

Broadmoor Arts and Wellness Center opens

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The Broadmoor Arts and Wellness Center occupies the second floor of the former St. Matthias School on General Taylor Street in New Orleans. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Housed on the second floor of the freshly renovated St. Matthias School building, the [Broadmoor](#) community has gained a place where residents of all ages can learn new methods of nurturing their health and fostering creativity. Open since June 1, the [Broadmoor Arts and Wellness Center](#) is a new cornerstone supporting an expanding education corridor in this resilient New Orleans neighborhood, which features Andrew H. Wilson Charter School, Rosa F. Keller Library & Community Center and South Broad Community Health.

Once considered Broadmoor's largest piece of blight, a \$2 million renovation transformed 11,500-square-feet of empty space into a facility capable of serving 350 community members daily.

The [Broadmoor Improvement Association](#) (BIA) partnered with Blessed Trinity Church and the Archdiocese of New Orleans to secure private, federal and state funding for the community center's construction.

"The grand opening will be Aug. 1, and we'll have a ribbon-cutting ceremony then," says Emily Wolff, BIA executive director.

"I'm thrilled to see all of it come together. This is a testament of perseverance. The building was sitting there for 10 years, but the community's vision drove this process forward."

The center offers office space for several nonprofits (including Young Audiences, Community Works, Center for Restorative Approaches and Thibodeaux School of Music and Early Learning Focus). It also provides affordable programming designed to encourage collaborative expression.

Dubbed "the movement room," a 780-square-foot space will host performances as well as free community dance and fitness classes, like Zumba and yoga sessions.

Practicing local artists will have workshop space. Visual arts programs, like sculpting classes and digital design workshops, will cultivate creativity, Wolff says.

In addition, "we're now seeing clients for counseling." Clients can seek these services comfortably in the building's two 130-square-foot counseling offices.

Future plans include a holistic wellness room outfitted for massage therapy and acupuncture.

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