



RTA
REHABILITATION
THROUGH THE ARTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Prison Communities International Inc. (PCI) is a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to criminal justice issues. Established in 1999, PCI is the parent company under which Rehabilitation Through the Arts operates.



Artwork by RTA participant, Jeremiah Walker, *Princess Kaiulani*, 2022, created at Woodbourne Correctional Facility

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- E. Annette Nash Govan, Chair
- Mikki Shaw, EdD, Vice Chair
- Jermaine Archer
- Sheryl Baker
- Lawrence Bartley
- Hillary Bliss*
- Allison Chernow
- Gabe Cruz
- Tanya Diaz-Goldsmith
- Kenneth Fields
- Hans Hallundbaek D-Min*
- Sean Dino Johnson
- Suzanne Kessler, PhD
- Que Newbill, JD
- Lauren Price**
- Katherine Vockins, D.H.L.*
- Karin Young Shiel

ADVISORY COUNCIL

- Joe Berlinger
- Jabbar Collins
- Brian Fischer
- Elizabeth Gaynes
- Ann Gregg
- Clay Hiles
- Stephanie Lynn
- Julio Medina
- Judith O. Rubin

*In 2022

**As of 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement	4
Vision Statement & Core Values	5
About RTA	6
Letter from Board Chair	7
RTA's Impact	8-9
2022 Highlights	10-11
Thank You to Our Supporters	12-13
Major Funding Sources	14
Financial Statement	15

RTA helps **people in prison** develop **critical life skills** through the arts, modeling an approach to the justice system **based on human dignity** rather than punishment.



Music Composition workshop in collaboration with Musicambia at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility.

CORE VALUES

DIGNITY

We recognize the **universal humanity of all people** and treat everyone and ourselves with respect and compassion.

CREATIVITY

We are creative problem solvers and turn imaginative ideas into reality. We believe that **the arts are an essential part** of our humanity and make life better.

COMMITMENT

We take responsibility for our actions and **understand the effect our actions** have on the whole. We uphold our obligations to each other and to our work.

COLLABORATION

We listen, share and depend upon each other. We believe that **change and growth happen when we work in partnership**.

ABOUT RTA

Founded at Sing Sing in 1996, RTA works with professional teaching artists to lead year-round workshops in theatre, dance, music, creative writing, and visual arts. The RTA model provides an intensive, comprehensive arts program that builds critical life skills so that people can meet the challenges of connecting with family and community when released.

RTA demonstrates that an approach based on human dignity is vastly more successful than one based on punishment. **Less than 5% of RTA members return to prison, compared to the national recidivism rate of 60%.**

WHO WE SERVE

RTA currently operates in six maximum and medium men's and women's correctional facilities in New York State.

Bedford Hills

Maximum-security women

Fishkill

Medium-security men

Green Haven

Maximum-security men

Sing Sing

Maximum-security men

Taconic

Medium-security women

Woodbourne

Medium-security men

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



2022 marked the full return to in-person programming from the previous pandemic-restricted years. We strengthened and expanded existing programming, implemented new initiatives and increased staffing to better serve our mission. The year culminated with

an exuberant celebration of RTA's long-time Founder and Executive Director, Katherine Vockins. It was a remarkable year of transition.

RTA continues to change lives and inspire our participants to make positive life choices. RTA builds the confidence and skills that participants need to navigate critical life decisions by setting goals, problem-solving and working collaboratively. Our approach to transformation is based on human dignity rather than punishment, and the success of our alumni demonstrates that our approach works.

Here are a few highlights of our progress for the year 2022:

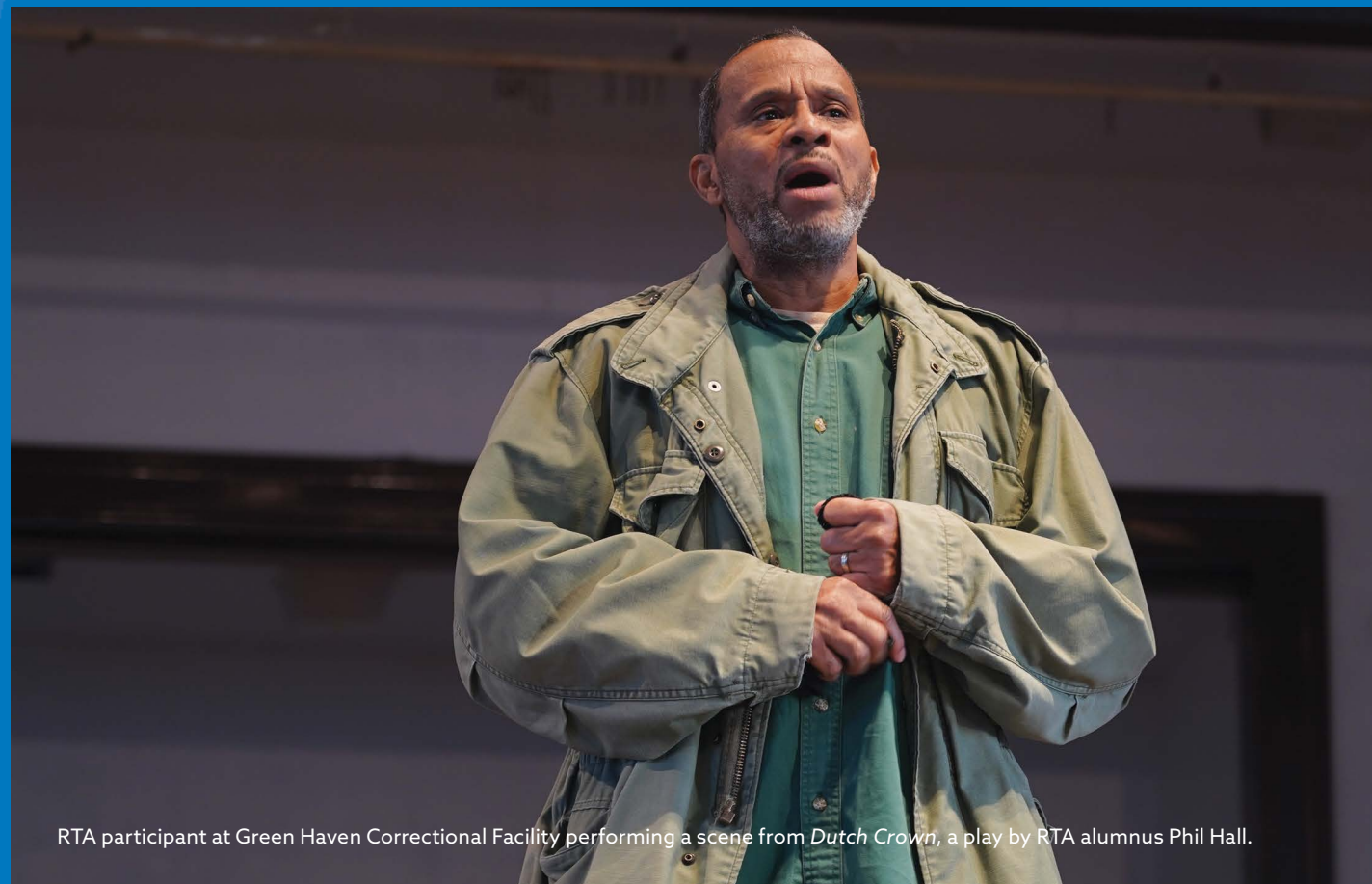
- In January, we held our annual Homecoming Celebration virtually, always a joyous event. RTA alumni (previous program participants), board, staff and teaching artists gathered in their Zoom boxes to welcome the new cohort of returning citizens. The event included speeches by each new alumnus, 20 in total, and breakout rooms for more informal conversation.
- Programming kicked into full gear. In the spring and summer, we produced ReStarting the Arts, a short film that documents RTA's return to in-person workshops after pandemic restrictions were lifted. Talented new teaching artists joined the ranks as RTA facilitated workshops in theater, dance, knitting and storytelling and launched a visual arts program in a Special Needs Unit at Woodbourne Correctional Facility. We collaborated with the nonprofit organization Musicambia for a music keyboard/composition workshop at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. As programming continued to grow, we added operational staff, hiring a new Development Associate and Director of Finance.
- RTA held its second annual gala celebrating 25 years in operation and was awarded a \$150,000 grant from the NYS Legislature all on the same commemorative evening.
- In the fall, RTA was the proud recipient of ArtsWestchester's inaugural Advancing Equity Award. The award aims to commend a non-profit cultural organization that serves residents of Westchester and demonstrates exemplary leadership in advancing social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility through and in the arts.
- Later in September, a reunion of the principals from the documentary, *Dramatic Escape*, was held at the Jacob Burns Film Center to an enthusiastic crowd. A panel discussion with RTA alumni featured in the film followed the screening.
- In the fourth quarter, RTA alumni performed a short play written by an incarcerated PEN America contest winner at the Brooklyn Public Library. This opportunity allowed RTA to collaborate and deepen its relationship with PEN America's Prison Justice writing program.
- The biggest celebration occurred in December when the RTA community honored the incredible legacy of RTA's Founder and Executive Director, Katherine Vockins. Katherine has been a dedicated and stalwart promoter of arts-in-corrections and an inspiration to all of those who participated in RTA and the wider realm of social justice. She ended her tenure as Executive Director at the close of 2022 and now leads RTA's newest initiative, Reimaging Myself, a transitional reentry program.

As we move to a new phase in leadership and expansion of programming, RTA will continue to impact the lives of those that it serves. We cannot do this without your help. We are grateful and appreciative of all who support our mission and community.

With deep gratitude,

E. Annette Nash Govan

Board Chair
Rehabilitation Through the Arts



RTA participant at Green Haven Correctional Facility performing a scene from *Dutch Crown*, a play by RTA alumnus Phil Hall.



DARRIAN BENNETT

MEET DARRIAN, RTA ALUMNUS

"One of the big lessons I learned from RTA is 'You get out of it, what you put into it'. You hear that a lot when you first start the program."

Darrian's mom always tried to keep him out of trouble when he was young. Of his own admission, he didn't listen and ended up serving a 14-year sentence in New York State prison.

When he entered prison, he never had a dream of being an artist. He was naturally drawn to visual arts before incarceration but the thought of being an artist was something you didn't dream of on the streets. It never crossed his mind growing up. When he saw his peers inside creating murals on prison walls, a spark was ignited.

While incarcerated at Sing Sing Correctional Facility, Darrian knew right away that he had to become an RTA participant in the visual arts program. He remembers it took a long time to get into RTA. The program was extremely popular with the residents at the facility, but when he eventually got in, Darrian's creativity took off.

Time, reflection and the support of RTA enabled him to reconsider his journey in life

"RTA changed my life. It's where I learned to draw and then I started doing art for different events, you know, posters, sets and scenery, and decorations for a daddy-daughter event."

Another RTA participant asked Darrian to help set up and plan an event, and before he knew it, Darrian was helping with all the special events that happened inside. In RTA, Darrian started acting in plays, created a portfolio of artwork, gave artist talks and eventually led discussions in the visual arts workshop. A whole creative world opened up for him.

Darrian emphasized how RTA, his workshops and his mentors led him down a path of change.

"You have to change who you are in prison, you have to adjust and adapt, not only to be inside but to think about how you want to be outside. RTA allows you to see the changes in yourself and to show your family how you have changed. Just saying it on the phone isn't enough...you have to show them."

Darrian's family witnessed the change in Darrian. They saw how an intensive, comprehensive arts program helped him develop self-awareness, self-control and interpersonal skills that are vital to meeting the challenges of connecting with people, family and community.

"I was able to show my family that I was growing and changing and ready for life on the outside. When they visited me in prison at an RTA performance or for a visual art show, they could see all the hard work I put into being a better me. One of the greatest moments inside prison



RTA alumna, Darrian Bennett, Untitled (With My Daughter at the Wizard of Oz performance at Sing Sing), 2022, created at Sing Sing Correctional Facility

was sitting with my daughter during a performance of the Wizard of Oz after having shown her my artwork on display in the art show.

Darrian was released from Sing Sing in early 2023. He recently landed a job as an illustrator for a production company and interns at Central Synagogue in New York City. He continues to make art while also teaching himself the business side of marketing and branding through various

media channels. Darrian's goals are clear, but he acknowledged that he needs to be patient.

"I want everything I hoped for all at once, but the process is slow. I want financial freedom. I want independence. I want consistency and excellence. I want to make my family proud."

As Darrian says, "You get out of it, what you put into it."

2022 HIGHLIGHTS



Homecoming Our favorite event of the year! In 2022, we welcomed home 20 RTA members back to their families and communities. Even via Zoom, the joy could be felt!



RTA's community **celebrated 25 years** of recognizing that an approach to the justice system based on human dignity rather than punishment strengthens our communities.

Pictured above: RTA alumni giving back during the paddle raise at the 25th anniversary gala.



We premiered **ReStarting the Arts**, a short film that documents RTA's return to in-person workshops. The project was supported by ArtsWestchester and NYS Council on the Arts.



Dramatic Escape Reunion *Dramatic Escape* is a documentary about mounting an in-prison theatrical production. RTA alumni featured in the film reflected on their experiences during the production and life after release. The reunion was held at the Jacob Burns Film Center where the film premiered.

WINTER

"When you have **access to the arts**, you have access to a part of you that only you can find – in a place where finding yourself is the difference between life and death. **RTA is a place of transcendent hope.**"

— RTA participant at Green Haven Correctional Facility

SPRING

RTA receives a **\$150,000 grant** from the New York State Legislature to support our mission.



SUMMER

RTA becomes the inaugural recipient of **ArtsWestchester Advancing Equity Award**.

"The Award aims to commend a non-profit cultural organization that serves residents of Westchester and demonstrates exemplary leadership in advancing social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) through and in the arts."

-ArtsWestchester



FALL

Tribute to RTA Founder The RTA community celebrated the vision and leadership of Katherine Vockins, Founder and Executive Director.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

RTA is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

RTA is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

RTA is proud to be a grantee of ArtsWestchester with funding made possible by Westchester County government with the support of County Executive George Latimer.

RTA is also indebted to the many generous foundations and individual donors whose support is so inspiring to our community.



OUR DONORS

RTA would not be the vital organization it is today without the generous support of our donors. We regret there is not enough space to list every name but we are grateful to all of our donors for their contributions in 2022.

PATRON \$50,000+

Mellon Foundation
New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
New York State Legislature
The Tow Foundation

BENEFACTOR \$10,000 TO \$49,999

ArtsWestchester
Bear Dog Group Fund
Nancy and David Gernert
Clay Hiles
Cass and Nick Ludington
Stephanie Lynn
Mummy Time, Inc.
Netflix, Inc.
New York State Council on the Arts
Radiant Fund
Judith O. and Robert E. Rubin
The Seattle Foundation
The Sills Family Foundation
Tikkun Olam Foundation

PROVIDER \$5,000 TO \$9,999

Leslie Allen
Anonymous
Deirdre Burns and William Hoynes
Constance Curran
Titia Hulst and Paul Francis
The Hyde and Watson Foundation
Suzanne Kessler
Karen and Bruce Sabath
Charles Scatamacchia

SUPPORTER \$1,000 TO \$4,999

Margaret and David Ables
Shami Arslanian and Steve Weisbart
Sheryl Baker
Martha and John Ball Polstein
Hillary Bliss
Ellen and Richard Chassin
Allison Chernow
Vanessa and Tyson Daugherty
Sharon DeLevie and Steven Haber
Tanya Diaz-Goldsmith
Alisa and Dan Doctoroff
Blake Eger
Maria and Kenneth Fields
The First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn
Rhoda and Brian Fischer
Nicole Giroux and Michael Reeber
Jamie and Jim Hasl
Thomas Hoffman
Beth Holly
Howard Gilman Foundation
Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison
Janet Inskeep-Benton
The Lanegate Foundation
Liza Karsten
Katie Kitchen and Paul Kovach
Kunhardt Films
Michael Gregory Kwedar
Shaylyn Lawrence and Brian Leonard
Rhonda Markman
John Martin
Izzy McClean
Fulvia and Robert McCrie
Robin Melén
Deborah Mullin
E. Annette Nash Govan
Lida Orzeck
Simon Perutz
Marguerite and Reid Pitts
Yvonne Pollack
Sharon Quayle and W. Roger Buck
Heidi and Richard Rieger
Robert and Mercedes Eichholz Foundation
Karen Free Royce

Tammy and Dietmar Serbee
Mikki Shaw
Karin Young Shiel
Christopher Spiegelman
Ildiko Sragli and Barry Appelman
Donna Stein
Leslie Sternlieb
Anne Sweazey
Nancy Head Thode
Nichole and Josh Thorsvik
Elisabeth and Peter Wells

FRIEND \$500 TO \$999

Judy Aydelott
Matt Bockelman
Norma Buchman
Lauren Casper
Laura Chamberlain
Katharine Chapman
Gabe Cruz
Aisha and John Dennis
Paula Darrow
Jeffrey Deskovic
Helen Dillon
Loren Eiferman and Joe Berlinger
Joshua Elkin
Jennifer Eskin
Jason Flom
Suzanne and John Gallagher
Brent Glass
Christine Govan
Ann Gregg
Patricia and Robert Ivry
Alexis Johnson
Joan Kessler and Vincent Kruskal
Cynthia Krupat
Jackie and George Kunhardt
Charissa Lawrence
Elsa Limbach
Sean Lyons
Rajwant Mangat
Linda and Fred Mangelsdorf
Julio Medina
Celeste Merzon-Theis
Linda Meyers
Felise Milan

Dorothy Muller
Steve Navedo
Emily Anne Nixon
Sasha Olney
Daniel Perlman
Purchase College Foundation
Sheila and Ru Rauch
Martha and Fred Reimer
Joanna Riesman
Nancy Rosanoff
Debbie Rovner
St. Matthew's Church
Nancy Sall
Frances Schneider
Keiko and William Spade
Nancy and Robert Steed
Meg Sussman
Jim Van Alen
Mark Vogt
Nancy and Jonathan Warner
Keve Wilson
Amy Wilson Flannery

SUSTAINING

Making a monthly gift provides a steady stream of support for our work. These are the donors who have chosen to give every month.

Karin Almquist
Jack Cino
Jane Dixon
Lorena Liñero Lopez
Jennifer McHugh
Jennifer Ringstad and Paul Meissner
Karen Murphy
Mauricio Rivera
Jay and Georgia Roelof
Gina Shea
Gary Sloan
Brian Steele
Luzimary Veitel
David Zuluaga Martinez
Andrea and Winthrop Wetherbee

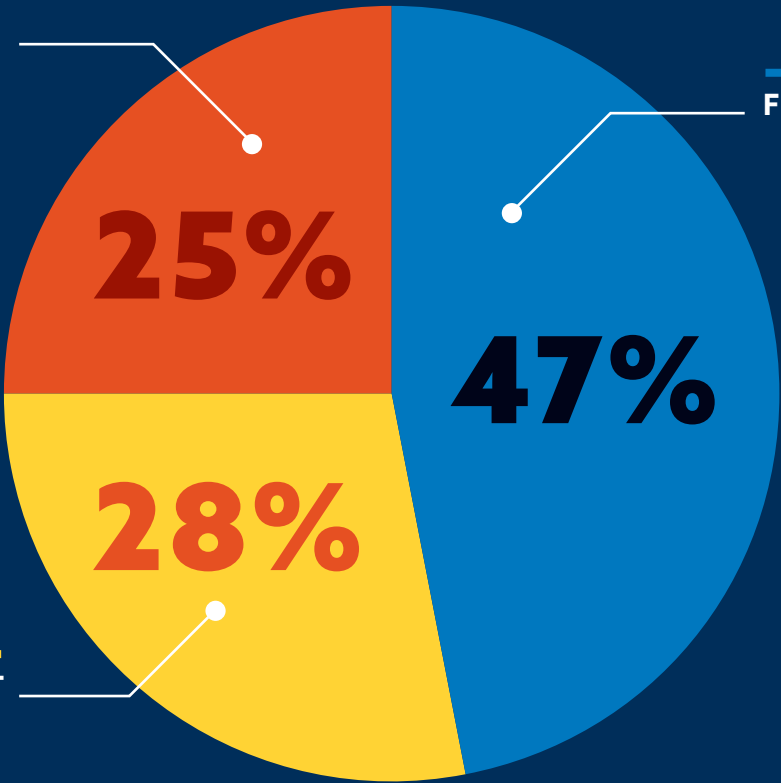
Please contact us if there are omissions or corrections.



RTA participants displaying their completed collaborative knitted blanket during the knitting workshop at Taconic Correctional Facility.

MAJOR FUNDING SOURCES

INDIVIDUALS



FOUNDATIONS

GOVERNMENT

PCI/RTA FINANCIALS

Selected Statement of Financial Position
Full Financial Statements are available upon request

Accrual Basis 12/31/2022

Assets (Current Assets)	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$187,890
Short-term investments	\$1,234,920
Receivables and Prepaid Expenses	\$184,747
Total Current Assets	\$1,607,557
Net Fixed Assets	\$4,089
Total Net Assets	\$1,611,646
Liabilities	
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$8,665
Deferred restricted grant revenue	\$2,380
Total Liabilities	\$11,045
Net Assets	
Without Donor Restrictions	\$1,592,608
With Donor Restrictions	\$7,993
Total Net Assets	\$1,600,601
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$1,611,646
Revenue and Other Support	
Donations	\$1,177,833
Grants	\$325,300
Interest & Other Income:	\$43,657
Total Revenue	\$1,546,790
Expenses	\$1,089,460
Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$457,330
Net Assets	
Beginning of Year	\$1,143,271
End of year	\$1,600,601



RTA[®]
REHABILITATION
THROUGH THE ARTS

735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase NY 10577
914-251-7540 | info@rta-arts.org

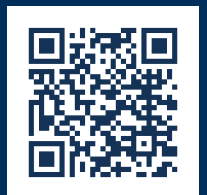
rta-arts.org

 [@RTAARTS](https://www.facebook.com/RTAARTS)

 [@RTA_ARTS](https://twitter.com/RTA_ARTS)

 [rta_arts](https://www.instagram.com/rta_arts)

 [YouTube @RTA_ARTS](https://www.youtube.com/RTA_ARTS)



Support RTA