December and has made funding recommendations. See the attached docket for proposed funding awards, *Item 4 in your packet*.

Meeting Briefing: **COVID 19 Anti-Hate & Stigma Digital Art Campaign**

Whitney Johnson will introduce the work of several artists who were selected for an anti-hate and stigma campaign. Details are included in *Item 5, in your packet*.



COO Cohorts: Deeping Learning and Strengthening Networks

COO's Learning Community strengthens networks and relationships through shared learning, critical connections, capacity building, and equity transformations. Engaging in shared learning with a consistent group over a period of time, is an important strategy to building deep content knowledge, adaptation of skills, and connections to peers that will continue to grow. Working and learning in a cohort, enables leaders, organizations and partnerships to share ideas and test new concepts, be introduced to new experiences, while putting their skills into practice. The hope and intention are that these relationships will accompany participants as they transition in and out of the learning space and create bonds where peers continue to reach out to one another, work alongside as they practice the learnings in real settings.

COO Cohorts take on opportunities to challenge the dominant frameworks and explore ways to shift them to promote and sustain equitable and thriving communities. In some cases, the cohorts are sharing or developing new tools, such as assessments and curriculums so that this learning does not just stay within the cohort but is available to share with the broader community.

We are excited to highlight three cohorts that are taking place from now until the end of 2021.

- **Communities Rise Capacity Building Cohort** supports high-impact, high-opportunity groups led by communities of color that are doing vital work to advance racial, health, and economic equity and who need assistance with organizational development (governance, program delivery and impact, operations, developing strategic relationships, fundraising, etc.) to sustain their mission. Eight years ago, the Non-Profit Assistance Center (NAC, which is now [Communities Rise](#)) developed a cohort model which has successfully supported the development and capacity building of more than 50 grassroots, community-based, POC-led organizations.

The model brings eight organizations together for 10 months. The cohort group members work with a coach who helps identify priorities, develop a workplan, and provide monthly 1:1 sessions; they participate in three

peer-to-peer learning/relationship building gatherings throughout the year; and they may access five skill-building group workshops on topics the cohort members collectively identify as top interests. The curriculum is customized and shaped by the unique assets and priorities of the participating members. The current cohort of COO partners includes: Cham Community Services, On Board Othello – HOSTED, On Board Othello – Beetbox, U.T.O.P.I.A., Kent Community Development Collaboration, Partners in Employment, United Indians and Surge NW. Each of these participants has two key organizational leaders participating in the program. The Cohort is well underway. Groups have developed work plans, met with their coach and participated in the first workshop, *Outreach and Publicity*. Upcoming trainings in 2021 will include *Partnership Development, Community Representation/Voice, Collecting Community Data, and Fundraising*.

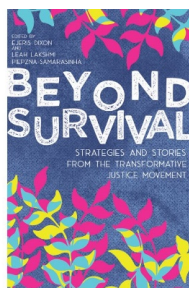
- **Generative Conflict:** COO is partnering with [Vision Change Win](#) (VCW), a Black-led team of queer and trans people of color with deep roots and commitments to social justice movements to offer a series on generative conflict. COO's partnership members participated in a training last winter from [Ejeris Dixon](#), VCW's Founding Director. All participants responded to the content and facilitation with overwhelming positivity and the group was eager to learn and practice more with Ejeris. VCW will facilitate a cohort-group associated around organizational safety and generative conflict. Their COO program will document best practices, provide tailored organizational assessments, and peer-to-peer relationship building. Some topics within the cohort will include: *Introduction to the Generative Conflict and Transformative Justice* and *Understanding the Self in Collaboration Using Healing Justice and Creative Tools*. We are also working on identifying local practices and organizers who can ground this cohort in the historical and current work of Transformative Justice in King County.

At the close of the program, we expect that participants will:

- Understand conflict as organizational issue, not just interpersonal issue
- Create organizational structures that prevent or alleviate organizational conflict
- Be able to identify conflict early enough to be able to adequately address it
- Be better able to hold and navigate conflict and harm within the organization
- Be better able to know when and when not to get outside assistance with conflict

Outreach for this opportunity will begin in January of 2021 and is open to COO Place Based and Cultural Community Partnerships. The cohort has room for up to 20 participants and we anticipate 2-3 partnerships participating. Each participant will engage in eight virtual trainings with individualized follow up assessments and consultations. This experience is to build skills, practices and infrastructure to reduce, navigate and hold conflict, and is not intended to provide direct mediation.

VCW will also facilitate special training sessions to introduce COO leadership, staff, and consultants to the transformative justice and restorative justice principles that are foundational to the Conflict Transformation Cohort experience.



For more information -- Co-Edited by Ejeris Dixon, [Beyond Survival: Strategies from the Transformative Justice Movement](#), published in January 2020, documents stories and strategies from leaders and organizers within the Transformative Justice Movement. This text will provide a backdrop to the foundational trainings that COO will participate in and illustrate the frameworks, practices and tools that will be introduced into the Generative Conflict Mini Cohort. This text and the lessons shared bring visibility to the legacy of organizing that has built momentum to reach the moment we are in of a collective movement of re-thinking conflict, accountability, harm and re-dress.

- **Puget Sound Sage's Community Real Estate Stewardship Team (CREST)** picked up where they left off. In version 2.0 [the Learning Circle](#) builds skills and supports co-learning in a leadership cohort approach with a technical advisory board. The continuation of CREST will allow for Puget Sound Sage to refine and improving the original CREST Cohort curriculum, strengthen cohort member's relationships, and deepen the knowledge and skill set across the wide array of community based organizations to better inform and provide a strong framework of how to scale community driven development in King County. The new CREST cohort focuses on intentional and personalized leadership development and takes a deeper dive into the topics of community stewardship of land, community driven development strategies. There will be opportunities to expand learnings with the other staff, board and community members of the original cohort's organizations and gather feedback around the priorities that affect the very communities they serve and represent.



Photo: Leadership Team planning for CREST during the pandemic summer.

CREST's Cohort is made up of leaders from Africatown, Cham Refugees Community, Debre Mihret Kidus Church, Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition, East African Community Services, Estelita's Library, Global to Local, Got Green, Hilltop Urban Garden, Ingersoll Gender Center, Lake City Collective, Rainier Beach Action Coalition, Seattle Indian Services Coalition, WA State Coalition of African Community Leaders, White Center CDA, and Skyway. Multicultural Community Coalition and Na'ah Illahee Fund are also part of the cohort and the CREST Leadership Team.

Community Real Estate Stewardship Learning Circle



As the cohort progresses and the curriculum is refined, CREST will move towards establishing the technical advisory board that will support their recommendations for sustainability, long term implementation, and policy and systems change.

CREST will share its lessons and vision for change on Saturday, January 9th.

RSVPs by 12/18/20: [CREST Community Share Back \(everyaction.com\)](http://www.everyaction.com)

CREST COMMUNITY SHARE BACK

Saturday January 9, 2021

10am-12:30pm

Learn about the how the CREST program's Black, Indigenous and people of color-led organizations are advancing Community Stewardship of Land in the Seattle region! Open to the public!



Register for this event at <http://bit.ly/crestcsl>



Systems and Policy Change Black-led Organizations Grant Awards



| Organization Name | Project Partners | Project Summary | Award Amount | Result Areas |
|---|--|---|--------------|---|
| Recommended Funded Organizations | | | | |
| CHOOSE180 | Collective Justice, Creative Justice, Community Passageways | Develop a community grounded approach to Restorative Community Pathways (RCP). RCP is a community-led program that would divest resources from a juvenile legal system that is harmful and racially disproportionate and invest those resources in programs that support youth, support community, and support healing and racial justice | \$ 145,000 | Economic Opportunity, Health |
| Freedom Project | Beyond the Blindfold Project, Freedom Project East | To undo the impact of the racist "Super-predator" myth by seeing through the implementation of a new Washington State policy mandating resentencing and release for people who were tried and sentenced as adults when they were actually children. | \$ 145,000 | Economic Opportunity, Community Connection |
| Surge Reproductive Justice | Families of Color Seattle, Black Birth Workers Collective | Launch a Black maternal and perinatal health campaign that will create a community directed strategy for policy and advocacy solutions. | \$ 145,000 | Health |
| The Dare2Be Project | Urban Food Systems Pact, Skyway Community Advocates Cohort, New Birth Center for Community Inclusion | Leveraging effective strategies to empower the community to identify, document and execute a community action plan aimed at disrupting health inequities of its most vulnerable members by creating an equitable and sustainable Urban Food System. | \$ 145,000 | Health, Economic Opportunity, Community Connection |
| Wa Na Wari | CD Brothers and Sisters, Keep Your Habitat, King County Equity Now, Africatown | Support community participatory research work that will inform our organizing of Central District Black homeowners and cultural workers to engage in land use policy education and organizing for systems change. The primary activities during 2021 will be the implementation of the community surveys that we have been developing throughout 2020. | \$ 145,000 | Economic Opportunity, Housing, Community Connection |
| ForFortyTwo | Glover Empower Mentoring, Kent Black Action Committee | Combat systemic racism in Kent, WA concerning education, law enforcement, politics, and youth investment. | \$ 145,000 | Economic Opportunity |
| Potential Additional Grant | | | | |
| King County Equity Now | Over 60 organizations including: Black Power Epicenter, Black Trans Task Force, East African Community Services, Bridging Cultural Gaps, Wa Na Wari, The Silent Task Force | Support KCEN in developing the research, technology, and data management capacity it needs in order to continue to develop and grow as a coalition of Black-led organizations across King County. COO funds will support the development of the Black Brilliance Research Project, a developing Black-led research institute, to collect quality data while building trust and deepening relationships amongst Black community members and Black led organizations. The information developed from the Black Brilliance Research Project will later be used to support effective policies that benefit Black communities. | | Health, Housing, Economic Opportunity |

Systems and Policy Change Black-led Organizations Grant Awards



| Organization Name | Project Partners | Project Summary | Award Amount | Result Areas |
|---|--|--|--------------|---|
| Unable to Fund | | | | |
| Skyway Coalition | Somali Parents Education Board (SPEB), the Renton Innovation Zone (RIZ) Partnership, Childhaven, West Hill Community Association (WHCA), Urban Family, and Renton School District. | 1) Increase partnership scope to include additional organizations and community members in advocacy and capacity-building efforts to uplift and right-size resources for the Skyway community; 2) Build community-wide awareness of the efforts that the Coalition is achieving, and to garner support in time, treasure, and talent as we look ahead to the bright future for Skyway; 3) Boost resources and create initiatives that support the community best through the co- creation of sustainable practices that keep families at the center. | | Health, Housing, Economic Opportunity, Community Connection |
| Brothers United In Leadership Development | Glover Empower Mentoring, Bemby Consulting, Creative Justice | Activate a wide cross-section of Black-IPOC community members in a “3D” plan of action: discuss the issues, develop alternatives paths to safety that do not rely on the carceral system of state-sanctioned violence, and dictate a path forward through The Peoples’ Platform: systems and policy change to the carceral state --part roadmap, part manifesto--developed by the community itself. | | Economic Opportunity, Community Connection |
| Tubman Center for Health & Freedom | Black Community Impact Alliance, Equity Alliance of Washington | Design a healthcare delivery system that meets the needs and desires of King County's Black communities. | | Health |

COVID-19 Anti-Hate & Stigma Digital Art Campaign

Partnership project with the King County Office of Equity and Social Justice (Coalition Against Hate & Bias) and COVID-19 Equity Response team to support artists from communities most impacted by COVID-19 and promote messages of community care, resilience and health. COO value and principle commitments of equity, respect, partnership, and community engagement made visible through creative artworks.

TORI SHAO



Hu Sanliang (廉三娘) is a skilled warrior maiden who wields a pair of sabres and carries a lasso.

Guan Yu (关羽) a loyal and righteous Han dynasty general and deity. You will find statues of him in shrines all over Asia.

Sun Wukong (孙悟空) or the Monkey King, is a legendary figure and rebellious prankster with many supernatural powers.

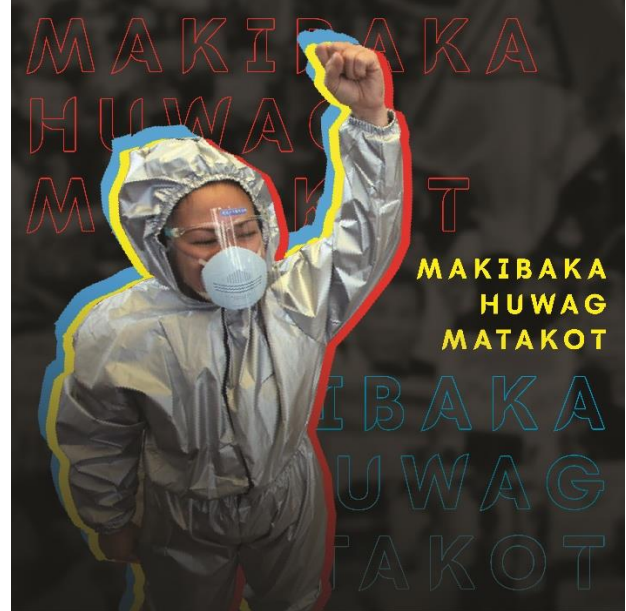
"Wearing is caring! Chinese opera is a form of musical theatre, the ornate costumes and painted faces have been developed over centuries and are steeped in symbolism, they are a source of cultural pride and identity. Notable characters from favorite tales persevere through the current-day trials of COVID-19 and racism, with modern day surgical masks and traditional symbols of resilience."

DRAG & DROP CREATIVE



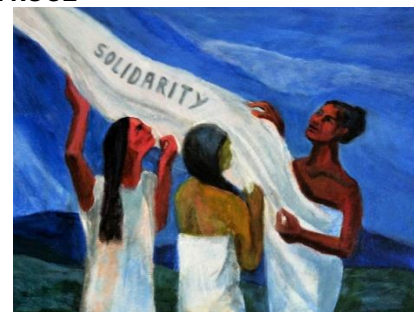
"This series explores how digital and physical spaces are being reshaped by COVID-19. The first piece is "the new normal". The remaining focuses on inspirational messages."

SHARLYN SANTIAGO



"Makibaka! Huwag Matakot! is the battlecry of the movement against the Philippine fascist dictatorship Ferdinand Marcos during the 1970s. Filipinos leading the fight against COVID-19! Our frontline heroes saving lives, who will fight for theirs? Filipinos are often seen as the caretakers of the world as Filipinos are forced to work abroad under the Labor Export Policy (LEP) to provide for their families back home. Most are nurses who came to the US to be at the frontlines of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980's. With the LEP continuing today, Filipinos have also been at the frontlines of the COVID pandemic, making up just 4% of nurses in the US, but 31.5% of total nurse deaths."

NASRIN AFROUZ



"I started painting on the Solidarity subject in April 2020 and my motivation for that is the current political situation on Racial Justice for all. I believe with Solidarity underserved communities of color will achieve their goal and rights. As an underserved artist not only do I feel this but also support it through my language that is visual arts."

TOKA VALU



"Depicted here is a typical day at a PICA-WA food distribution site where several of our Pacific Islander young people and adults continuously show up to volunteer, support the livelihoods of our fellow Pasifika community members, and also connect and fellowship with each other. In times of hardship, our Pasifika communities have always responded by rallying to support each other and this weekly food distribution has come to personify what resilience looks like to me. The illustrated background also pays homage to the longevity of our traditions and customs that have survived generations of systemic aggression in efforts to erase our collective sense of self. This too is resilience and it all points back to the importance of uplifting the voices and leadership of our Pasifika communities who continue to steward their own self-determination."

YVONNE CHAN

"Fueled by the pandemic and rising global tension, anti-Asian hate is surging once again. Hate crimes, verbal assaults, and stigmatization with Asians are only some forms of how this racism has played out recently. There are no easy answers on how to confront this – but being vigilant and supporting local Asian-owned small businesses is one place to start (such as those in the ID that have been stigmatized and hit particularly hard by this year). More than ever, we need to support and protect our local Asian communities. Stop the hate."



CHE SEHYUN



"We live in a globalized world and for our future to honor its beautiful diversity, we need to respect our differences, which are encapsulated through our ancient cultures that have been refined over thousands of years. It is us—we are living testaments of our culture, its beauty, integrity and relevance. I do not want my art to be centered on anti-anything, although this work is part of anti-bias and hate efforts, an important step, not end goal, in the right direction. I stand for our cultural futures and our collective liberation—that is our indigenous cultures, our lives and our innate beauty."