

# New Roots

Artist: Olivia Losee-Unger / ORLUarts

2024

2175 Lincoln Ave, San Jose, CA 95125 / Council District 6

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Willow Glen Community Center is a welcoming, positive place providing a wide variety of quality services and programs for people of all ages and abilities aimed at building community through fun. They offer a number of programs and events such as, but not limited to; San José Recreation Preschool, leisure, health and wellness classes, youth summer camps, and R.O.C.K Afterschool Program. In addition, they offer a weekday lunch program and classes for older adults over the age of 60 and those who are disabled. The center also host a number of special events throughout the year such as Neighbor Nights, and cultural and holiday celebrations.

Artists considered for this project are in the Public Art Program's Mural Artists Roster which features Bay Area artists. The Public Art Program released a Request For Qualifications (RFQ) on September 19, 2022 on Café, the online platform that is widely used for artist calls, and staff actively promoted and recruited Bay Area artists. From this roster artist Olivia Losee-Unger was selected for the Willow Glen Community Center commission by the Public Art Program.



Olivia Losee-Unger's mural *New Roots* transforms an underused area at Willow Glen Community Center into a vibrant and welcoming gathering spot. The design features an older and younger hand in the color of a California poppy, against a tapestry of native morning glory blossoms. The younger hand holds a newly opened bloom, while the older hand offers a mature flower, creating a dialogue about the cultivation of intergenerational connections. The intertwining movement symbolizes the transmission of stories, knowledge, and cultural histories. The overall design is inspired by input by community members, and Willow Glen Community Center's dedication to fostering a supportive environment. The mural reinforces the center as a hub for connection, support, and shared growth.

## **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Olivia Losee-Unger, also known as ORLUarts, is a Bay Area muralist specializing in murals that celebrate community, honor the environment, and inspire happiness. She earned her BFA from the University of Pennsylvania, and also earned a Certificate in Painting from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Recent mural commissions include *Superbloom*, in partnership with Southgate and Recreation and Park District, Sacramento, CA; *Art of Learning* at Forest Hill Elementary, San Jose, CA; *Ledyard Alley Sunshine*, SF Parks and Recreation.

More information on the artist can be found at <https://www.orluarts.com>.

## **ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM**

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape. Through active community engagement, public art strives to reflect the City's diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City's Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1984 municipal ordinance that provides public art through funding from City capital improvement projects and eligible private development.

For further information and photos, please contact the San José Public Art Program.



Office of Cultural Affairs **Public Art Program**

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