

## Art Force 5 summer residency in New York City continues

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Michael Perez, a member of Art Force 5, works on a mosaic tribute to American poet Joyce Kilmer.

Alfred University's Art Force 5 summer residency program in New York City continues into its final month with a number of activities aimed at encouraging youngsters to use art and creativity as a means to overcoming conflict.

The award-winning Art Force 5 program, which has received national recognition for their unique diversity training and their interactive community-based art, began a three-month residency in New York City in May. The program, which consists of student "superheroes" who oversee community-based art projects, has a proven record of engaging communities through creativity.

Upcoming events include a collaboration with the Women's Rights National Historical Park's [Convention Days](#) Friday and Saturday, July 20-21; and the creation of a [mosaic tribute to Joyce Kilmer](#) (born Alfred Joyce Kilmer in 1886) which will be unveiled during Poetry Weekend, July 28-29, on Governor's Island.

Art Force 5 will visit the Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, NY, where it will ask more than 200 people to each paint one ceramic tile. The tiles will form a mosaic of Lucretia Mott, noted abolitionist, reformer and women's rights advocate.

Kilmer was a noted American poet whose most famous work was the 1913 short poem *Trees*. He enlisted in the New York National Guard during World War I and was deployed to France with the 69th Infantry Regiment (the famous “Fighting 69th”) in 1917. A year later, at age 31, he was killed by sniper fire during the Second Battle of Marne. The tribute to Kilmer during Poetry Weekend will mark the 100th anniversary of his death.

Art Force 5 will also be engaged in [SUNY recruitment efforts](#) for high school students interested in creative studies, hosting receptions at SUNY Global (July 19) and Brooklyn&s Urban Glass (Aug. 1) and a movie night on Governor&s Island Aug. 10.

The summer residency in New York City marks the first time Art Force 5 has partnered with the State University of New York (SUNY) to put together a statewide team of heroes from SUNY institutions. The Art Force 5 summer program is supported by a grant from the SUNY Performance Improvement Fund, which encourages collaboration across the SUNY system.

The Art Force 5&s summer team is made up of five students from SUNY institutions: Imani Graves (New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University), Michael Perez (SUNY Morrisville), Alison Garcia (University at Buffalo), Zaire Anderson (SUNY Purchase) and Marvin Brown (Tompkins Cortland Community College). Four Alfred University students Kelsey Oliveira, Elvira Rodriguez, Katherine Paz and Noah Mitchell are providing behind-the-scenes leadership for the residency.

Dan Napolitano, assistant dean of the Alfred University School of Art and Design and program director for Art Force 5, will supervise the group, which will spend its days on Governor&s Island and be hosted evenings at Brooklyn College.

The residency in New York City began on May 17, providing free activities Thursday-Sunday each week through August 12. Their offerings include action-figure building, cape construction and an expansive comic book exhibit. It will also offer interactive history projects paying tribute to Harlem&s 15th Regiment and its contributions to World War I. On Memorial Day (May 28), Art Force 5 unveiled a mosaic in [tribute to Sgt. Henry Johnson](#), a National Guard infantryman from the 15th Regiment.

Special school and summer programs are welcome to reserve activity time by contacting [artforce5@alfred.edu](mailto:artforce5@alfred.edu). No appointments are needed for small groups, families, and individuals. The program is located at Governors Island&s Colonel Row Houses (405E) on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (10 a.m. to 8 p.m. after Memorial Day); Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Special holiday hours will be offered on Memorial Day and July 4. Governors Island is accessible by ferries from Manhattan seven days a week and from Brooklyn on weekends. Visit [www.artforce5.com](http://www.artforce5.com) for more information and updated offerings.

Founded in 2006 at Alfred University, the Art Force 5 has received national recognition for their unique diversity training and their interactive community-based art and has a proven record of engaging communities through creativity. In 2016, they were awarded the Unite Rochester Challenge grant and designed opportunities for the Rochester Police Department to make art alongside community members.

Throughout 2017, the team conducted a statewide tour building mosaics and raising awareness of 1917&s East St. Louis Riots through portraits of the leaders of the subsequent 1917 Silent Parade. The final works were exhibited at both the NAACP National Convention in Baltimore and at the State University of New York (SUNY) Central Administration in Albany, NY.

For more information on Art Force 5, visit the [artforce5.com](http://artforce5.com), or email Napolitano at [artforce5@alfred.edu](mailto:artforce5@alfred.edu).