



Young Audiences Western New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Young Audiences' *Grant Street Global Voices* -- Mounts New Mural On Buffalo's West Side

BUFFALO, NY (8/6/13) Young Audiences of Western New York is pleased to announce the arrival of a new mural, currently being hung at Lorigo's Meating Place, located at 185 Grant Street (at Auburn) in Buffalo, NY. The mural is the work of Young Audience's ***Grant Street Global Voices***. *Grant Street Global Voices* is a Young Audiences initiative in collaboration with Buffalo State College, its Community Academic Center (CAC), Buffalo Public Schools, and Grant Street business owners. The project honors the voices of young people from a burgeoning immigrant and refugee community. Its overarching goal is to use art to welcome their stories, and to build a sense of community among young people and the Grant Street corridor. The project was funded by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

"This project designed to bring the community of the west side to life through relationships between children, families, schools, and the growing business community," said Cynnie Gaasch, executive director of Young Audiences. "Artists from Young Audiences and Buffalo State College worked with young people at Lafayette High School, the International School and the surrounding neighborhood to document stories of immigration and embrace the diverse cultures making this neighborhood home."

Teaching artists Augustina Droze, Ismail & Company, Ellen Melamed and Buffalo State Arts Education students worked closely with students from Lafayette High School and the International School #45 to gather the stories of their families and capture it in words and art. These stories became the basis for visual art and storytelling that was turned into a public mural that is being hung this week. It is a work of art that the entire neighborhood can enjoy and call its own. Young people will see their stories come to life in their own neighborhood. This is public art at its finest.

"I think it'll be an indicator for those who don't know what the neighborhood is about that it's a multicultural neighborhood," said teaching artist Augustina Droze. "It's a bounty of riches for Buffalo."

The official unveiling will occur once school is back in session so that Buffalo State students who documented the work by video and worked in the classroom, and students at CAC, 45 and Lafayette, may participate. Young Audiences of Western New York is delighted to have had its hand in crafting this beautiful connection between arts, education and community-based public art.

Grant Street Global Voices is possible thanks to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) *Our Town* grant award. They funded 80 *Our Town* grant awards totaling \$4.995 million and included 44 states and the District of Columbia. Additional funds came from the Baird Foundation, Cameron & Jane Baird Foundation, City of Buffalo, Council member David Rivera, Lorigo's Meating Place, West Side Tax Payers Association, New York State Council for the Arts and the Rupp Family Foundation.

ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES: *Young Audiences of Western New York's mission is to make the visual, performing, and literary arts a part of young people's lives in order to enhance their development as creative and productive human beings. They provide services in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming counties. Every day, they fulfill their mission through performances, workshops, and residencies in educational, cultural and community centers. Young Audiences of Western New York is one of 30 national affiliates from the parent organization, Young Audiences, Inc.*

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