



the arts empowerment project

2023

COMMUNITY
IMPACT
REPORT



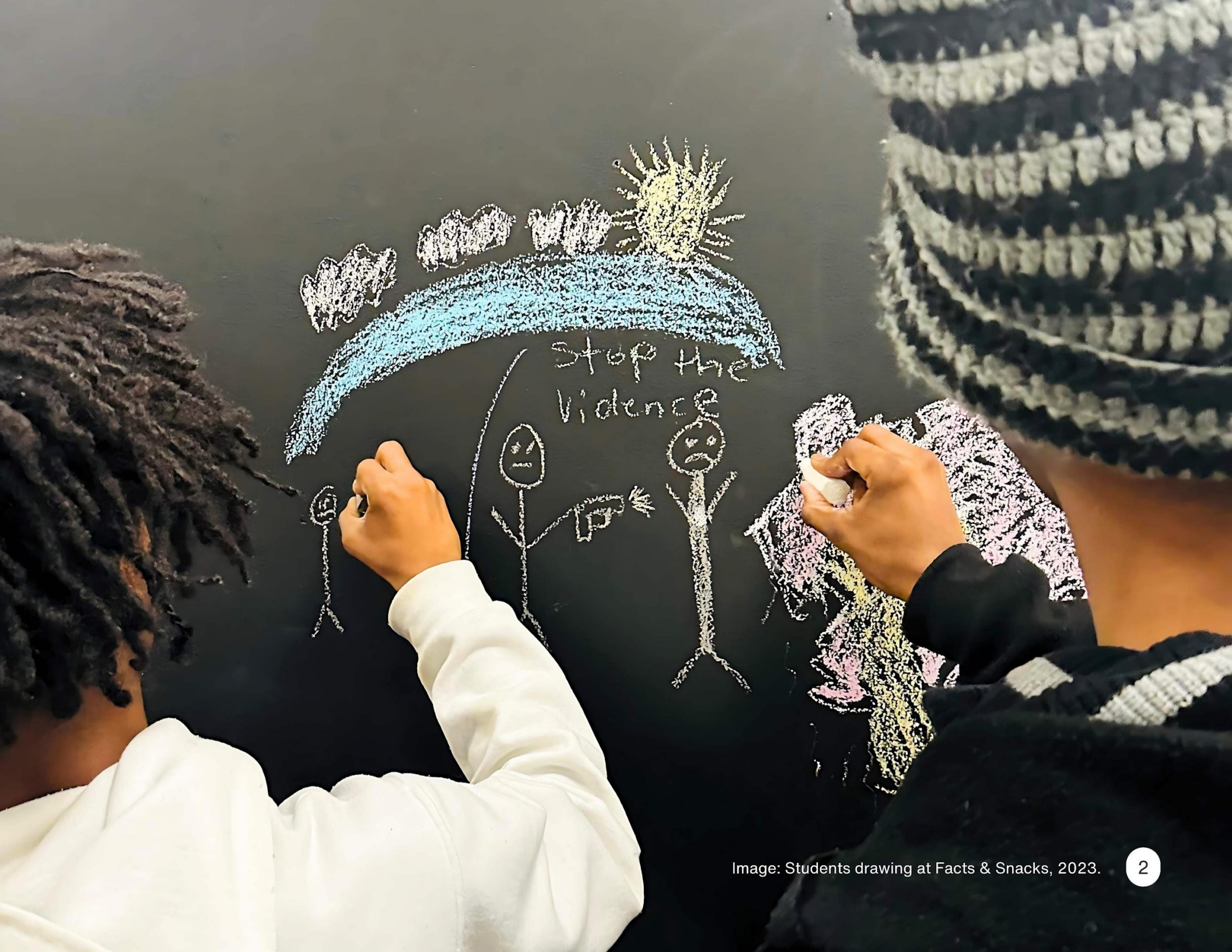


Image: Students drawing at Facts & Snacks, 2023.

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LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER



Natalie Frazier Allen, J.D.
Founder | CEO

Dear Friends and Supporters:

As we continue to build a strong organization, we understand now more than ever how much the youth we serve need to feel connected, hopeful, inspired, and secure. The programs, workshops, and outreach opportunities we are able to offer throughout the year reflect your investment and belief in our impact. Each inspired smile, impactful experience, and meaningful connection made is because of you.

I am proud to share that we are celebrating ten amazing years of serving youth in the Charlotte community. Since we launched our pilot program with 25 students in 2014, your investment in our organization has led to our ability to impact the lives of over 3,000 children and teens, providing them with the resources and experiences they need to remain engaged, hopeful, and resilient as they look to build a brighter tomorrow. Last year, over 797 individual students enjoyed over 2,379 hours of program classes, with over 300 students receiving outreach and engagement through our HeART Pack Program.

The philosophy that the arts are an essential tool to build life skills and bring resilience to our youth is and will continue to be the driving force behind The Arts Empowerment Project's core mission. With support from donors, volunteers, and friends like you, The Arts Empowerment Project will continue prioritizing the participation of our community's most vulnerable children in transformative arts experiences designed to heal, inspire, and provide positive self-expression, social-emotional learning and access to new opportunities.

After an outstanding year of providing transformative programming to at-risk youth, we remain grateful for your support. With a new year of programming on the horizon, we are proud yet humbled to share how together with you, our strategic partners, volunteers, and community supporters, we are growing in meaningful ways to meet the challenges ahead. As we continue our commitment to building a strong organization for the youth we serve, we wish to thank you for allowing us to help each child grow and thrive, one child at a time.

Gratefully yours,

Natalie Frazier Allen, J.D.
Founder | CEO

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

WHAT WE DO

The Arts Empowerment Project offers high-quality arts programming and social emotional development for at-risk children facing adversity. The programs integrate art instruction with life-skills development including communication, self-esteem, decision making, and more.

WHY IT MATTERS

Participation in arts and positive pro-social activities has been shown to contribute to academic achievement and to mitigate the effects of childhood trauma, as demonstrated by an independent study of TAEP's pilot program by the UNC-Charlotte School of Social Work.



Image: Photographer Alvin C. Jacobs, Jr. at Art Vocation, 2023.

3x

Students with access to the arts in high school are **THREE TIMES** more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than students without arts experience (17% vs. 5%)

4x

Students with weekly exposure to the arts are **FOUR TIMES** more likely to be recognized in school for academic achievement

5x

Students with little or no arts education are **FIVE TIMES** more likely to drop out of high school than students with high arts involvement

2023
IMPACT
BY THE
NUMBERS

797

STUDENTS
SERVED



2,379

Total Student
Contact Hours



1,370

Cumulative
Student Attendance



97

Total
Sessions



27

Program
Facilitators



15

Community
Partners



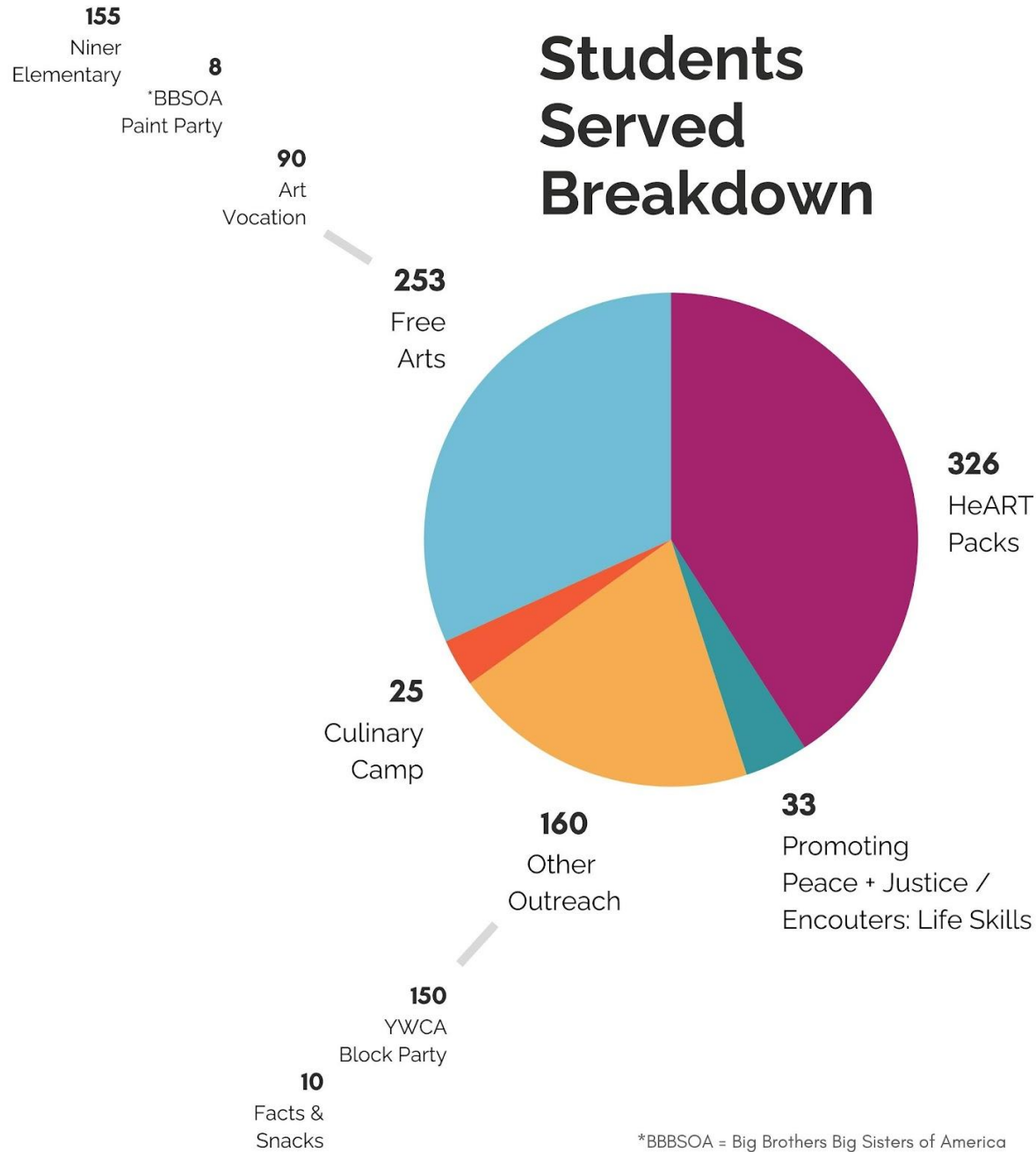
35

Program
Volunteers

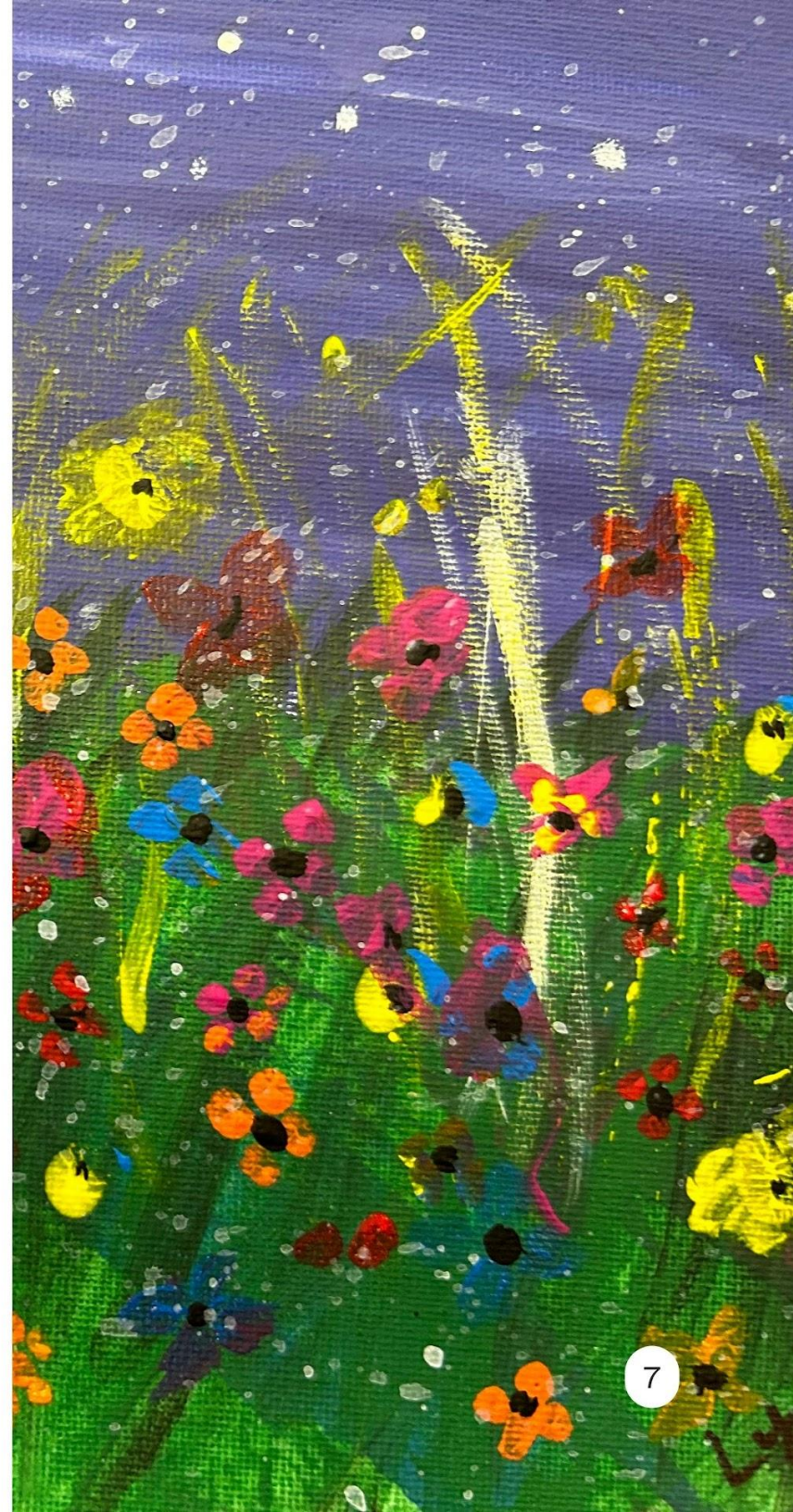


797

Students Served Breakdown



*BBBSOA = Big Brothers Big Sisters of America



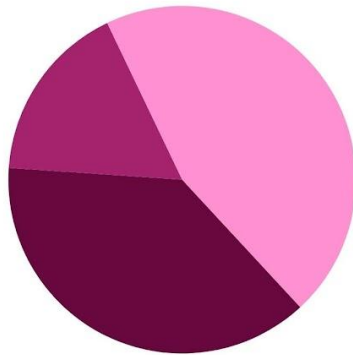
2023

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Total Expenses

\$249,804

\$41,994
Fundraising Expenses



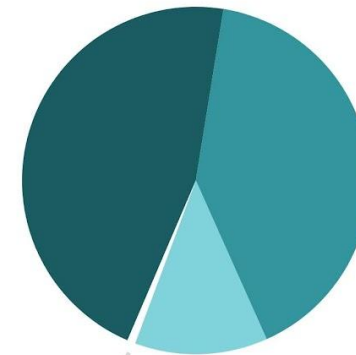
\$112,937
Program Expenses

\$94,871
General Expenses

Total Revenue

\$286,962

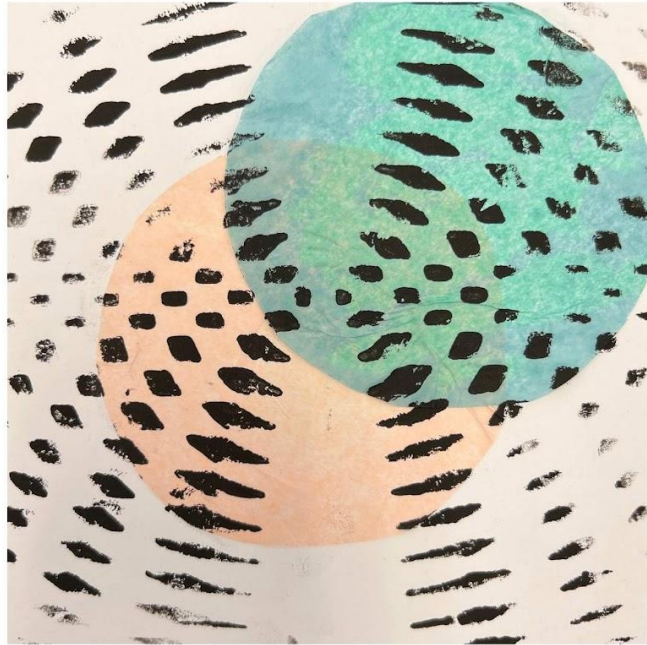
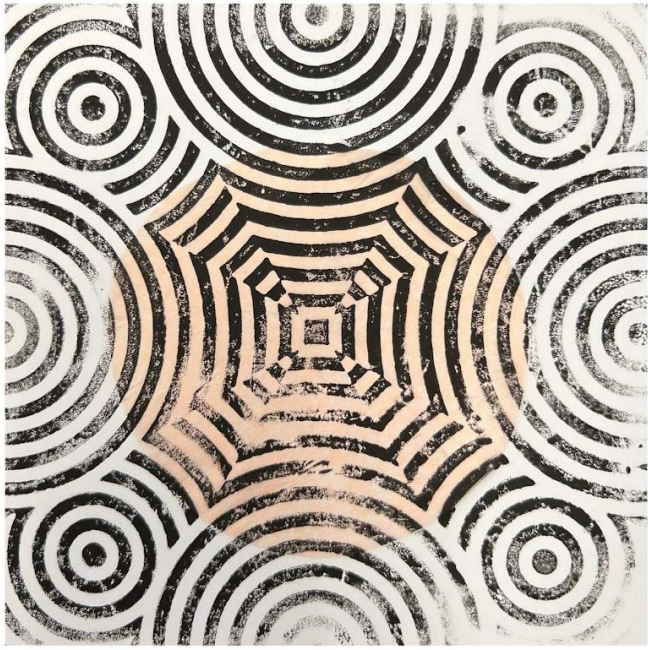
\$132,317
Fundraising



\$117,000
Grants

\$2,178
Other Revenue

\$35,466
Contributions



YWCA student artwork, stamp on decorative tissue paper.

OUR PROGRAMS

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

Culinary Camp

Encounters: Life Skills / Promoting Peace + Justice

Free Arts

HeART Packs

OTHER OUTREACH

Big Brothers Big Sisters Paint Party

Art Vocation

YWCA Block Party

Facts & Snacks





Culinary Camp

Our Culinary Camp teaches underserved youth basic cooking skills, healthy eating and shopping on a budget, etiquette, and life skills that will help them when they one day live on their own. During our Summer, Fall and Holidays sessions, 25 students in our Culinary Camp participated in sessions with professional chefs from Central Piedmont Community College. Participants explored their creativity, and pathways for higher learning, including opportunities in the culinary arts and culinary career tracks. The program culminated with a graduation ceremony where students invited guests to enjoy dinner.



3

Total Sessions



5

Program Facilitators



25

Students Served



42

Cumulative Student Attendance



181

Total Student Contact Hours



Encounters: Life Skills & Promoting Peace + Justice

Encounters: Life Skills Seminar is a collaborative program we offer to court-involved youth each year, which includes workshops with local artists, entrepreneurs, motivational speakers, and community members. Through art-making and facilitated discussion youth in grades 8-12 participate in activities which encourage positive choices and self-awareness while also promoting leadership and orientation to educational and career goals. In our Promoting Peace + Justice sessions of this program, teens who are at-risk and court-involved are brought together with members of local law enforcement to help breakdown stereotypes and explore implicit bias and social justice issues through collaborative art. Our team members, teaching artists, and guest speakers from a wide range of disciplines help provide a safe space for officers and teens to engage in honest discussions about community and racially motivated violence, social justice issues, and other challenging topics.



11

Total Sessions



4

Program Facilitators



33

Students Served



163

Cumulative Student Attendance



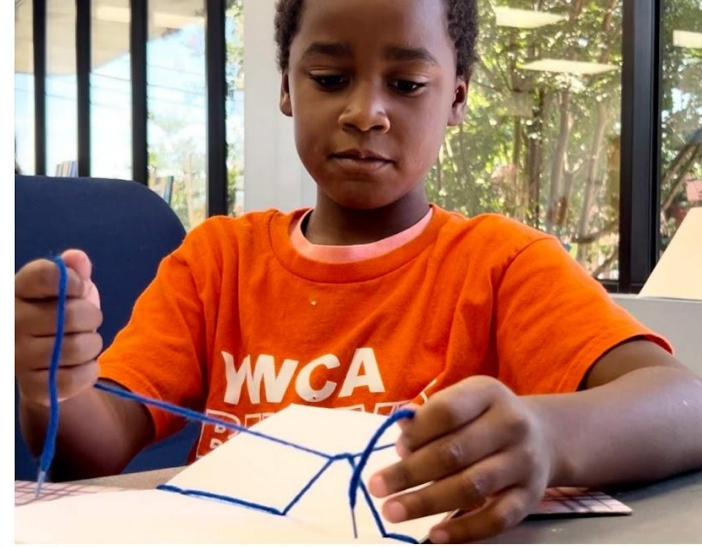
739

Total Student Contact Hours



739

Attending Law Enforcement



Free Arts

The Arts Empowerment Project's Free Arts program brings arts experiences to underserved youth enrolled at Niner University Elementary and the YWCA of the Central Carolinas. Throughout the year, students and their families also enjoy opportunities to attend local theatrical performances, and participate in cultural enrichment. This year, 6 TAEP art facilitators worked with 155 students and provided 513 hours of instruction, exploring character development, social and emotional learning, and literacy through the arts.



75
Total
Sessions



6
Program
Facilitators



155
Students
Served



724
Cumulative
Student
Attendance



513
Total
Student
Contact Hours



HeART Packs

Our HeART Packs outreach program provides art care packages to underserved youth. HeART Packs contain age-appropriate donations, including art supplies, educational games, comfort and creative age-appropriate toys, healthy snacks, gift cards, and messages of inspiration. HeART Packs provide the opportunity to explore creative outlets and positive self-expression, crucial to youth during the summer and holiday breaks. This year schools, businesses, individuals, and volunteers joined us to collect, assemble, and donated 326 HeART Packs, involving the broader community in TAEP's work.



2

Total Sessions



27

Program Volunteers



\$2,200

Total Value of Gift Cards Distributed



\$6,293

Total Value of HeART Packs Distributed



326

Total HeART Pack Distributions

OUTREACH

Big Brothers Big Sisters Of America Paint Party

Youth paired in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America organization brainstormed self-affirming words to decorate pots, flowers and plants, and discussed how plant care aligns with self-care. Staying in a positive environment and building healthy habits was a large component of learning life skills through our potted plant art. Participating youth and their mentors were able to take their own potted plant home!



1

Total
Sessions



2

Program
Facilitators



8

Students
Served



8

Cumulative
Student
Attendance



16

Total
Student
Contact Hours



OUTREACH

Art Vocation Artist Career Fair

Our inaugural event brought together students in grades K-12 from the local YWCA of the Carolinas for Art Vocation Day. They had the chance to learn from a diverse group of visual, performing, and musical artists about potential careers in the art industry. Through engaging activities, students delved into the realms of custom music creation, dance, and visual and digital arts. This event not only offered exposure and inspiration, but also incorporated social emotional learning aspects into the art-making process, creating a truly enjoyable and enriching learning experience for all involved!



3

Total
Sessions



12

Program
Facilitators



90

Students
Served



270

Cumulative
Student
Attendance



450

Total
Student
Contact Hours



OUTREACH

YWCA Block Party

The Arts Empowerment Project was proud to team up with Santae and Sanwone Benjamin (Twin Nation) at the Annual YWCA Block Party. This event was held at the brand new Stick Williams Field of Dreams off of Tuckaseege Road in Charlotte. We support the YWCA and the kids they serve come to many of our Arts Empowerment programs year-round. A great time was had by all at this fun-filled event!



1

Total Sessions



2

Program Facilitators



150

Students Served



150

Cumulative Student Attendance



450

Total Student Contact Hours



OUTREACH

Facts & Snacks

Our first annual "Facts and Snacks" event held at The VAPA Center in Uptown Charlotte was a resounding success, with an engaging information session focused on "Digesting Hard Conversations" in honor of National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The session featured insightful contributions from Angelica Foster, Mecklenburg County's Guardian ad Litem Program Supervisor, and performances by Santae and Sanwone Benjamin (Twin Nation) and Backspinz, making for an informative and entertaining afternoon. The event culminated with a meaningful activity as participants gathered to plant pinwheels in the garden.



1

Total Sessions



4

Program Facilitators



10

Students Served



13

Cumulative Student Attendance



30

Total Student Contact Hours



2023

SHINE FUNDRAISER



Raised over
\$130k
in contributions

The performing and visual arts are an important way for youth who are at risk to remain connected and to find hope, comfort, and healing in these times of unprecedented challenges. The philosophy that the arts are an essential tool for building life skills and bringing resilience to our youth is and will continue to be the driving force behind The Arts Empowerment Project's core mission. To raise the necessary funding to support our mission of serving the most vulnerable children in our community, we held our SHINE Fundraiser. This signature event allows us to continue our commitment to the community of children we serve and recognizes the individuals and organizations committed to furthering opportunities for children and families in the Charlotte area. Thanks to our donors and sponsors' generous support in 2023, we raised over \$130k in contributions. We are grateful to the over 200 guests who attended and everyone who helped make this event a success.



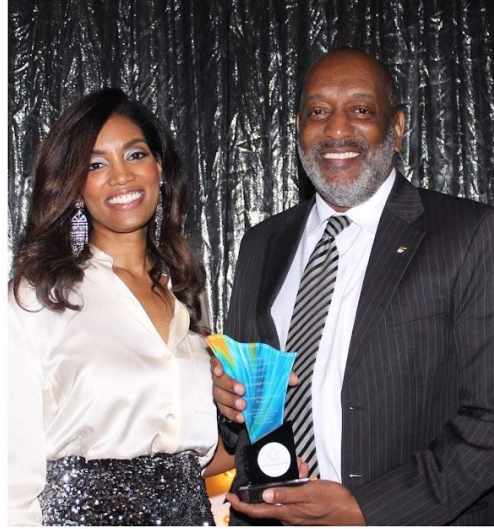
Shine

2023

TEAM MEMBERS

Kobi & Ron Brinson
Serena & Kieth Cockrell
Ogechi & Derrick Davis
Dee & William Haygood
Helen & Marcus Kimbrough
Nina & James Jackson
Mary Beth & Bill Morgan
Kaitlin Powers & Michael Coletta
Carolyn Zimmerman &
Tom McGinnis

Thank You



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Kobi Kennedy Brinson

Katie-Rose & Davis Austin

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Carolyn Zimmerman

2023 STAFF

Natalie Frazier Allen - Founder & CEO
Crystal Durham - Program Coordinator
Bunny Gregory - Arts Facilitator
Shane Manier - Arts Facilitator
Brenda Ramos - Graphic Designer, Arts Facilitator
Kimberley Thomas - Arts Facilitator
Julia Winfield - Marketing & Outreach Consultant, Arts Facilitator

2023 INTERNS

Jenna Bracket
Brittany Hodges
Owen Panos
Cheryl Quinn





the arts empowerment project

COMMUNITY **IMPACT** REPORT

Infusion Fund
A Partnership for Arts + Culture



Funded in part by a grant from South Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts.



 theartsempowermentproject.org

Headquarters located at VAPA | 700 N. Tryon St, Charlotte, NC