

Foreword

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It has been said that listening is a form of art. The seemingly simple act of listening requires multiple skills: the ability to earn the trust of the person speaking; the fortitude to wholly focus one's attention without being distracted; and the patience to iteratively process and understand what has been shared. Listening, building trust, and engaging in lasting partnerships with communities are key requirements for effective community development, but the process remains a challenge for many organizations. If listening is indeed an art form, and central to achieving the aims of community development, then I can think of no better partners for this work than artists themselves.

This issue of the *Community Development Innovation Review* explores the power of arts and culture to transform the practice of community development. The diverse range of authors includes artists, community developers, bankers, and researchers, and their collective voices frame a rich conversation on how openness to the creative process can help community development organizations better achieve their mission of expanding opportunity for low-income communities. This work is important to the Community Development team at the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco because it supports our vision of a healthy and inclusive economy in which all people have the opportunity to fully participate and no one is left behind. Realizing this vision requires a deep commitment to working with communities to catalyze responsive action that allows all people to achieve their full potential. As SF Fed President Mary Daly said, “Reducing the structural barriers that limit workforce participation or keep individuals from reaching their full potential requires taking a hard look at some of our social and workplace policies... We have to combine the forces of our institutions... our communities... our people.”¹


Published in partnership with ArtPlace America and PolicyLink, this issue takes a deep dive into the lessons learned from the Community Development Investments (CDI) program, and offers reflections from industry leaders on their implications for the broader community development field. The CDI program, led by ArtPlace America, provided flexible funding to six diverse community development organizations in support of their partnership with artists and creative practitioners. Through a process of listening and discovery, the CDI participants developed locally tailored, creative solutions to challenges that are impacting many low-income communities and communities of color today, such as preserving cultural identity in the face of rapid change, or reducing health disparities tied to community disinvestment

1 Mary C. Daly, “Beyond Fairness: The Value of an Inclusive Economy” (speech, Los Angeles World Affairs Council & Town Hall, Los Angeles, CA, October 15, 2019). <https://www.frbfsf.org/our-district/press/presidents-speeches/mary-c-daly/2019/october/beyond-fairness-the-value-of-an-inclusive-economy/>

and intergenerational poverty. The essays build on a prior issue of this journal from 2014 dedicated to the topic of creative placemaking and reveal the ongoing evolution and future direction of this important work. Some of the newly emergent themes that appear in this issue—and reflect broader shifts in the community development field—include a more intentional emphasis on the interplay of arts and culture with issues of racial equity, equitable development, and gentrification and displacement.

The contributing authors share insights into the role of the arts in transforming their respective practice. For example, Joe Claunch, co-director of the Zuni Youth Enrichment Project, which serves the Zuni tribe in New Mexico, shares that the infusion of arts and culture into his organization “has changed the nature of our work; we have always strived to connect Zuni kids back to their traditions... What this project has taught us is how to let the community and the community’s artists lead those initiatives to bring about better health outcomes for Zuni youth.” Similarly, Enzina Marrari describes the transformation of her own work as an artist through the process of working with the Cook Inlet Housing Authority in Anchorage, AK, stating, “We moved from a *social practice* approach—artists identifying a social problem and designing work around it—to a *civic practice* approach—artists responding to problems identified by the community and designing work to address them.”

This issue would not have been possible without the vision and tenacity of guest editors Lyz Crane of ArtPlace America and Victor Rubin and Jeremy Liu of PolicyLink—I am grateful for their thoughtful partnership. Like any creative process, the production of this issue involved a blend of many emotions, including deep sorrow over the loss of contributing author Dean Matsubayashi. Dean served as the executive director of Little Tokyo Service Center in Los Angeles, CA, and was also the inaugural chair of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco’s Community Advisory Council. Dean’s tireless pursuit of justice and passionate commitment to his community shines through in the reflections he shares in this journal. We dedicate this issue in honor of Dean and celebrate the inspiration he provided to so many in the field.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lana". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.