

# AMD&ART

*CREATING COMMUNITY ASSETS*

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August 30, 2001

Mr. Michael Kane  
Executive Director  
The Community Foundation  
416 Franklin Street  
Suite 606, U.S. Bank Building  
Johnstown, PA 15901

Dear Mr. Kane,

Enclosed is a grant application from AMD&ART, Inc., for general support for the 2002 fiscal year. AMD&ART is entering an exciting phase in the history of this young nonprofit organization. It was just six years ago that T. Allan Comp and I founded AMD&ART. Three years later we received a substantial grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Sustainable Development Challenge Grant Program. This grant gave us the basic operating support that allowed us to pursue our goal of creating large-scale, artful public places that would directly address this region's greatest environmental problem, abandoned mine drainage (AMD).

Last summer, we broke ground on our pilot site in Vintondale, Cambria County, and this October we will be dedicating that site. Over the past year, formerly barren land has been remarkably transformed. AMD&ART constructed an AMD treatment system, recruited volunteers to plant over 900 trees and shrubs, and arranged for the removal of 49,000 tons of coal refuse from the site. This fall, we are building habitat-rich wetlands, recreational fields, walking trails, and informational signs. In addition, this summer we entirely rehabilitated the ground floor of the Hungarian Reformed Church in Vintondale, space that the congregation is leasing to AMD&ART for a dollar per year. This space is now the Blacklick Environmental Education Center, where a full-time AmeriCorps member will teach schoolchildren and community groups about coal mining, acid mine drainage, and AMD&ART's work with the community of Vintondale to transform abandoned mineland into a vibrant public place.

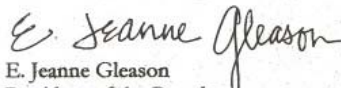
Our outreach efforts are now shifting to the Dark Shade Creek Watershed, in Somerset County, and beyond. In the Dark Shade Creek Watershed, we are making great progress on a watershed restoration and brownfields redevelopment plan, again with the help of a grant from the U.S. EPA. AMD&ART and the Dark Shade Brownfields Project have worked to develop local leadership capacity and build partnerships to encourage environmental remediation and economic development.

With one project near completion and a watershed restoration plan in the implementation stages, AMD&ART is beginning to redefine its organizational mission. We are well positioned to offer our services to other environmental organizations and watershed groups, with our experience in facilitating community participation and interdisciplinary collaboration. AMD&ART is equipped to help other groups build partnerships that will ensure the success of their own remediation and community revitalization efforts. In addition, we can offer assistance in developing educational

programs and curricula that will enhance understanding of the problem of AMD and potential solutions.

Just as we begin our work with other environmental and watershed groups in the Alleghenies, we are at the end of our three-year EPA Sustainable Development Challenge Grant. We are now in need of general operating support for the coming fiscal year. This will allow us to extend our reach and spread the models we have developed in Vintondale and in the Dark Shade Creek Watershed. We are requesting \$5000 from the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies to support our outreach efforts. We are grateful for the support that the Community Foundation has offered in the past, and we look forward to a continuing relationship. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the AMD&ART staff.

Sincerely,

  
E. Jeanne Gleason  
President of the Board

  
T. Allan Comp  
Director

COMMON GRANT APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Date of Application: August 30, 2001

Legal Name of Organization Applying: AMD&ART, Inc. (NP)  
(Should be the same as on IRS determination letter and as supplied on IRS Form 990)

Year Founded: 1995 Current Annual Operating Budget: \$ 65,000

Are you currently receiving United Way Program Funding? Identify programs and amount:  
- NA. - \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Executive Director: T Allan Comp, Ph.D.

Contact Person/Title (if different from Executive Director): \_\_\_\_\_

Address (principal/administrative office): 411 Third Avenue

Mailing Address, if different from above: same

City Johnstown State PA Zip 15906

Phone Number: 814.539.5357 Fax Number: 814.539.4345

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of Grant (one sentence): We are requesting operating funds for AMD&ART, an organization dedicated to AMD remediation and community revitalization.

Beginning and Ending Dates of the Project/Campaign: Fiscal year 2002

Amount Requested: \$ 5000 Total Project Cost: \$ NA

Geographic Area Served: Southwestern Pennsylvania

Signature; Board of Directors Chairperson: E. Jeanne Gleason Date: Aug. 30, 2001

Typed Name and Title: E. Jeanne Gleason, President, AMD&ART

Signature; Executive Director: T Allan Comp Date: 7-29-01

Typed Name and Title: T Allan Comp, Founder and Director, AMD&ART

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AMD&ART, a small nonprofit organization with a five-year track record of success, is artfully transforming environmental liabilities into community assets in the Coal Country of Western Pennsylvania. The AMD&ART process combines public art, environmental improvement, history, and a commitment to community engagement in treating abandoned mine drainage (AMD), Appalachia's biggest environmental problem. AMD is the devastating result of past, unregulated coal mining; it is an unstable, aqueous solution that gushes from abandoned mines, lining streams with orange sediment and killing aquatic life.

In a region where coal and culture are inseparable, AMD is not just an environmental problem; it is also a social and economic problem. The people of Appalachia are just beginning to come to terms with the devastating consequences of pre-regulatory coal mining. They are banding together in watershed and community groups, determined to restore their streams to health, bringing renewed commitment to environmental and civic activism. These groups face a number of obstacles, the foremost being a lack of public awareness of the problem of AMD. Most Coal Country residents take orange-coated streambeds for granted, and they do not realize what can be done to bring life back to their waterways, or even what some groups are already doing.

AMD&ART is bringing attention to the problem of AMD by designing and building artful, public places that incorporate passive AMD treatment systems, honor the history and contributions of coal towns, restore wildlife habitat, and provide opportunities for recreation and community gatherings. Ours is an unusual approach to environmental problems and an unprecedented approach to AMD treatment. Most passive treatment systems are fenced off or hidden behind the cover of trees. But we believe that by treating AMD in the public arena, we can create educational and civic opportunities, which in turn can help shape a more informed, involved public. At the same time, we are creating places that encourage visitors to reflect on the relationship between humans and the environment in the past and in the present; these are places that instill hope for a healthier environment and a better future, and we are working to bring this educational content to all of Coal Country.

AMD&ART is at the end of a three-year, \$250,000 Sustainable Development Challenge Grant from the U.S. EPA. This grant has helped support a staff consisting solely of AmeriCorps and VISTA volunteers, who have accomplished great things under the direction of Volunteer Director T. Allan Comp, Ph.D. In coming years we hope to disseminate information about the model we have created, while providing assistance to other groups. We are adept at facilitating participatory design and interdisciplinary collaboration, we are well positioned to help create partnerships for watershed groups throughout Western Pennsylvania and Appalachia, and we have the curricular needs of Coal Country clearly defined. We are in need of general support to fund our operating budget for the next several years, when AMD&ART will be bringing an interdisciplinary model of AMD remediation, and a commitment to civic engagement and education, to a larger and more geographically widespread audience.

## **NARRATIVE**

### **ORGANIZATION INFORMATION**

AMD&ART began as a demonstration project, seeking to create large-scale, artful public places that would directly address the problem of AMD. We selected a pilot site in Vintondale, Cambria County, and we are also working to address the problems of the Dark Shade Watershed in Somerset County. Under the auspices of the EPA Sustainable Development program, AMD&ART has used the development of AMD remediation sites to effectively link environmental education, protection, economic prosperity, and community well-being.

Passive treatment systems, designed using lessons from nature, are commonly used to remediate AMD. The typical passive treatment system consists of a series of settling ponds filled with native plants and limestone, where the pH of AMD is brought to a neutral, healthy level. As AMD flows through the ponds, metals drop out and the water is cleansed. Traditional passive treatment systems are often fenced off or surrounded by trees, hidden from the public. Few people even realize the AMD treatment systems exist. AMD&ART has taken an entirely different approach to AMD remediation sites. We have brought community participation and interdisciplinary collaboration to the design of treatment systems, transforming an environmental liability into a community asset, a public celebration of renewal.

In each of our projects, our goal is to bring a holistic approach to the design and construction of AMD treatment systems. We believe that wide public participation is key to bringing abandoned environments back to life, honoring the history of coal towns, and restoring coal-impacted watersheds. Our approach helps us build partnerships with groups that usually would not take an interest in AMD remediation, and it has drawn the attention of the media and of other watershed and environmental groups. Increasingly, AMD&ART is looked to as a model of inclusive, interdisciplinary environmental problem-solving.

AMD&ART is nearing completion of its pilot project in Vintondale, in Cambria County. Community members, along with a team of artists, an historian, a scientist, and a landscape designer, participated in the design of this AMD treatment system and community park. The Vintondale site is situated on thirty-five acres of reclaimed mine land, bordered by the Ghost Town Rail Trail, which is traveled by over 70,000 hikers and bicyclists each year. The AMD discharge at Vintondale is relatively small and manageable; a passive treatment system and wetlands will cleanse the polluted water.

But there is much more at Vintondale. Visitors will come to see an historically important coal mining site, to view birds and wildlife, to gain a better understanding of the science behind AMD and its treatment, and to learn how community-based initiatives can restore the environment to health. AMD&ART is working with the residents of Vintondale to interpret the natural and historical features of the site and to develop recreational amenities and a small community environmental education center. The Vintondale site, once the bustling center of work and life in this company town, then abandoned, will again be a vital part of community life. Through this pilot project, we have demonstrated that AMD treatment sites, creatively designed, have the potential to re-instill a sense of place and pride, allowing community members to forge new connections to the local environment and history.

In Somerset County, AMD&ART is working with a coalition of groups to address the devastating consequences of pre-regulatory coal mining and industrial abandonment of the Dark Shade Watershed. Dark Shade Creek is the most polluted tributary of the most polluted river in Western Pennsylvania, and the surrounding watershed is a blighted landscape pocked by hundreds of acres of abandoned industrial sites, former mine lands, boney piles, and twenty-one AMD discharges. Three of these discharges flow at a rate of more than a thousand gallons per minute.

Through the efforts of AMD&ART, the Borough of Central City, and the Office of Surface Mining Watershed Assistance Team, the Dark Shade Watershed was the first coal-impacted watershed recognized as a brownfield by the EPA. This indicates an understanding of coal mining as a vast, underground industrial activity that has left scars on our landscape, not unlike traditional brownfields. This pioneering grant from the EPA is funding a pilot project to inventory, assess, and plan the cleanup of abandoned minelands, industrial sites, and AMD discharges within the watershed. The Dark Shade Brownfields Project, supported only by AmeriCorps and VISTA workers, a part-time OSM Project Advisor and many volunteer professionals, is facilitating the collaboration of federal and state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private industry. Together, they are addressing the real and perceived contamination that hinders redevelopment within the Dark Shade Watershed.

The Dark Shade Brownfields Project is comprehensive in its approach to watershed restoration. Its programs include educational outreach to schools, a vision planning initiative sponsored by the USDA, and job training, offered jointly with the Carnegie-Mellon Brownfields Center, that gives watershed residents knowledge and skills in the environmental field. The Brownfields Project helped community members launch the Shade Creek Watershed Association, which has taken responsibility for monitoring the health of streams within the watershed.

The Brownfields Project has also spurred the creation of a community-driven watershed restoration and brownfields redevelopment plan. The goal of this plan is to stimulate economic development and to create opportunities for commercial businesses, recreational trails, and AMD treatment systems, some of which will be developed as "AMD&ART parks," creating interpretive opportunities. Through its work with the Brownfields Project, AMD&ART is a critical element in making "brownfields in the coalfields" a viable model for watershed assessment and revitalization.

#### **PURPOSE OF GRANT**

The coalfields of Pennsylvania seem a forgotten place, abandoned by industry and neglected by government, left with a legacy of environmental and human desolation. Economically, the region has never fully recovered from the mechanization and globalization of the coal industry. In the typical coal patch town of Vintondale, with a population of 528, 61.9% of families with children live in poverty, and only 7.7% of the borough's residents have a college degree. Despite these hardships, the people of Southwestern Pennsylvania are beginning to confront and overcome their environmental and economic past. Within the conflicted history and ravaged landscapes of this region are seeds of hope, change, sustainability, and even healing. This is a region that can be restored, watershed by watershed, to environmental and economic health.

There are good reasons to attack the problem of AMD at the watershed level. While the rest of the nation has experienced economic growth and prosperity, Coal Country has largely been left behind, and though outsiders often propose ways to fix what ails the region, top-down prescriptions often result in much talk and little action. Watershed groups have a proven track record of bringing *local* attention and energy to the problem of AMD. Working within their watersheds, communities can take action to improve their own backyards.

Citizen activists face numerous challenges in their work to restore their waterways. First, watershed groups must organize members of their community and collect comprehensive data on water quality, consistently and over many months. Watershed groups also need expertise in working with government agencies and in fundraising, and they require a technical understanding of AMD remediation. Despite these hurdles, Southwestern Pennsylvania's watershed groups are unwavering in their commitment to the environmental and social recovery of their homeland. They demonstrate that this region need not be written off, abandoned as we work to save more pristine environments.

There are lessons in AMD&ART's successes in Dark Shade and in Vintondale, at both the watershed level and the project level, which can be applied much more broadly. Most importantly, restoring streams contaminated by AMD requires more than a technical fix. A lasting antidote to the complex problems of coal country must be cultural *and* environmental. A scientific solution may clean the water, but a multidisciplinary solution has the power to both clean the water and heal surrounding communities. AMD&ART is demonstrating that there is great potential to reclaim and restore this part of Pennsylvania, to bring the region greater environmental sustainability and economic prosperity.

To heal our streams and our communities, we must engage the public in such a way that there will be widespread demand for environmental improvement and the better quality of life that a healthy place can provide. Only with such constituent advocacy can we restore all of Pennsylvania's waterways to health, rather than treating a select few discharges. AMD&ART has demonstrated that attention will come to the problem of AMD through broad public participation in the development and construction of treatment systems that are integrated into artful, educational, engaging public places. To re-conceptualize AMD treatment in this way is to create a paradigm shift; AMD treatment systems become a mark of public pride and civic engagement in these communities.

The challenge in Coal Country is to combine grassroots, watershed-level action with regional collaboration and support, to provide experienced leadership that can work at the grassroots while effectively engaging government and the private sector, to do what AMD&ART has done. Unfortunately, at present, watershed groups are no more than loosely affiliated with one another, still struggling for a regional voice and a sense of center. But, given the opportunity and support, AMD&ART can help link watershed groups committed to AMD remediation, help develop the leadership capacity of these groups, and give them new tools to accomplish their goals, and we can do so in a cost-effective manner. Bringing a track record of patient and successful development in brownfields, AMD remediation and community design to the table, AMD&ART can facilitate collaborative solutions, train AmeriCorps and VISTA volunteers in the skills

and strategies that watershed groups require, and help to identify and engage the broad array of partners and funders that is the hallmark of our process.

In the coming years, AMD&ART hopes to bring the models developed in Vintondale and the Dark Shade Watershed to other groups. At the same time, we hope to build relationships among watershed groups that will facilitate more coordinated advocacy for AMD remediation. We have shown that bringing new life to abandoned mine lands can and will contribute to an improved quality of life that will make neglected communities more attractive to businesses and new residents.

The AMD&ART model for AMD remediation and community engagement is truly interdisciplinary and collaborative, and it encourages full participation by communities and by a broad range of professionals and volunteers. We are creating new places that clean polluted water, but also help to revitalize communities. AMD&ART is proving we *can* bring about positive environmental and social change in the Coal Country of Pennsylvania.


#### EVALUATION

One way AMD&ART will measure progress and results is to track the number of partnerships we develop over the next several years and to assess how well we sustain those partnerships. Already, AMD&ART has proven effective in bringing together a diverse group of partners and has received the support of a number of federal, state, and local environmental agencies. These include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Office of Surface Mining, the U.S. Forest Service, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. AMD&ART also cooperates with non-governmental environmental groups, including the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Protection Program, the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project (SCRIP), the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy, the Kiski Basin Initiative, and the Wildlife Habitat Council.

Together with this array of environmental funders and partners, several arts and humanities groups support AMD&ART. Reaching out to such non-traditional sources of funding helps to relieve pressure on the usual sources of funding for AMD remediation projects. AMD&ART's funders include the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Vira I. Heinz Endowment, and the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. In addition, the Rockefeller Foundation committed \$140,000 to AMD&ART to develop a small community environmental education center and three interpretive works of art for the Vintondale site. In the Dark Shade Watershed, we are among an array of partners including coal companies, the local landfill, and the Shade Creek Watershed Association.

For AMD&ART, one of the most important measures of our success is the level of commitment demonstrated by local volunteers and watershed groups. In Vintondale, volunteers have built park benches, helped to renovate a future environmental education center, and planted over 1000 trees and shrubs, among other activities. In the Dark Shade Watershed, volunteers have monitored AMD discharges, helped clean trash out of local waterways, and planted flowers to beautify downtown Central City. AMD&ART documents these contributions of time and services through volunteer logs, photographs, and video footage. In Vintondale alone, volunteers' contributions of time and labor have a documented value of over \$150,000.





AMD&ART hopes to encourage civic involvement and generate enthusiasm for community improvement that goes beyond AMD remediation, and that continues long after AMD&ART's work is done. In Vintondale, AMD&ART helped residents start a Municipal Authority that will take responsibility for completing and maintaining the recreational components of the Vintondale site. In Dark Shade, we are working with the Shade Creek Watershed Association to build the capacity of local leaders. In addition, in both Vintondale and the Dark Shade Watershed, AMD&ART has conducted a number of vision planning workshops, in which residents articulated the problems and potential of their communities; they created project groups to address needs for streetscape improvements, adequate senior housing, community gathering places, and economic development.

AMD&ART is also gathering quantitative data on the effects of AMD remediation and participatory design on communities. Sue Thering, an Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin, is assessing the social and economic impact that AMD&ART has had on the communities we work in. Her doctoral thesis will provide an analysis of the results of our projects, and AMD&ART will use her research as the basis for continuing self-assessment.

We will continue in our effort to communicate our approach to a broader audience. AMD&ART's successes in Vintondale have drawn the attention of the media, from magazines including *Public Art Review*, *Landscape Journal*, *Orion Afield*, and *Now and Then*; newspapers including the *Nanty Glo Journal*, the *Johnstown Tribune-Democrat*, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, and the *New York Times*; and local and national television news stations, including CNN and WQED, the Pittsburgh PBS affiliate. AMD&ART maintains an extensive mailing list, sending an organizational newsletter to about 2300 recipients, including all residents of Vintondale and the Dark Shade Watershed. A web page, a ten-minute documentary video, and a traveling exhibit titled "From Rust to Renewal" are additional components of AMD&ART's communications efforts.

## 2002 operating budget

<b>EXPENSES</b>		
<b>Salaries/wages</b>	<b>\$20,000.00</b>	
AmeriCorps (two PMSC members and two VISTAs)	\$16,000.00	
Intern stipends	\$4,000.00	
<b>Payroll taxes</b>	-	
<b>Fringe benefits and related fees</b>	<b>\$1,500.00</b>	
Liability insurance - Board of Directors	\$1,500.00	
<b>Professional fees</b>	<b>\$12,000.00</b>	
Bookkeeping and audit	\$2,000.00	
Videotaping and documentary production for outreach	\$10,000.00	
<b>Travel</b>	<b>\$8,000.00</b>	
mileage	\$4,000.00	
conference travel and registration	\$4,000.00	
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>\$1,900.00</b>	
computers	\$1,500.00	
software	\$400.00	
<b>Supplies</b>	<b>\$5,000.00</b>	
exhibit materials, film, and processing	\$1,500.00	
office supplies	\$4,000.00	
<b>Printing and copying</b>	<b>\$3,500.00</b>	
press/informational folders	\$1,300.00	
brochure	\$700.00	
newsletters	\$1,200.00	
miscellaneous photocopies	\$300.00	
<b>Telephone, fax, and internet service</b>	<b>\$4,500.00</b>	
<b>Web/Internet</b>	<b>\$1,500.00</b>	
web hosting	\$500.00	
website design and maintenance	\$1,000.00	
<b>Postage and delivery</b>	<b>\$3,500.00</b>	
USPS & FedEx	\$2,500.00	
bulk mail - biannual newsletters	\$1,000.00	
<b>Rent</b>	<b>\$3,600.00</b>	
Office space - \$300/month	\$3,600.00	
<b>Utilities</b>	-	
<b>In-kind expenses</b>	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$65,000.00</b>	

2002 operating budget

<b>INCOME</b>		
<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Government grants and contracts</b>		
Pennsylvania Council on the Arts	\$4,500.00	confirmed
PA Humanities-and-the-Arts Initiative*	\$2,000.00	confirmed
<b>Foundations</b>		
Rockefeller Foundation*	\$1,500.00	confirmed
Community Foundation for the Alleghenies	\$5,000.00	anticipated
Canaan Valley Institute	\$3,000.00	anticipated
Additional Western PA Foundations (R.K. Mellon and others)	\$45,000.00	anticipated
<b>Corporations</b>		
GPU Foundation*	\$2,000.00	confirmed
<b>Earned income</b>		
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation*	\$2,000.00	confirmed
<b>Individual contributions</b>		
	-	
<b>In-kind support</b>		
	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$65,000.00</b>	

\* note: these and other funders have also provided project-specific support for AMD&ART's pilot project and educational center in Vintondale.