

**PRESS CONTACT:**

Cari Feiler Bender, Relief Communications, LLC
610-416-1216 or cari@reliefcomm.com

MURAL ARTS PHILADELPHIA CREATES ARTISTIC “SPACE PADS” *Combines Public Health Messaging with Beautiful Public Art*

PHILADELPHIA – May 4, 2020 – Mural Arts Philadelphia, the public art organization that creates social change through art, jumped into action at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis. The **Mural Arts Philadelphia Space Pad Project** launched on Friday, April 3, created by Mural Arts staff and artists, and continues to grow throughout the city. Mural Arts began by supplying grocery stores throughout Philadelphia with vinyl Space Pads for use encouraging proper spacing for customers who are waiting in check-out lines – six feet apart per Centers for Disease Control recommendations. Each Space Pad was designed by a Mural Arts artist and combines beautifully-designed imagery or text with helpful public health facts related to COVID-19 or a message of hope.



Through the end of April, **Mural Arts has provided 1,672 Space Pads** for grocery stores, pharmacies, small markets, mini marts, small independent grocers, food distribution sites, food pantries, emergency meal service sites, and City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health sites.

Jane Golden, Executive Director of Mural Arts Philadelphia, said, “When one of our project managers, Kate Jacobi, suggested the idea, we knew that Mural Arts should jump at the chance to be involved. We know that art can help magnify public health messaging, in addition to beautifying unusual places when we need it most.”

Thirty artists were paid to create 48 sets of Space Pad designs. The initial artists were **Adam Crawford, Dora Cuenca, Felix St. Fort, and Shira Walinsky**. Since then, a wide variety of artists contributed to the project including Maria Beddia, Larisa Danowitz, Andréa Grasso,

Eurhi Jones, Lisa Kelley, Nathaniel Lee, Daniel Lipschutz, Nilé Livingston, David McShane, Kathryn Pannecker, Calo Rosa, Mat Tomezsko, and Lauren Cat West.

The Space Pads were provided at no cost to the initial round of grocery stores, markets, and pharmacies. The first store to install them was the ShopRite of Whitman Plaza at 330 West Oregon Avenue in South Philadelphia, which is owned by the Colligas family, longtime supporters of Mural Arts Philadelphia.

Shortly thereafter, the program expanded to small markets, pharmacies, and other small businesses around the city. Mural Arts provided Space Pads for the Step Up to the Plate initiative, a collaborative effort of Broad Street Ministry, Project HOME, and Prevention Point Philadelphia, along with the City of Philadelphia, to bring together a team of caterers, non-profits serving vulnerable populations, and funders on a massive initiative to create temporary food service sites in Philadelphia serving meals to individuals experiencing homelessness.

Nearly 700 14" x 14" outdoor vinyl decals were installed for just the Center City site, while another 140 were installed at the Kensington location.



In addition, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health has provided funding to bring the Space Pads to meal distribution sites at six Philadelphia Housing Authority sites that are serving as feeding sites, along with posters and other materials as part of a campaign to bring beauty and public health messaging together. Dozens more will be placed in the weeks coming, with the project scaling up with support from the Partnership for Healthy Cities.

The Pads are 14" x 14" in size. The vinyl Pads are being fabricated by Sign & Design in Holland, Pennsylvania. If grocery stores or small markets wish to receive the Space Pads, they can reach out to Mural Arts Philadelphia at info@muralarts.org.



Mural Arts Philadelphia is the nation's largest public art program, dedicated to the belief that art ignites change. For more than 35 years,

Mural Arts has united artists and communities through a collaborative and equitable process, creating nearly 4,000 artworks that have transformed public spaces and individual lives. Mural Arts aims to empower people, stimulate dialogue, and build bridges to understanding with projects that attract artists from Philadelphia and around the world, and programs that focus on youth education, restorative justice, mental health and wellness, and public art and its preservation. Popular mural tours offer a firsthand glimpse into the inspiring stories behind Mural Arts' iconic and unparalleled collection, which has earned Philadelphia worldwide recognition as the "City of Murals." For more information, call 215-685-0750 or visit muralarts.org. Follow along on social media: @muralarts on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and [@MuralArtsPhiladelphia](#) on Facebook, and [phillymuralarts](#) on YouTube.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: high-resolution images are available in the Mural Arts Philadelphia press room at <http://bit.ly/MuralArtsPressKit>.

Photos by Michael Reali for Mural Arts Philadelphia.