

## Post-Event Press Release

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## Prebys Foundation Celebrates Successful Launch of Healing Through the Arts and Nature Initiative

San Diego, CA – January 15, 2025 – The Prebys Foundation is proud to announce the launch of its Healing Through the Arts and Nature initiative, which awarded \$5.2 Million to 59 nonprofits across San Diego. These grant awards will support programs serving youth, veterans, justice-impacted individuals, and historically underserved communities, offering proactive ways to enhance quality of life in a post-pandemic world.

This effort is rooted in growing [evidence](#) that non-clinical approaches, such as spending time in nature and engaging with the arts, can reduce social isolation, improve mental health, and foster a stronger sense of community. The nonprofits receiving recognition and grants engage in activities including playwrighting, horse therapy, hiking, farming, dancing, painting, surfing and more.

The event, held on January 15, 2025, featured transformative experiences at three locations across San Diego. Attendees had the opportunity to engage with interactive art exhibits, nature walks, community discussions, live performances, and nature-inspired activities. The event highlighted the innovative work of the grantees and the positive impact of the initiative on community well-being.

“Modern research is validating ancient wisdom that engaging with nature or creativity can be a major source of healing and connection for us as human beings,” said Grant Oliphant, Prebys Foundation CEO. “By investing in this initiative, we are working with an exceptional array of organizations to harness San Diego’s unique natural and artistic resources on behalf of resilience and well-being. At a time when our society faces unprecedented mental health challenges and the apparent inability to keep pace with them, we believe that building a community of practice here rooted in new applications of this ancient wisdom will not only strengthen the lives and wellness of San Diegans but also inform a vital national conversation about the importance of reconnecting with each other and with our essential humanness.”

### Grantee Highlights

There are a diverse set of grantees providing spaces and practices to reconnect with our inner voice and needs. Examples include:

- **S&S Friendly Ranch** a 10-acre Black-owned and -operated neighborhood ranch in the Tijuana River Valley. Workshops and experiences include cooking with food from the farm, land stewardship, civic engagement and cultural relevancy in nature
- **ArtReach** ignites youth creativity through visual arts expression and community connection. In collaboration with the International Rescue Committee San Diego, this program will address the

mental health impact of social isolation in refugee populations, 40+ women and their children will participate in 10 hands-on, social-emotional wellness art workshops at IRC's Women's Resilience Center. Participants and ArtReach will end the program by designing and painting a large-scale community mural at the Center.

- **Via International's Somos La Voz (SLV)** provides culturally responsive art and cultural heritage programming led by teaching artists with lived experience to Chicano and Mexican youth in San Diego, culminating in three live pop-up events/performances. SLV improves youth mental health by helping youth access their voice and leadership potential, bridging generational divides, offering a safe space to explore self-expression and creativity, and fostering pride and ownership in youth cultural roots/identity.
- **Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation** Since 1988, the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation has worked to preserve, protect, and improve Mission Trails, one of the largest urban parks in the United States. Among its current initiatives is land acquisition to continue to grow the park, a multi-year brush and invasive plant removal program for fire resiliency, and an expansion of its youth education programs to cultivate the next generation of environmental stewards.

On the day of the announcement, grantees shared their work and tours of their spaces. [Links to photo, b-roll, and quotes from grantees are available here.](#)

### Full List of Grantees

A full list of grantees, project descriptions, and amount awarded is as follows:

Healing through Arts Initiative		
	Organization Name	Funded
1	A Step Beyond	\$100,000
2	African American Writers & Artists Inc	\$40,000
3	Art Of Elan	\$66,000
4	ArtReach	\$36,000
5	Arts Education Connection San Diego	\$55,100
6	CCAIE Theatricals	\$150,000
7	Dreams + Ducats	\$50,000
8	Fern Street Community Arts Inc	\$125,000
9	Hill Street Country Club	\$50,000
10	Ilan-Lael Foundation	\$60,000
11	Imagine	\$148,800
12	Malashock Dance	\$65,000
13	Playwrights Project	\$45,300
14	Project PAINT: The Prison Arts Initiative	\$58,000
15	Resounding Joy Inc	\$148,500
16	Rosin Box Project Inc.	\$35,000
17	San Diego African American Museum of Fine Art	\$100,000

18	San Diego Craft Collective	\$29,000
19	San Diego Dance Theater	\$38,500
20	Synergy Arts Foundation	\$31,000
21	San Diego Urban Warriors	\$100,000
22	Space 4 Art	\$138,000
23	The Aja Project	\$125,000
24	The Veterans Art Project	\$100,000
25	Timken Museum of Art	\$60,000
26	Via International Inc.	\$110,000
27	Viet Voices	\$126,000
28	Villa Musica	\$72,200

**Total**

**\$2,262,400**

### Healing through Nature Initiative

	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Funded</b>
1	Agua Hedionda Lagoon Foundation	\$50,000
2	Botanical Community Development Initiatives	\$150,000
3	City Heights Community Development Corporation	\$149,300
4	Coastal Roots Farm	\$100,000
5	Depositing Empowerment Through Outreach and Urban Redevelopment (DETOUR)	\$100,000
6	Emilio Nares Foundation	\$127,100
7	Hearts and Hooves Therapy	\$10,000
8	Kumeyaay Community College	\$150,000
9	Lakesides River Park Conservancy	\$50,000
10	Mid-City Community Advocacy Network	\$142,000
11	MiraCosta College	\$116,500
12	Misson Trails Regional Park Foundation	\$50,000
13	Outdoor Outreach	\$150,000
14	Paddle for Peace	\$75,000
15	Pala Band of Mission Indians-Learning Center	\$100,000
16	Project New Village	\$150,000
17	Resource Conservation Foundation of Greater San Diego	\$50,000
18	San Diego Canyonlands	\$50,000
19	San Diego Children's Discovery Museum	\$85,500
20	San Diego City College Foundation	\$90,100
21	San Diego Second Chance Program	\$100,000
22	San Diego Natural History Museum	\$150,000
23	Serving Every Soul via S&S Ranch	\$149,500
24	Slavic Refugee and Immigrant Services Organization	\$100,000
25	STAR/PAL	\$45,000

26	Surprise Farm Retreat Center	\$75,000
27	The Escondido Creek Conservancy	\$50,000
28	The Queer Sol Collective, Inc	\$50,000
29	UCSD Department of Urban Studies and Planning - Black Like Water	\$150,000
30	Un Mar De Colores	\$100,000
31	San Diego Armed Services YMCA	\$50,000
	Total	\$2,965,000

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### **About Prebys Foundation**

Prebys Foundation is the largest independent private foundation in San Diego County, a unique tri-national area encompassing communities from San Diego, Tijuana, and the Kumeyaay Nation. The foundation works to create an inclusive, equitable, and dynamic future for all San Diegans. Prebys advances excellence and shared opportunity through investments in groundbreaking institutions, ideas, and people to ensure more people in the region are financially secure, healthy, empowered, and connected.