



**Minnesota African American
Heritage Museum and Gallery**

MINNESOTA ARTS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND ANNUAL REPORT



**FISCAL YEAR
2024**

Prepared by

MAAHMG

Prepared for

**MINNESOTA STATE
LEGISLATURE**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MAAHMG OVERVIEW	3
PROJECT OVERVIEW	4
PROJECT - YOUTH PROGRAMS	5-10
PROJECT - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	11-14
PROJECT - CHARLES CALDWELL MURAL	15-16
MAAHMG CONTACT INFORMATION	17

ABOUT MAAHMG

The Minnesota African American Heritage Museum and Gallery (MAAHMG) preserves, documents and highlights the achievements, contributions and experiences of African Americans in Minnesota.

This mission is carried out through exhibitions, programs and events that educate and inform the public about the history, culture, and art of African Americans in Minnesota. Opened in 2018, the museum is a community gathering place and institution located on Minneapolis' Northside that serves as a cultural destination. The museum is free and accessible to all.

MAAHMG BOARD MEMBERS

Coventry Cowens

Tina Burnside

Jack Rainey

Verlena Matey-Keke

Clarence Jones

PROJECT OVERVIEW

2024 FISCAL YEAR FUNDING AMOUNT

- \$120,000 MINNESOTA AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MUSEUM AND GALLERY
- \$105,600 CHARLES CALDWELL NORTHSIDE MURAL
- \$225,600 TOTAL

BUDGET

- \$20,000 YOUTH PROGRAM SPECIALIST
- \$25,500 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR
- \$15,500 YOUTH CURATOR PROGRAM
- \$10,000 VISIONARY VOICES PROGRAM
- \$12,000 EXHIBITS
- \$26,900 OPERATING EXPENSES
- \$105,600 CHARLES CALDWELL MURAL
- \$10,100 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND TRAVEL

PROJECT DATES:

- 10/1/23 - 6/30/25

PROJECTS:

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Youth programs which include planning and implementing youth programming for MAAHMG which includes the Youth Curator Program which teaches high school youth the curatorial process where they learn skills such as research, interviewing, writing, and art techniques (collage, drawing, painting and photography) to curate a history and art exhibit that is displayed in the museum. The program is for youth ages 13 - 18 years old. Grant funding will be used for materials, stipends to the youth for participation, field trips in the community, guest speakers, teaching artists and historians and the Youth Program Specialist salary. Other programming includes the Visionary Voices program in which youth learn creative writing and spoken word through various lessons and guest artists. At the end of the program they perform in a showcase of their work and an anthology is printed of their written work. Family, friends and community are invited to the program. The Children's Reading Circle is both online and in-person storytime featuring books with Black lead characters and/or written by Black authors and read by either the local author or a community member. Focus on books Children's books by Minnesota authors.

OUTPUTS:

The museum hired a Youth Program Specialist, Sabrina Ford, in December 2023. MAAHMG provided youth programming to the public which included a Youth Zine and Collage Workshop with Artist Baki Porter on February 24, 2024, and a Print Making Workshop with Artist CRICE on May 4, 2024.

MAAHMG also held its Youth Curator Program from June 1 - August 10, 2024, which was facilitated by Youth Program Specialist Sabrina Ford. Eight students ages 11 - 17 spent Saturdays, during three-hour sessions, at the museum learning the curatorial process to create art and history exhibitions. The theme for the program was exploring how photography and the Black Press have historically served to present authentic and positive images and narratives about Black people and the community. The youth curators learned photography using DSL cameras where they took portraits of community members during a Juneteenth festival. They also learned research, writing and design skills to curate a history exhibition about the Black Press in Minnesota. Guest speakers came to talk to the students to give them a real-life view of work in the media and the importance of documenting history and shedding light on hidden Black stories. CEO and Publisher of the Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder Tracey Williams-Dillard and Executive Producer and WEM Endowed Director of History Daniel Bergin were guest speakers sharing their knowledge with the youth curators. At the end of the program the students held a public opening reception for their art and history exhibitions that are on display at the museum from August - December 2024. The youth curators were also invited to do photography for a fashion show during fashion week in October 2024. The youth curators who participated used the skills they learned during the program to shoot a runway fashion show, *The Denim Experience*, and they had a follow-up workshop taught by MAAHMG Communications Specialist Michaela Spielberger who taught them photography editing skills.

MAAHMG held its Visionary Voices creative writing and spoken word workshop for youth ages 13 - 18 years old from September 12 - October 25, 2024, afterschool on Thursday evenings during two-hour sessions at the museum. The program was facilitated by Poet and Spoken Word Artist Joe Davis. Two students completed the program and learned creative writing techniques including poetry, essay and monologue. They also learned spoken work, self-expression and public speaking skills. At the end of the program, the museum published an anthology of their work and hosted an Open Mic event where the students performed works created during the program.

OUTPUTS:

MAAHMG hosted its Children's Reading Circle offering in-person storytime at the museum. Authors/Community Readers included Rose McGee (1/20/24), Sideena Grace (2/17/24), Melina Mangal (3/23/24), Shayla Michelle (4/20/24), Shondra Dickson (5/18/24), Andrew Brundidge (7/20/24)

OUTCOMES:

The MAAHMG achieved its goals for youth programming pursuant to the grant. The qualitative outcome achieved was participants in the various youth programs learned about Black history, art and culture. For instance, in the Youth Curator Program, youth learned skills to curate both history and art exhibitions that are on display at the museum through December 2024. The program participants were youth, many from underserved, Black communities, who learned about opportunities in a museum by MAAHMG creating a safe, learning environment where they can see themselves in museum spaces and learn about possible careers in the arts and cultural community. The MAAHMG Youth Curator program broadened the participants knowledge of Black history in Minnesota where such stories are not often told in schools or mainstream organizations. The program also strengthened participants interest, knowledge and understanding of Black history, art and culture in Minnesota. The guest speakers were from the community. In addition, the Visionary Voices program taught participants writing and public speaking skills. It built self-esteem and confidence by giving students the tools to express their views and feelings in a positive and creative manner. The Open Mic event allowed both the students and community to participate in a event where they could collectively share, and their messages be positively received. The youth art workshops were one-day events where youth of all ages could come to the museum and learn a specific art technique, create a project, engage with working artists and then take home their finished project at the end of the class. These programs provide opportunities to learn something new and gives access to the arts. Finally, the Children's Reading Circle introduces children to books at an early age and increases literacy through storytime. It also provides local authors a platform to share their books and community readers an opportunity to serve and engage.

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT:

The program is assessed by evaluations completed by the participants and feedback from artists, guest speakers and community members who participate in or attend the events. Here is some feedback from participants and facilitators:

MAAHMG Youth Curator Shon Smith described the experience as both fun and challenging. Shon credited the Youth Curator Program for teaching him about photography, saying, “Everything I know about the cameras we used was learned in the youth program, which helped me know what angles to go for and the best lighting for pictures.”

MAAHMG Youth Curator Ayla Porter said the program was rewarding. “I gained a lot of experience while having fun. There was so much to capture, which was challenging but interesting. The whole program was alive with creativity.”

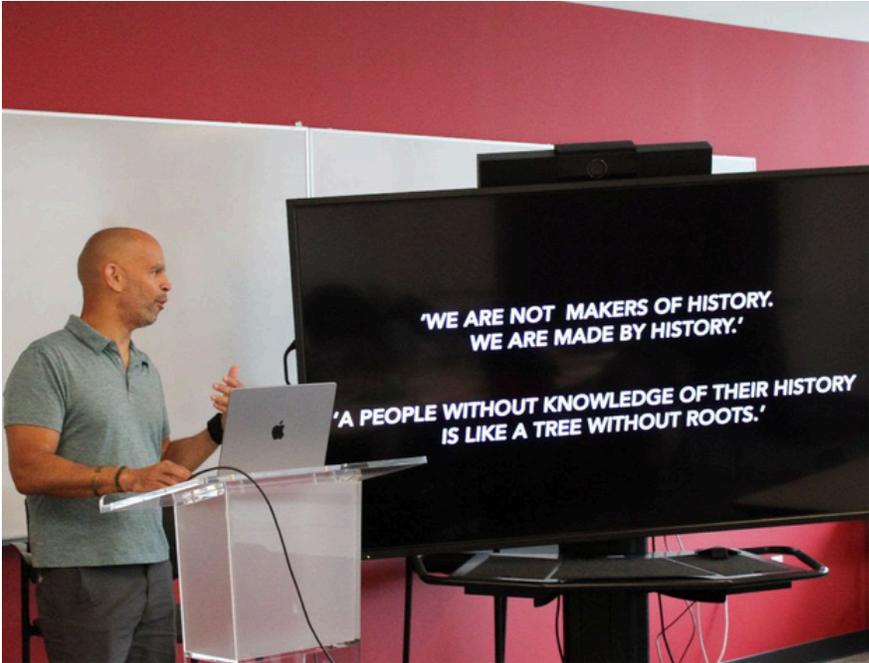
MAAHMG Visionary Voices Participant Shaudae Edwards was excited to participate in the Visionary Voices program at the museum where she learned new things, met people and had fun. “It’s wonderful because we can talk about anything, and we always have a good time,” she said. “I really enjoyed the writing activities. I like being here.”

MAAHMG Visionary Voices Facilitator Joe Davis praised the program for providing opportunities for youth saying “because not only does the program inspire and encourage and motivate, it’s necessary to the human spirit to have spaces where there’s creativity and like, just human connection.”

Attendance at the Youth Curator exhibition reception, Visionary Voices open mic, youth art workshops and Children’s Reading Circle was about 120 people. MAAHMG would like to increase public participation in Children’s Reading Circle, and we are currently exploring a partnership with Hennepin County libraries to collaborate on storytime events. We are also exploring other ways to market museum events to increase the public’s knowledge of the programs and looking to partner with other youth organizations and local schools to tell them about the programs offered at the museum.



Snapshots from the MAAHMG Youth Curator Program including exhibition reception, guest speakers and fashion show event.





Group photograph of some attendees at the Visionary Voices Open Mic event.



Visionary Voices participants Macaria Belfry (L) and Shaudae Edwards (R) performing during the Open Mic event.



Sideena Grace, author, aerospace engineer and physicist, reading her book at the Minnesota African American Heritage Museum and Gallery during its Children's Reading Circle.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement. Organize and execute programming for adults at the museum which includes panel discussions, arts programming, and history talks. Plan, coordinate and attend various community events where the museum tables at including George Floyd Global Memorial celebration, Juneteenth, Urban League Family Day, Selby Jazzfest, Open Streets, and the Minnesota State Fair education building. Inform and educate the public about Black history, art and culture in Minnesota. Build relationships with other cultural organizations in the state to collaborate on mutual programming. Coordinate tours in the museum and offsite at various locations. Coordinate traveling exhibit displays at various locations. Recruit and maintain volunteer program for the museum.

OUTPUTS:

The museum hosted free and public Black History Month 2024 events at the museum which included a presentation about the Givens Collection by Davu Seru, curator of the Givens Collection of African American Literature at the University of Minnesota (2/1/24); and a genealogy workshop with Mica L. Anders, an artist and genealogist, who provided information to participants on how to trace their family history (2/22/24). MAAHMG also conducted numerous tours at the museum. MAAHMG tabled at over 25 community events where the museum displayed exhibits, gave out information about the museum and its programs, interacted with the public, played Minnesota Black history trivia, and provided arts programming. To effectively carryout the community engagement public outreach, MAAHMG hired a Community Engagement crew of seven individuals. The public events that the museum participated in are: Loppet Foundation Community Play Date (2/19/24); Cooper High School Black History Month Expo (2/23/24); UROC Youth Resource Fair (3/23/24); Hiawatha Academy Festival of Nations (5/18/24); Door Open by Rethos (5/18/24); MN Soul festival (5/25/24); Northside Pride at Northpoint (6/1/24); Minnesota Quilt Show in Duluth, MN (6/13-6/15/24); Juneteenth at Minnesota Orchestra (6/14/24); Northside Juneteenth Family Festival (6/15/24); Juneteenth UROC (6/15/24); Soul of the Southside (6/19/24); Kumbayah The Juneteenth Story at University of Minnesota (6/21/24); Juneteenth at the State Capital (6/22/24); V-Fest St. Paul (7/27/24); Rondo Block Party (8/3/24); Minnesota State Fair (8/22-9/2/24); Urban League Family Day (8/31/24); Southside Back in the Day (8/31/24); Rondo Reconnecting Community Conference (9/11-13/24); Selby Jazzfest (9/14/24); Open Streets Broadway (9/21/24); UROC Community Day (10/17/24); South Minneapolis Seniors Fair (10/23/24); Phyllis Wheatley Community Center Trunk or Treat (10/31/24); MAAHMG Community Holiday Ornament Decorating Party (12/9/23 & 12/7/24).

OUTCOMES:

The museum achieved its goals for community engagement pursuant to the grant. Qualitative outcomes were the public gained an understanding and appreciation for Black history, art and culture. The public through various outreach events learned about the contributions of Blacks to the growth and cultural richness of Minnesota. Through the public outreach events, MAAHMG connected with over 50,000 people. In addition, MAAHMG's participation in displaying its "Black Liberation" exhibition at the Minnesota State Fair in the Education Building is a great opportunity to show the diversity of Minnesota and the richness of its history to the 1.9 million visitors that attend the fair.

MAAHMG conducted 44 tours to schools, community organizations and corporate groups, serving 536 people through tours. The museum has visitors from all of Minnesota, and from visitors across the country and internationally.

The museum also established relationships with other cultural and community organizations including the Minnesota Humanities Center, the University of Minnesota with both UROC (University of Minnesota Urban Research and Outreach Engagement Center) and the Givens Collection, the Minnesota Orchestra, Phyllis Wheatley Community Center, Heritage Park Community, Rondo Community Landtrust.

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT:

The museum's community engagement is assessed by the number of people reached at events, social media, comments in its guestbook, and media coverage. Through the public outreach events, MAAHMG connected with over 50,000 people. In addition, the museum has over 6,500 followers on Facebook; 1,663 on Instagram; 393 subscribers on YouTube and almost 4,000 on its email list. Visitors to the museum were over 3,000 people. MAAHMG will continue to work to increase its presence on social media to connect with the public about the museum's mission, exhibitions and programs. Some of the comments from visitors about the museum and its exhibitions include:

"This is incredible. I loved it." "I learned that Debbie Montgomery was the first female police officer in St. Paul." - Deb and Doug, who saw the "Black Liberation" exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair.

"I learned so much more about my culture, history, and true change agents. It was deeply inspiring to learn about the journey and legacy of so many in this great community." - DW from New Jersey.

Here's some photos from MAAHMG's Community Engagement



Here's some photos from MAAHMG's Community Engagement



CHARLES CALDWELL - NORTHSIDE MURAL

Artist Charles Caldwell painted a mural title “All Seasons” in North Minneapolis for the community. He also trained emerging artists as apprentices to learn mural painting skills and techniques. There is also a community healing space near the mural for the public.

OUTPUTS:

The mural was created along with a community space. There were events related to the mural painting and completion. The mural is painted near the intersection of West Broadway and Lyndale Avenues on the Kemps Ice Cream building wall that is 140 feet by 17 feet. The mural is designed to reflect everyone’s lives.

There were 4 apprentices on the project ranging in age from 14 - 25 years old. The goal is to introduce them to the art of mural painting, application and public art. They will learn skills and improve their ability to work with different materials and art techniques. There will also be community events centered around the mural and the healing space.

OUTCOMES:

The mural is public art adding to the cultural landscape of North Minneapolis. A mural reveal community celebration was held August 24, 2024.

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT:

Outcomes will be measured by surveys of the artists participating in the project and the feedback from the public viewing and using the community healing space. Artist Charles Caldwell stated “I hope that this contributes to the perception that there’s beauty in every community. And especially in North Minneapolis.” Caldwell added that one thing he hopes this mural accomplishes is that when people look at it, they smile. “This mural is just part of the development of North Minneapolis, and I think that this will get people excited about more of this and more confidence in seeing the beauty that we all possess in this community” - from interview of Charles Caldwell with Fox 9 reporter Bisi Onile-Ere.

Here's some photos from the community mural "All Seasons"



CONTACT US



MAAHMG Cofounders Tina Burnside (L) and Coventry Cowens (R).

MINNESOTA AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MUSEUM AND GALLERY

Phone/

(612) 615-3318

Email/

info@maahmg.org

Website/

www.maahmg.org

Address/

1256 Penn Ave. N.,
Minneapolis, MN 55411