

3.25.26

MACC Staff Report – [Website](#) - [Facebook](#) - [Instagram](#)

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## Caminos Teen Leadership Program

### Upcoming:

#### 2026 8<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL BREAKING BARRIERS YOUTH MENTAL WELLNESS DAY

March 28, 10 AM – 3 PM

Millenium Youth Entertainment Complex

[Link to RSVP on Eventbrite](#)

Save the date, March 28, for this year's Breaking Barriers event designed, planned, and coordinated for teens-by-teens. This event It is a safe space to "break barriers" in mental health stigmas for teens via connection through community conversations and creative artmaking. Activities include screen printing, live music, zine-making, and more.



**Note:** You can attend without an RSVP, but **RSVPs will be needed in order to secure your lunch!**

\*HS Volunteer Credit: All you'll need is your volunteer paperwork for staff to sign at the event, email Eufemia Rivera at [eufemia.rivera@austintexas.gov](mailto:eufemia.rivera@austintexas.gov) for more details.

Follow the program on Instagram [@atxcaminos](https://www.instagram.com/atxcaminos) to stay updated!

Breaking Barriers (Rompiendo Barreras) is an annual event advocating for mental health awareness created by teens, for teens! Join us for a powerful day to share thoughts, ideas, art, and music by teens, for teens! Breaking Barriers is an annual event led by the teens in the [ESB-MACC's Caminos Teen Leadership Program](#). It is a safe space to "break barriers" in mental health stigmas for teens and find connection with one another!

Breaking Barriers is a space for **conversation, connection, and creation**—We want to empower each other to break barriers, talk about our experiences (or not), and heal through creating, and building community with other teens (Ages 13-18).

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

Screen printing (totebags, caps, t-shirts, and more)

Lunch and Snacks provided (IF you RSVP\*)

Live Music and Community Conversations

Crafts like Jewelry Making, Air dry clay, etc

## **Collaborations**

### **Upcoming:**

**Art Alliance Austin Presents: The Big We**

**Friday, 3/27 12:00pm-8:00pm**

**Saturday, 3/28 9:00am-12:00pm**

**Asian American Resource Center**

[The Big We: A Creative Convening | AustinTexas.gov](#)

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**AB AND AUSTIN ARTS LEADERS PRESENT:**

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# THE BIG WE

## A CREATIVE CONVENING

**FRIDAY, MARCH 27  
12-8 PM**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 28  
9 AM-12 PM**

For Austin's artists,  
musicians, performers,  
and creative workers.  
To connect, problem-  
solve, and imagine what  
comes next -  
**BETTER TOGETHER.**

This event is free and open to the public; pre-registration required.  
Lunch, dinner, and light refreshments provided.

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**Asian American Resource Center | 8401 Cameron Rd. Austin, 78754**

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Made possible by:



Collaborators:

The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. For assistance, please contact (512) 974-3917 or Relay Texas 7-1-1. For more information or to request interpretation services, please call Austin 3-1-1 or 512-974-2000.

## WHAT IS THIS EVENT?!

Austin's creative community has experienced a perfect storm of reductions or delays in Federal, State, and City funding; a lack of performance, rehearsal, and studio space; and little civic infrastructure to provide a safety net for artists, performers, and arts organizations when hard times fall. More than a few arts spaces and institutions have closed, some as old as 35 years, while arts organizations "hunker down" into silos, to keep producing their work on less while protecting what little they have.

After years of increasingly hard times, a group of ten Austin arts leaders from all genres began gathering informally to discuss how to manifest a more cohesive community among creatives.

They asked, “How can we work together on a purpose greater than our differences?” “How can we create a meeting space that is expansive enough to encompass divergent opinions but focus on solutions that we create for ourselves?” The Creative Congress was born.

With the facilitation and sponsorship of A3 Art Alliance Austin, (a newly formed Local Arts Agency) they developed a plan to host a city-wide convening of artists, musicians, performers and others in the creative community to develop a more cohesive artistic community for the purposes of networking resources, opportunities, spaces and expertise; for creating solutions to our creative community’s issues through collaboration; and to gather plans, collaborative groups and leaders to create a self-defining Community Arts Plan.

## **GOAL**

Fostering collaboration between different sectors of Austin’s creative community, the convening will emphasize the importance of purposeful cross-pollination across art forms, networks, and cultural arts organizations to chart a self-defined course for our creative community.

### **Objectives include:**

- Celebrate the successes of our creative community and share information about the opportunities that were created by our peers.
- Inspire and empower a new group of leaders to develop plans to solve tangible problems in the creative community.
- Network community resources with those who have needs and develop an ongoing mechanism for continued information sharing.
- Create a sense of identity for our diverse creative community through relationship building
- Develop a written plan for the goals and objectives of our creative community through the feedback received at this convening.

The convening has been planned for creatives by creatives from every discipline who are passionate about finding connection for their people. All creatives will be invited to this gathering through our growing network, and the network is ever-expanding.

Utilizing Open Space Technology, a meeting style emphasizing democratic values and collaboration, the problem-solving break-out sessions will be decided at the March convening with the participation of those who attend. Up to 20 break-out sessions can be accommodated for community discussions. Learn more about Open Space Technology in [this video](#).

### **The Big We Schedule:**

#### **Friday, March 27**

12:00pm THE BIG WE Convening Box Luncheon featuring “flash” keynote speakers from the creative community, each of whom has done something extraordinary to change the status quo

1:15pm Training sessions with Shana Merlin on “Open Space Technology” and Karen LaShelle, Executive Director of Austin Together on “The Art of Collaboration”

3:00pm Open Space Technology: “Pitch Sessions”

3:30pm-4:30pm Community Discussions - Session I

4:30pm-5:30pm Wrap-up Session

6:00pm Networking Mixer with dinner, music, beverages

7:00pm The Big We video + 3 more “flash” keynote speakers. Asaf Ronen from Austin Creative Alliance facilitates and provides Day 2 outline

8:00pm Adjourn

### **Saturday, March 28**

9:00am Breakfast Gathering in the Ballroom with an Introduction to Open Space Technology with facilitator Shana Merlin

9:15am Open Space “Pitch Session #2”

10:15am-11:15am Community Discussion – Session 2

11:15pm-12:00pm Session 2 - Wrap-up discussions

12:00pm Adjourn