

From: [Mayor David N. Cicilline](#)
To: jhawkins@mypasa.org;
CC:
Subject: City News: Who Knew Summer Learning in Providence Could Be So Much Fun!
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Attachments:



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City of Providence
Office of Mayor David N. Cicilline
25 Dorrance Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 421-2489
www.providenceri.com
citynews@providenceri.com

THIS WEEK IN THE CITY

ART CULTURE

+ TOURISM [\[more\]](#)

GALLERY AT CITY HALL [\[more\]](#)

PROVIDENCE PARKS [\[more\]](#)

AT ROGER WILLIAMS PARK

(To visit these sites, click on the line to the left of each attraction)

- Botanical Center
- Carousel Village
- Museum of Natural History and Planetarium
- Roger Williams Park Casino
- Roger Williams Park Zoo
- Todd Morsilli Clay Courts Tennis Center

BANK OF AMERICA CITY SKATING CENTER [\[more\]](#)

AT THE COLLEGES

(To visit these sites, click on the line to the left of each college)

- Brown University
- Community College of RI
- Johnson & Wales University
- Providence College
- Rhode Island College
- Rhode Island School of Design
- Roger Williams University (Providence Campus)
- University of Rhode Island (Providence Campus)

BUSINESS LINKS

(To visit these sites, click on the line to the left of each business name)

- Arts & Business Council of RI
- BuyProvidence
- Center for Women & Enterprise
- Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce
- Providence Business News
- Providence Economic Development Partnership
- Providence Neighborhood Markets
- Providence /Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau



Who Knew Summer Learning in Providence Could Be So Much Fun!

Mayor Cicilline kicks off PASA program that exposes youth to fun activities, bridges summer learning gap & meets Mayor's Operation Opportunity goal [\[...\]](#)

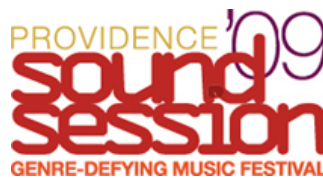
FEATURE



My City
All Aboard, Gallery Night! [\[...\]](#)

HEADLINES

Don't miss New England's premiere summer music festival!
3 more days of ...



Mayor Cicilline and John Hope Settlement House Announce \$3.3 Million in Tax Refunds To Providence Residents in 2009

Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign and Providence Volunteer Tax Assistance celebrate successes [\[...\]](#)

State Forums To Identify Concerns of People with Disabilities

In Providence, forum will be on July 27th at One Capitol Hill [\[...\]](#)



Vote for Providence! *Travel+Leisure's* America's Favorite City The Creative Capital made it to the top 30 American cities vying for top billing. Voting has begun!

To vote, go to: <http://www.travelandleisure.com/afc/2009/survey/>



Summer Programs at Greater Kennedy Plaza

Fun-filled activities include live music, a Farmers Market, free outdoor fitness classes and more [...]



Creative Capital Website Goes Live

New quarterly online magazine features neighborhood + entrepreneur profiles, news feeds, event calendar, + more [...]

Who Knew Summer Learning in Providence Could Be So Much Fun!

Mayor Cicilline kicks off PASA program that exposes youth to fun activities, bridges summer learning gap & meets Mayor's Operation Opportunity goal



Kids dressed in white Aikido robes practiced their moves while others engaged in gymnastics, cooking and performance art at the Providence Academy of International Studies (PAIS). It marked the first week of the Providence After School Alliance (PASA) summer program for middle school students, an initiative created by Mayor David N. Cicilline as part of Operation Opportunity.

"Keeping children engaged in stimulating, fun activities while brushing up on academics during the summer months is critical to our efforts to accelerate student achievement," said Mayor Cicilline.

"The healthy development of our kids translates into economic success for our entire community."

The newly established summer AfterZones combine academic support at Providence Schools with fun activities such as sailing, archery, tennis, hiking, culinary arts, theater, dancing and scavenger hunts at the Roger Williams Park Zoo. Children begin their day focused on academics and spend their afternoons engaged in activities that reinforce what they've learned in the classroom.

"Extended day and summer programming such as this model provided by PASA benefit our students in very real ways," said Superintendent Thomas M. Brady. "As research has shown, summer learning loss is a very real phenomenon, and impacts urban students especially. These programs give our students access and opportunity to master new academic, physical and creative skills, keeping their brains and bodies active, which is vital in stemming learning loss."

FEATURES ARCHIVES

Providence's Noah Andrade, 10, Strikes a Chord at Sound Session [\[more\]](#)

RPM Voices Belt Out a World Tune [\[more\]](#)

Summer Jobs Help Keep Providence Beautiful [\[more\]](#)

A League of Our Own [\[more\]](#)

CITY LINKS

OPERATION OPPORTUNITY [\[more\]](#)

PROVIDENCE SUNSHINE [\[more\]](#)

PUBLIC NOTICES [\[more\]](#)

CITIZEN OBSERVER [\[more\]](#)

GRAFFITI TASK FORCE [\[more\]](#)

SPRING STREET SWEEPING SCHEDULE [\[more\]](#)

CATCH THE MAYOR



The City

Topic: Knowledge Economy Jobs Alan Tear (Managing Director, BetaSpring) and Jack Templin (President, ThoughtCap)

Topic: Neighborhood Stabilization Carla DeStefano (Executive Director, SWAP) and Ken Schadegg (Housing Program Manager, Department of Planning & Development)

Showtimes

Channel 17
Providence/Kent County area
Monday 5:30 pm
Wednesdays 6:00 pm

Channel 15 – (Interconnect C)
Statewide
Monday 6:30 pm
Wednesdays 8:30 pm

Video Archives

PTU Responds to Mayor's Call for Shared Sacrifice [\[View here\]](#)

Mayor Joins Artists to Kick Off Summer Festivities in Providence [\[View here\]](#)

Press Conference Update on

Mayor Cicilline launched Operation Opportunity in February during his State of the City Address to create the climate for residents to access good jobs as Providence repositions itself for the 21-century economy. The economic action plan holds the City accountable for 30 measurable goals, including the establishment of a middle school summer program to continue the academic progress and experiential learning.



The summer AfterZones also provide jobs for 40 high school youth who have been hired as counselors through the Mayor's summer jobs initiative. The teens received extensive training in the principles of youth development and also receive career and college counseling. The program also places 10 high school students in apprenticeships focusing on arts-based programming.

The PASA summer initiative was created through the support of the Nellie Mae Educational Foundation, Rhode Island After School Plus Alliance, Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston, The MetLife Foundation, City of Providence, Providence Schools, Boys & Girls Clubs of Providence, John Hope Settlement House, Providence Housing Authority and the West End Community Center.

Mayor Cicilline spearheaded PASA shortly after taking office in 2003 to enrich the lives of the city's middle school-aged youth by providing a network of neighborhood-based, high quality programs after school at AfterZones throughout the city. Plans are currently underway to expand PASA to include high school students as well.

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Firefighters Local 799 Contract [\[View here\]](#)

Mayor Cicilline's Statement Re: U.S. Conference of Mayors and Leadership of Local 799 [\[View here\]](#)

Mayor Cicilline announces 800 summer jobs for city youth [\[View here\]](#)

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

Thursday, July 9

Jewelry District Neighborhood Clean-Up + Block Party
Clean up at 1pm; Party at 5pm
Corner of South + Hospital Streets
For more, contact Lois at 354-9710

Do you have a neighborhood or business association meeting coming up in the near future? [Email us](#) at Mayor Cicilline's Office of Neighborhood Services and get it posted on City News!

TO UNSUBSCRIBE

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Mayor Cicilline and John Hope Settlement House Announce \$3.3 Million in Tax Refunds To Providence Residents in 2009

Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign and Providence Volunteer Tax Assistance celebrate successes



Today, Mayor David N. Cicilline led a 10:00 am press conference at John Hope Settlement House in Providence to announce the results of the 8th Annual Providence Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign. This year's campaign helped to bring in \$3.3 million in refunds to Providence residents, an 18% increase in refunds claimed since last year. In 2009, more than 2,200 filers were served, the largest number to-date.

Also at the press conference were Peter Lee of John Hope Settlement House, Laurie White of the Greater

Providence Chamber of Commerce, Jodonna Powell, IRS SPEC Territory manager, and other local business and community leaders.

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is the nation's largest and most important anti-poverty program, offering an average of \$1,950 per year to each of 22 million low-income working families nation-wide. The maximum benefit for those who qualify is \$4,700, which for many families in Providence represents about one-fifth of their annual income.

At the Campaign kick-off press conference in January, Mayor Cicilline noted that "more than 21,000 Providence households took advantage of the EITC in 2007, receiving \$43.7 million for rent, mortgages, groceries, tuition, savings, and heating bills. Still, we estimate that there is \$10 million that Providence families are leaving unclaimed. This effort is about making sure they get what's rightfully theirs."

Responding to the results of this year's Providence EITC Campaign, the Mayor noted, "This program is an important component of the City's Pathways to Opportunity strategy, aimed at rebuilding the economic ladder for Providence's working families and strengthening the American Dream."

John Hope Settlement House is the lead agency for the Providence EITC Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Coalition, which:

- offers free, multi-lingual tax preparation services;
- seeks to boost the impact of these tax credits by raising the awareness of eligible families;

and

· encourages recipients to use their refunds for savings and building assets through ongoing financial education programs and referrals to other work supports.

VITA is an IRS program that provides oversight, training, software, technical assistance, and other support; all VITA tax preparers are certified by the IRS. The Providence EITC VITA Coalition also provides financial education, promotes savings through access to free, no-minimum-balance savings accounts through the Washington Trust Company, and assists low-income families in connecting to job training and other important resources and public benefits.

The EITC Campaign is part of Making Connections Providence (MCP), a 10-year initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Campaign is an important part of MCP's "Family Economic Success" (FES) work, which supports workforce development and promotes financial literacy to help families increase their income and build economic self-sufficiency.

The United Way of Rhode Island (UWRI) is a valued partner in the EITC VITA program: UWRI provided major funding through its Community Impact Grants program, and helped raise public awareness of the EITC Campaign and VITA sites through the new "United Way 2-1-1" hotline. The Campaign also benefits from the continuing strong support and leadership of Mayor Cicilline. For more info on the EITC/VITA Campaign, contact Richard Keller at 421-6993 ext. 334.

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State Forums To Identify Concerns of People with Disabilities

In Providence, forum will be on July 27th at One Capitol Hill

On the week of the anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26th) the Governor's Commission on Disabilities and over 20 other state and non-profit agencies will conduct a week long series of public forums to hear the concerns of people with disabilities and their families.

The forums are open for anyone to come in and speak. Representatives of the sponsoring agencies will be present. The forums are offered so that state policy makers and planners can hear from people with disabilities and their families about their concerns about current services and take suggestions for improvement and expansion of opportunities.

In Providence, the RI Department of Health's Office of Special Healthcare Needs will host a forum on Monday, July 27th from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the RI Department of Administration's 2nd floor conference room A at 1 Capitol Hill.

For more information, contact the Governor's Commission on Disabilities at 462-0106.

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Feature: My City

All Aboard, Gallery Night!



The Creative Capital is home to a great number of public and private art galleries located in neighborhoods throughout the city. While other metropolitan areas have specifically designated gallery districts, Providence is unique in that neighbors and their guests can enjoy an abundance of artistic offerings within blocks from where they live. And on one very special night every month, gallery-goers can experience them all -- in a fun and educational bus ride equipped with a celebrity tour guide.

Gallery Night Providence, founded by a group of local gallery owners, has been around for more than a decade. What began as a tour around nine galleries in Providence has now expanded to a visit to over 20 participating venues, complete with a visitor's choice of the type of tour they want to take: the continuing loop or the celebrity version. The regulars now even join in on the gallery romp via their own via cars, on foot, or by bus. Best of all, Gallery Night is free! Anyone can come.

City News caught up with board co-chair Paula Martesian and coordinator Ida Schumolowitz at the Regency Plaza, where Gallery Nights kicks off.

Tell us how Gallery Night in Providence got its start.

Paula: About 13 years ago, as part of the Convergence Festival, some of the galleries were asked to do a coordinated opening for a sculpture conference that was coming to town. It

was a great success. There were tons of people who came out. People were buying artwork and the galleries stayed open at night.

Several of the participants in the group decided to come together to create an ongoing gallery night. The three founding members were the Bert Gallery, Gallery Flux, and the CenterCity Contemporary Arts. We started out with nine galleries 13 years ago and today we have 23 participating galleries.

When did the busses and trolleys become part of the tours?

Paula: About five years in to the program. We decided that since Providence galleries are so spread out in so many different neighborhoods, we would need transportation. As far as I know, we are the only gallery night in the country that provides transportation. But I think that most cities have gallery districts and we don't.

What should people expect to see when they go on a tour with you? What's a typical gallery night like?

Ida: People should arrive at the Regency Plaza where they will be directed into the foyer. We have an information table set up. We have brochures for most of the galleries explaining what's at each gallery for the night. We have people manning the information table to help out.

For a lot of people, it's their first time at Gallery Night and we ask them if there's anything in particular they want to see. Sometimes people want to see photographs. Sometimes they want to be in area where there is a concentrated section of galleries because they just want to walk around. A lot of times, if it's their first experience, people want to do the celebrity tours because they get to ride on the bus and get information from a local "celebrity" – typically a member of the local art community, an artist, a curator, or for example we had Curt Columbus from Trinity Rep last month lead a tour. This is a great way to get started for Gallery Night.



So do you tailor the tours based on what visitors want to see?

Ida: There are a few different things one can do. There are busses that make continuous loops to different areas. We also have special tours that may go from one area to another and that might last about an hour and a half. That's our celebrity tour.

Paula: Many galleries also do specific programming for Gallery Night. So you might wander in to a gallery and find a discussion or a lecture or a demonstration going on. Often times, if the artist featured in that gallery is living, he or she will be at the reception talking to people. The celebrity tours are a relatively recent addition to the program. As Ida said we bring people from different communities who love art or like to talk about art to give those tours. They come in and talk about their perspectives on art. This month, we've got Sarah Ganz Blythe (who is the Director of Education at the RISD Museum) and Mary Tinti (who is the Executive Director of Waterfire).

So there are so many different things one can do on gallery night. You can even go all by yourself. You can take your car and visit each gallery on gallery night. You can walk. You can take a bus. You can take a celebrity tour. Many people who are regular gallery-goers do end up going on their own but they're still a part of the whole experience of Gallery Night.

What are some common reactions that you hear from visitors when they go in and explore our city's galleries?

Ida: They love Gallery Night! It's so popular. I love working on Gallery Night because people just come back from the tours at the end of the night and they just thank us. It's a free evening and it's just wonderful and filled with art. It's very positive. People say comments like, 'Great! Wonderful! Educational! Inspiring!'



Paula: It's hard to find a negative comment. I think the most negative we've had is, 'Can you have more busses?' There's also music, food and refreshments at many of the galleries and so people come and just enjoy themselves. They're grateful. A lot of people really love art but don't have an entrance or a doorway into the art world. They hear about how wonderful Providence is for the arts and this is a really easy way to introduce oneself to that. That's what we intended and we're very happy that we've succeeded in that.

Fill in this phrase: Gallery Night is important to Providence because ...

Paula: Providence has a huge artistic population. It has a reputation as a cultural hub within much of New England. It has a history of the arts here and Gallery Night is the only

organization that connects many, if not all, of the galleries in the city and presents it to the public. It's important because the artist, the gallery, and the people need to be able to find each other. And you can't always find each other without a method or a way to do that. We do it in a fun, easy, and free manner. So there's no pressure on the visitors who come in here. You can bring your kids and your whole family. We've had people from all over the world – from Australia to Pakistan to Pawtucket. It's great.

Ida: People get intimidated or uneasy about walking into a gallery by themselves sometimes. Gallery Night makes it all accessible and people have a great time.

Paula: We're also in four, five different neighborhoods in the city. So Gallery Night also introduces visitors to the different neighborhoods in Providence, which is great.

What should people take away with them when they experience Gallery Night?

Ida: I want them to be able to take with them the idea that they CAN walk into a gallery. There are a lot of arts going on in Rhode Island. They can see art most anytime. People from galleries it's not intimidating thing for them. And I just want them to know that there's a wealth of art going on in the community.

Paula: Ida and I are both artists. In some ways, when you're an artist, you're very happy when you make a nice painting, or a good painting, or a great painting. But you often times fall short of the energy to show it or put it out there. When you do something like Gallery Night and see the growth of the gallery scene that we've seen, you get a lot of hope that there are places out there to put that painting out that you just made that's so great and so wonderful and share it with people. That is part of being an artist, too, and often times it's an overlooked piece of being an artist. I can't tell you how many paintings are in my cellar! And they're good paintings but they need to be out in the world and Gallery Night provides that to the artist population here. We hope that in the end, that exposure actually turns into a sale for the artist and that the artist population that lives here can survive financially, creatively, and seizes this culture of galleries that we're trying to create and nurture. That's the bigger goal.

Providence is a great city that has aspirations to be a mini New York. It's multicultural. It has a ton of different cultural offerings but we really don't the audience that we need yet in Gallery Night but places like Trinity Rep, AS220, and Black Rep (Sound Session), they're trying to create that en masse. That's our goal too is to draw a large audience to see what we see everyday in our galleries.



How do guests sign up to take the tour?

Ida: Just show up! But we do have a new tour, the Accessible Tour, which is accessible to people in wheelchairs. You do need to make reservations for that tour by calling us. Those tours take place in the summer months.

What's in store for the future of Gallery Night?

Paula: We want to increase our audience to people outside of Rhode Island so we started to advertise on WGBH. We've also inaugurated our facebook account this year! We've put a ton of money into our website. We're actually researching an app for Gallery Night – so we're trying to embrace the electronic and technological future and we're trying to increase our audiences outside of the state. There's a ton of people who live around here who love Providence and love the arts and when you combine that with the architecture and the restaurants that our city has, it's a no-brainer. This city is a wonderful place.

Ida: Also more galleries bring a larger audience.



Paula: We'd like to see the city support 40 galleries financially – not as in writing out a check to those galleries – but in people buying artwork from those galleries. Certainly not all galleries intend to sell the work (like the university galleries, for example) but there are a lot of commercial galleries that do want to sell their art. Even if someone doesn't necessarily buy a piece on Gallery Night, they often come back.

The next Gallery Night will take place next Thursday, July 16th. For more information, visit www.gallerynight.info or call 490-2042.

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