



POMEGRANATE CENTER

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Study Highlights Effectiveness Of Pomegranate Center's Community Building Methodology

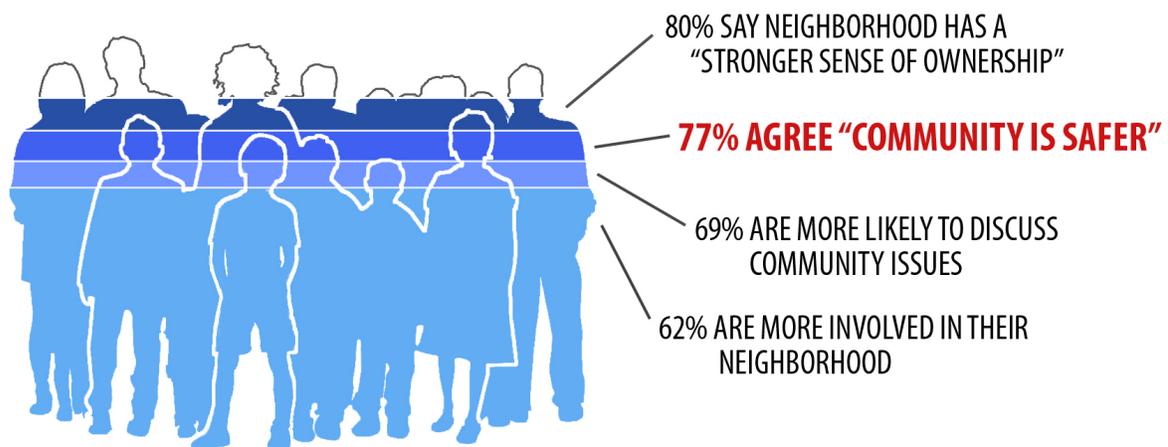
For twenty-seven years the Pomegranate Center has been making communities more **livable, sustainable, and socially engaged** through **training, designing, and building** alongside leaders and community members. The Pomegranate Center's work is based on the core values of strong communities of place, collective creativity, and multiple victories where the best ideas solve more than one problem at the same time. Pomegranate Center has always known this approach is effective in achieving multiple goals - now, empirical data proves this.

In 2012, Pomegranate Center partnered with ARTS (A Reason To Survive) and the San Diego Foundation to launch the **San Diego Gathering Place Initiative**. This multi-year project included a "Pomegranate Fellows" training to teach others the Pomegranate model, and the subsequent construction of two gathering places under Pomegranate's mentorship.

The Center for the Study of Art and Community conducted an **eleven month evaluative study** assessing the impact of the Initiative on participants, partnering organizations, and the community. This study confirmed both the effectiveness and the power of the Pomegranate Center's work and training. Here are the highlights, illustrating the multiple goals achieved.

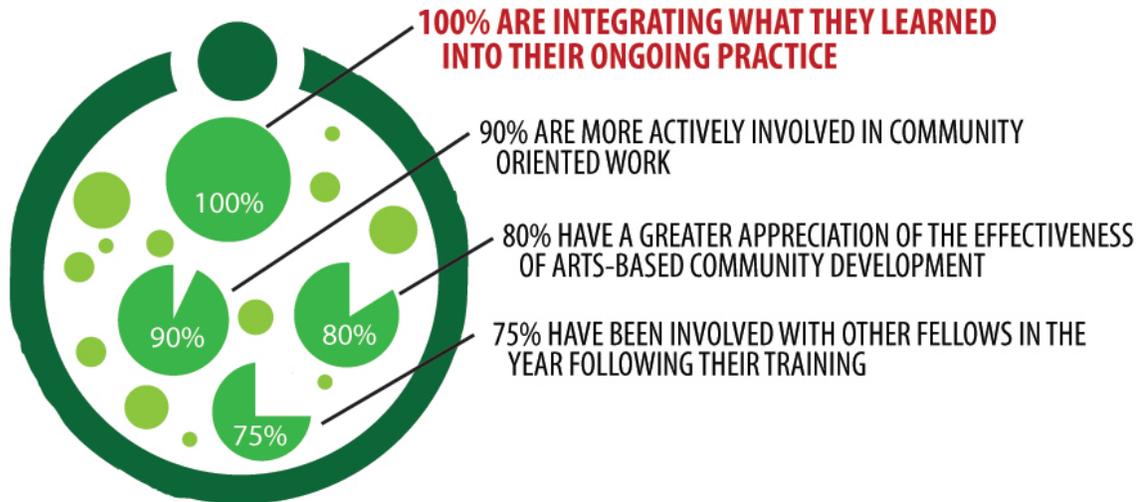
Impact on Communities and Participants

Community members describe multiple positive benefits from Pomegranate's work in their community. In particular, they noted a **strengthened sense of community identity** and a **renewed belief in their neighborhood's resourcefulness**. A significant majority said they communicate and collaborate more with their neighbors since the project's completion. There was also a marked sense of ownership over the project areas. More than three out of four participants agreeing that the community has "assumed full responsibility" for the gathering space. Community members also noted an increased feeling of security and safety.



Impact on Trainees

Participants in the Pomegranate Center's training program gave it very high marks, with an overall rating of 3.5 on a 4-point relevance scale. Nearly all participants report that they are integrating aspects of their training into their ongoing practice. Three out of four say that they have a greater appreciation of the effectiveness of an arts-based approaches to community development.



Impact on Partners and Networks

The partnering organizations that participated in the San Diego Initiative expressed positive outcomes similar to the community participants. Organizations came away with **networks and strategies** useful for their own work, including strategies for community engagement, civic discourse, volunteer coordination and education. The report determined that the **Pomegranate Center model can be successfully learned and applied by teams of local organizations and creative leaders.**

