

## NEIGHBORHOOD

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¡Aquí! staff

### Exposing Children to their Inner Geniuses

Children need positive outlets. One non-profit program, Artists Working on Education (AWE), provides a vital but often underestimated outlet — artistic expression — to thousands of low-income, inner-city youth. AWE seeks funding to pay professional artists to teach students to make art. Francisco Mora, a Mexico-born artist, is one of them.

Since September, he's worked at St. Rafael Catholic School on the south side teaching middle-school-aged students to make clay figurines that will be part of a permanent display at the school's library. "We all have artistic abilities," Mora says, "but we don't always use or recognize them." Exposing children to art is critical, he adds. "I've seen so many children who are a little opaque, who say, 'I can't do it,' but by the end of the program they really open up." If you are a bilingual artist, or if you are a teacher who wants to apply to have an artist at your school, call AWE at (414) 933-3877.

