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Superior Arts Institute Partners with Rutgers New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center launch a new research project dedicated to understanding the impacts of gun violence

CAMDEN – Superior Arts Institute is proud to partner with The New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center of Rutgers University to launch a new research project dedicated to understanding the impacts of gun violence in the City of Camden.

Superior Arts Institute recognizes the power of art in raising awareness, promoting self expression, healing the community, and generating change in our society. Over the years, our organization has developed an Advocacy Through Art model to tackle difficult issues like reproductive rights, police brutality, and environmental racism. This new partnership with the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center will expand our Advocacy Through Art model to include gun violence, a social justice issue that has plagued our community for far too long. *In 2021, gun deaths reached their highest level in at least 40 years, with 48,830 deaths that year alone.* Nearly every American will know at least one victim of gun violence in their lifetime.

As part of the project, the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center, in partnership with Superior Arts Institute, will hold a series of community focus groups. Superior Arts Institute, being a community organization, will help recruit residents to participate in the project. Residents who have been impacted by gun violence in any way are encouraged to participate. Please visit superiorartsinstitute.org to take the screening survey and see if you're eligible. Stipends of \$50.00 are available to residents chosen for the focus groups. The focus groups are expected to take place in the winter 2023 and spring of 2024.

In order for the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center to better understand gun violence in Camden and to ensure that the center is funding community engaged research, it is important to hear from local community members who have been impacted by gun violence. When the research is complete, Superior Arts intends to continue our partnership with the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center by developing performance art and other original artistic content that disseminates the results of this project to the community and general public at large. **"Through art we have been able to share many different stories and promote societal change in ways that move our audiences to action, spark difficult conversations, and promote self-healing. I am honored that this project will do just that"** said Nichols.

Artists with a passion for generating social change are encouraged to reach out to Superior Arts Institute to explore ways to get involved.

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About Superior Arts Institute

Superior Arts Institute's mission is to provide Camden City with an artistic venue for Camden residents to embark upon a compelling experience through Dance, Acting, and Production Management. The organization, in partnership with schools and community organizations, was designed for Camden residents to explore all areas of performing arts. Since inception, Superior Arts has created an Arts Sanctuary for artistic expression in Parkside, partnered with district and renaissance schools to provide arts-based programming to over 300 students since 2015, and implemented an Advocacy through Arts campaigns funded by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. More information about Superior Arts current and past projects please visit superiorartsinstitute.org

About Rutgers New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center

Rutgers New Jersey's Gun Violence Research Center (GVRC), is among the first state funded research centers in the United States that conducts interdisciplinary research on the causes, consequences, and solutions to gun-related violence, while respecting the rights of legal, safe gun ownership, and use. The GVRC works in collaboration with and is supported by the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE). More information about Superior Arts current and past projects please visit gunviolenceresearchcenter.rutgers.edu

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