Working with New Communities Best Practices
Delaware Teaching Artist Training

Julie's group:
- There may be mistakes but you can learn from them
- How can the partnership be sustainable? How can you build something with a partner that you can keep coming back to year after year
- Sometimes partners have limited resources is a thing - want to partner there but it can also drain you as an artist. Be sure to refill yourself
- Problems are often related to hiccup in communication
- How can we all sit at the same table?
- Be flexible, but understand you can't please everyone
- Find the person who knows the community, scope that out ahead of time
- Join the class (in this case remote) on a day when not teaching, observe what they are doing in the chat room. Be a "fly on the wall" first, then come in knowing how they were participating and working best, etc.
- Used to try to please everyone, but that can spread yourself too thin. How can you do one curriculum, and adjust slightly for each group?
- Find out what their funding needs are, so you can tailor to the needs of the funding. Collaborate with them to do what they need to do

Clark's group:
- Take groups by surprise in planning meeting, introducing them to the art form by getting them on their feet, create buy-in from the jump
- Bring younger people into senior environments to model and inspire the seniors to engage and create
- Get to know the higher ups but also the direct partner position - teacher, etc - who's already on board with the arts programming
- There are barriers due to the administrative requirements to getting programming up and running, bringing in participants, etc
- Teaching partners are really important to help you get the lay of the land, what approaches/ideas are effective
- Programs tend to follow teachers that are interested, so it's important to get other direct partner positions interested, and to build connections with administration - find them and bring them into where the art-making is happening to observe, assess and engage

Daniela's group:
- Make sure to listen to your students and prospective students. Ask them why they're in class and what they're looking to get out of it. What are their needs? What are their goals? You can use that feedback to tailor your class moving forward
- Gain interest and sign up by performing first
- Oftentimes when people see others doing it, they believe they can do it too
- Demo classes are a good way to kick off a program prior to the first class
- Highlight public performances that may have been featured in the newspaper or other news outlet
- Use humor to help break the ice and create a safe space for participants, by creating a safe space participants can feel more free to create art
- Knock on doors! Introduce yourself to new community centers, libraries etc. - use your expertise and artistic skills to build relationships - these relationships can help to open doors
- Allow the organization you're working with to make introductions

Jade's group:
- Volunteer at the facility prior to entering the new community
- Establish relationships with people who work and go there
- Establish trust with potential participants - tell them there is no right or wrong, simply have a fun time creating
- Establish trust with the organization (at different levels). Have a plan (or pitch) ready and present it. Tell them exactly how you want to engage your participants
- See the facility. Have a checklist of what you may need
- Be respectful and friendly to all staff at all levels of the organization
- Observe the culture of the facility by spending time in the neighborhood - walk outside the facility
- Very often these are close communities, speak to someone there (or you know there) to get more background information about the community
- Use LinkedIn to connect with people who work there if we don't have any connections

Annie's group:
- Using extra time to introduce yourself to the community
- Be flexible and say yes to new ways of working
- Research the community and the kind of programming they are doing currently
- Don't go in telling them what they need. Find out from them what they need - ask questions!
- Invite folks to community meetings to come in and share their point of view on what they want from a program.

- Within programming, build in time to find out from participants how they want the class to go or what they are interested in learning. What interests the learners?
- Connect to students interests, prior knowledge, and build agency
- Being clear about what you need in terms of space with your partner, but then be flexible and adaptive to their potential limitations with space or storage
- Be adaptive - use simpler art making tools and supplies if they can't afford to purchase them and make the class more accessible to all people
- Know what your basic needs are to run a class, and then build up from there in collaboration with your partner