

# The MAC Goes Mobile With ArtReach Programing

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STAUNTON - In the 5th year of operation, the Macoupin Art Collective staff has found an unusual solution to reach kids and adults who are not able to get transportation to the MAC studio.

Director Brandace Cloud envisioned a mobile art studio as a means to take art opportunities to students in surrounding areas. Then a substantial anonymous donation was offered to make this dream a reality.

With the mission of “art to all,” the ArtReach Program will travel to 91 small communities within a 40-mile radius of Staunton. The MAC will work with local parks, libraries, retirement communities, village halls, and community centers to arrange visits beginning in early 2022. The Art bus will offer free art instruction to the public of all ages. In the future, The MAC hopes to generate revenue for charitable operations through private event rentals such as birthday parties, family events, retirement parties, baby showers, and much more.

In August of 2021, the organization made the initial investment on a happy 15 passenger minibus to turn into a studio on wheels. The Macoupin Art Collective worked with Midwest Bus Sales to find the perfect vehicle. Local woodworker Micah Wall will be undertaking the task of retrofitting the interior. His work will include removing the interior seats and replacing them with rolling shelves and storage for all of the equipment and materials- including tabletop pottery wheels, glass grinders, and soldering irons, clay, paint, brushes, and much more. Joe Gugger of Edwardsville has provided partial support for a fused glass kiln to expand class offerings even further. Steve Hanson of Viking Electrical Services out of Edwardsville will be engineering all of the electrical needs demanded of the bus.

In addition to the anonymous donation, funding from The Walmart Community Grant Team at Facility #334 in Carlinville, IL, and Bayer Rural Fund Community Arts Program through the St. Louis Arts and Education Council have been received to support this ArtReach Program. Several grants are still pending and The MAC looks forward to sharing more funding announcements in the future.

An important aspect of the ArtReach Program is community empowerment. The MAC will call on students to advocate for the art that they would like to see in their hometowns. To learn more or get involved please visit [macart.org/bus](https://macart.org/bus).