



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Arts Summer Camp in New Brunswick draws to a close Friday, August 10th

New Brunswick, NJ – This coming Friday, August 10th, fifty New Brunswick youth will be showcasing their artistic work as part of the concluding gala of the **2007 Artists Mentoring Against Racism, Drugs and Violence (AMARD&V): Healing through the Arts Summer Camp**. The program, which presents the work accomplished by participants of the five- week camp, will take place at Mason Gross Galleries, located at 33 Livingston Avenue in New Brunswick, from 6:30 to 9:00 PM. The event is free and open to the public.

The *AMARD&V Healing Through the Arts Program* began in 1996 as a community effort to reduce gang recruitment among New Brunswick youth ages 10 through 16. Several community organizations are involved in the camp's organization, including the Rutgers Center for Latino Arts and Culture, the RWJ University Hospital Community Health Promotions Program, the Suydam Street Reformed Church, the Puerto Rican Action Board, and the New Jersey Institute for Arts and Humanities Education. Funding for the program has been generously provided by Johnson & Johnson, Merck & Co. and other funders.

Now on its eleventh year, the camp opens a much needed creative space where New Brunswick youth can explore personal and community challenges through careful reflection and artistic production. The Summer Camp involves a wide range of integrated learning activities, including arts workshops, presentations on health and safety, career panels, as well as excursions to museums and outdoor sports activities. Partnering organizations provide in-kind staff and/or services support, while Rutgers students participate in the camp as youth counselors through funding from the Federal Work Study program.

This year, and thanks to the generous support from our sponsors, the Summer Camp has been able to hire ten artists to instruct youth in a number of areas, including theater, music, photography, and visual arts. Claudio Mir continues to serve as our Artistic Director (as well as our theater and mask-making instructor). Other senior artists include Zack Green (visual arts), Jorge Barrueto (visual arts), Kwado Abrah (photography), and Meghan Trelease (dance). This year, the program also hired Amy Ortiz and Daniel Figueredo as assisting teaching artists.

As a special program, the program was also able to hire musician Nelson Baez to provide workshops on Puerto Rican *bomba*. Participants in the program have been learning to play *bomba* drums as well as to dance and sing traditional *bomba* songs, which are performed in a call and response fashion. In order to model *bomba* to the participants in the Camp, the program also engaged Juan Cartagena and members of the group Segunda Quimbamba of Jersey City, NJ. The group visited the Summer Camp on July 23 and 25 and demonstrated the choreographic steps and characteristic "dueling" that are performed between *bomba* dancers and the drum player.