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## ***VYEF Partner Spotlight: Upcycle Parts Shop***

Upcycle Parts shop has been a mainstay in the St. Clair Superior neighborhood since 2014. Co-founded by Nicole McGee and Devon Fegen-Herdman, Upcycle Parts Shop is a 501c (3) social enterprise that is an art hub for the neighborhood while diverting supplies and materials from the landfill (49 tons to date, and growing!). An eclectic mix of nostalgic items and art supplies greet visitors who enter. On a given day you can find small vintage toys, an array of knitting needles in various sizes, and vintage jewelry to name a few. Along with art and crafting supplies, Upcycle Parts Shop also offers community art classes, some of which are free of charge to the community.



Upcycle Parts Shop Founder Nicole McGee  
*Photo credit: Cleveland State University*

The shop started as an upcycle initiative through the St. Clair Superior Community Development Corporation with a grant from ArtPlace America and has grown to be an anchor in the community. Nicole and her team were honored recently as recipients of the Dominion Energy Charity Foundation's Community Impact Award. This award is given to organizations that support economic and social revitalization in Ohio communities. Upcycle Parts Shop is receiving it specifically for their social enterprise programming that introduces high school students to social entrepreneurship through hands-on learning about Upcycle Parts Shop's social enterprise business model.

The Veale Foundation offers field trips to Upcycle Parts Shop for any high school in Northeast Ohio, free of charge. The 2-hour field trips focus on creativity, innovation and developing a quick design of a business model that has a social impact—from upcycled materials donated to the shop. For schools who are not able to schedule a field trip, Upcycle offers a virtual program called Upcycle:Enterprise for schools who are not able to travel to the shop. Students will be guided through a series of videos focusing on social enterprise, a prototype building activity, and a virtual tour of the shop.

About this program, McGee shares, "students are full of innovation, good perspective, and commitment to their communities. Our Upcycle social enterprise program connects business development concepts with social impact. It challenges students to conceptualize a way to put those together in a

creative, hands-on, right-now kind of way. It's fun and it's inspiring to hear what social problems they care about and their business ideas to create impact. And truthfully, watching students innovate with secondhand materials is energizing to our whole team, every single time."

*More information and registration for Upcycle Parts Shop field trips can be found on our website: <https://www.vealeentrepreneurs.org/upcycle-enterprise-23-24/>*

*The organization's retail shop is open to the public 5 days a week and more information is on their website: [upcyclepartsshop.org](http://upcyclepartsshop.org).*



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