

the arts empowerment project

Shine

ANNUAL
FUNDRAISER

SAVE THE DATE
October 14, 2026
6PM

**THE MINT MUSEUM UPTOWN
CHARLOTTE, NC**

The Arts Empowerment Project is a 501(c)(3) organization.

*All featured art is made by participating TAEP students and artists in our programs.

WATCH OUR STUDENTS THRIVE

Meet Ericka and Javontre, former youth participants of The Arts Empowerment Project.

Javontre has since become a professional dancer and Ericka has pursued a career in social work

[Click here for the video.](#)



MISSION

To break the cycles of violence and trauma through arts opportunities that ignite change in vulnerable youth.

VISION

A community that gives every child arts experiences that broaden horizons, foster resilience and build essential life skills.

Dear Friends,

Dear Friends,

This year, we watched students light up with curiosity in art rooms, find confidence in the kitchen, and connect deeply through shared creative experiences and outreach. From brushstrokes to recipes, their imaginations came alive in the safe, welcoming spaces we created together. Thanks to your support, The Arts Empowerment Project (TAEP) didn't just deliver programs. We offered young people joy, healing, and the chance to see themselves in a new light through the power of the arts.

At a time when arts education is being stripped from classrooms and defunded at every level, TAEP is holding the line. **Art is essential.** It gives young people tools to process trauma, build self-worth, and envision brighter futures. Our work exists because this community believes that every child deserves access to creativity, connection, and opportunity.

In 2025, TAEP reached 986 students through 5,563 contact hours of programming. We also piloted two new initiatives that deepened our impact. The Artist in Residency program paired local artists from a wide range of lived experiences and artistic traditions with students for hands-on workshops in visual arts, while the Art of Resilience program helped youth understand the effects of trauma and toxic stress, build healthy coping strategies, and use art to express resilience, reduce stress, and push back against pro-substance abuse messaging. Together, these programs support both youth well-being and artist development, offering tools for growth, reflection, and long-term change.

SHINE 2026 is a celebration of this impact and a call to action. Our goal is to raise \$185,000 to keep these programs growing and accessible. In a time when arts education is under a cloud of disinvestment and cultural deprioritization, we invite you to help us spread some much-needed Sun-SHINE. Your sponsorship makes it possible for young people to heal, grow, and thrive through the arts. Stand with us to ensure creativity continues to light the way forward.

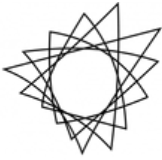
We hope you will stand with us.
With gratitude,

Natalie Frazier Allen, J.D.
Chief Executive Officer
The Arts Empowerment Project



the arts empowerment project

ABOUT US



What We Do

The Arts Empowerment Project provides high-quality arts programming, enrichment experiences, and social emotional development for children in need of access to light, hope, equity, and opportunity, which together offer paths to resilience.

Why It Matters

National studies show that participation in the arts and positive pro-social activities contribute to great academic achievement and can mitigate the effects of childhood trauma, transforming lives.

An independent study of TAEP's pilot program by the **UNC-Charlotte School of Social Work** reported that our students formed career and educational goals, developed positive peer interactions, grew more engaged in their community, accessed new opportunities and experiences, gained new life skills, discovered healthy emotional outlets and became more confident.

Our Demographic

We serve students in **K-12 grade** in the Charlotte area.



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.

OUR STORY

The Arts Empowerment Project has been dedicated to breaking the cycles of violence and trauma through arts opportunities for our community's most vulnerable youth since our founding. Through innovative and strategic collaborations with the District Court and a diverse array of partners and community members, we remain ever vigilant in our determination to provide programs that foster resilience and provide outlets and new opportunities for those at risk of social injustice in our community.

The curricula for our seminars combines meaningful and high-quality art instruction with development of life-skills such as communication, self-esteem, decision making, personal branding, leadership, goal setting, visual literacy, and exploration of social and racial justice and activism through art, and positive self-expression.

While violence is a learned behavior, it can be unlearned, addressed, and prevented. We are using the arts as a vehicle to break the cycles of violence and trauma through arts opportunities that ignite change in vulnerable youth.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

- Culinary Camp
- Encounters: Life Skills
- Promoting Peace + Justice
- Free Arts

OUTREACH

- HeART Packs
- Arts Access
- Facts & Snacks
- Art Vocation: Artists and Career Fair

PILOT PROGRAMS

- Arts Residency
- Hip - Hop & Healing
- The Art of Resilience
(Substance Abuse Prevention)



Flagship PROGRAMS

“Our programs are designed to build a community that gives every child arts experiences that broaden horizons, foster resilience, and build essential life skills.”

Grades 6 - 12

Culinary Arts

Led by professional chefs, this camp teaches court-involved teens about healthy eating and cooking skills. Participants explore career opportunities in the culinary arts.

Grades 6 - 12

Encounters: Life Skills

This program promotes positive choices, self-awareness, and character development through art-making and discussions led by educators and guest artists.

Grades K - 5

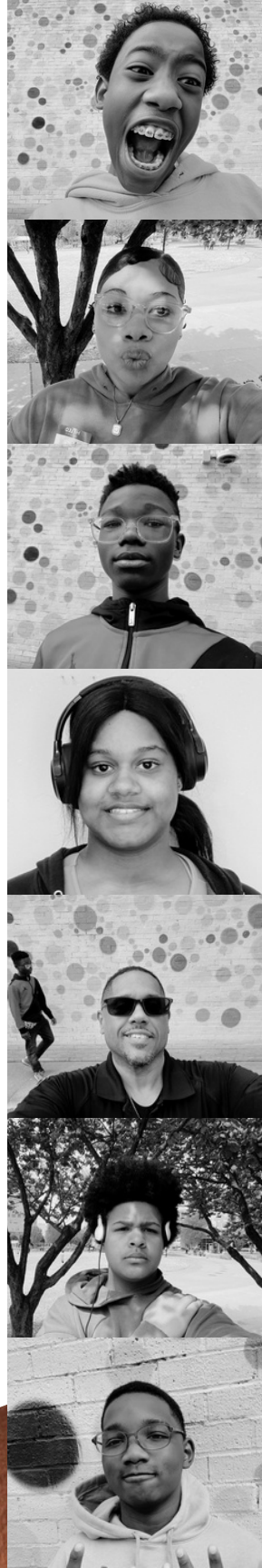
Free Arts

Students develop social and emotional skills through art, with opportunities to learn from local artists.

Grades 6 - 12

Promoting Peace + Justice (PP+J)

At-risk teens come together with local law enforcement to challenge stereotypes, discuss community violence and promote social justice through collaborative art.



IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

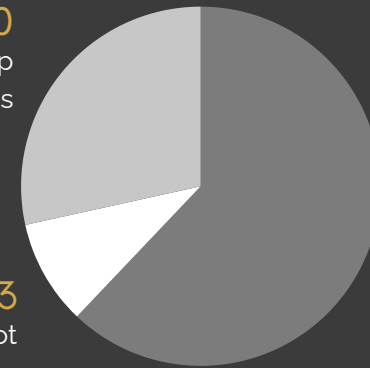
In partnership with its collaborating partners, including CMS, The District Court, Safe Alliance, TYM Inc., YFS, and the YWCA, TAEP engaged 986 students in 2025.

986

Students Served In 2025 Breakdown

By All
Programs
& Outreach

280
Flagship
Programs

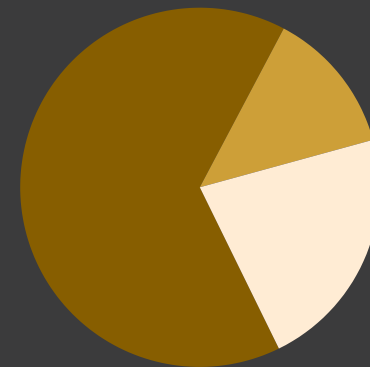


613
Outreach
Programs

93
Pilot
Programs

By Grade Level

65%
Elementary
School



13%
Middle
School

22%
High
School

Why Sponsor?

Social Commitment

This fundraiser supports TAEP's commitment to serving youth who are neglected, abused or at-risk. Your support demonstrates similar dedication to immediate community needs and aligns you with comparable values.

Brand Association

A partnership with The Arts Empowerment Project positions your organization as a force for positive change in Charlotte. You can deepen your existing relationships and broaden your reach by supporting projects that build social capital, equity and justice by increasing resilience and promoting healthy and productive lives for our community's children.

Philanthropic Partnership

TAEP's work is highly recognized and frequently featured in a variety of media outlets. Affiliating your company with TAEP reinforces your position as a leader in Charlotte working toward a day when all the children have the opportunity to find their voices, empower their spirits and embrace their selfhood as healthy and successful members of the community. Enhance your profile with our numerous and diverse stakeholders.



I felt respected.

"I didn't expect how friendly everybody was. Most people you go to school with are really rude, but [everyone] was actually really nice and considerate. It was funny because they [the staff] were so funny. I felt respected by them."

A much needed resource.

"The Arts Empowerment Project is a much-needed resource for some of the most vulnerable children and teens in our community." Judge Louis Trosch, Jr. North Carolina's 26th Judicial District"

Meets a critical need.

"TAEP has consistently helped our students remain engaged and meets a critical need by removing barriers and inviting our students to make meaningful and accessible connections." DSS Independent Living Program Social Worker"

So lucky.

"I usually do nothing [during the summer]. I was like, 'I go to culinary class,' and everyone was like, 'Oh my gosh, you're so lucky.' They don't have culinary arts at my school. That sort of opportunity is usually only for certain people unless you went to a really, really good school that has a lot of money."

Image: YWCA Student Artwork from the Free Arts Program, 2025.

OUR YOUTH

Healing.
Empowerment.
Motivation.

MARKETING OUTREACH



Experiential

Messaging you can touch, feel or view in a physical space.



Collaborative

The process of sharing resources to increase leads, brand value and influence.



Traditional

Traditional marketing activities typically involve advertising, publicity, sales, merchandising and distribution (typically does not include digital).

Social + Interactive Media

Building awareness and promoting a brand or product using all available digital channels as well as platforms that bring people together for the exchange of information



SPONSORSHIP

We deliver value to sponsors by:



Offering opportunities for your company to connect with and market your goods or services to TAEP's numerous and diverse stakeholders.



Providing your company with ways to expand your brand's market and community reach while being a part of impactful work to address one of Charlotte's pressing needs.



Enhancing your profile as an engaged supporter of an initiative that promotes healing, empowerment, and life changing experiences that can alter the trajectory for our community's most at-risk youth.



YWCA students at ArtVocation, Artist & Career Fair.

SHINE 2025 SPONSORS

NEW HORIZONS



America's Most Convenient Bank®



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Moore & Van Allen

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—PLLC—

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Bridget Long & Joe Chuba

S/F Holdings, Inc.

Morgan Companies

Joseph Penna



THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 CORPORATE AND INDIVIDUAL SPONSORS TO WHOM WE ARE ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL.



We invite you to join these prestigious organizations and allow us to customize our sponsorship offerings to meet your brand's marketing and philanthropic objectives. The following opportunities will give your business recognition across multiple industries and events. Additionally, your company's name, logo and link will be included for one full year (beginning October 2026) on all of TAEP's various communication channels and media.

YOUR IMPACT

\$20k Visionary Event Sponsor

Provides a full year of in-person Encounters classes for 20 students.

\$15k New Horizons Sponsor

Allows 20 students to attend free arts for a year.

\$10k Silver Star Sponsor

Provides one year of Free Arts Classes for 25 students.

\$5k Luminary Sponsor

Covers all expenses for Summer Culinary Camp.

\$1k Brilliant Sponsor

Provides 20 HeART Packs.



Value	\$20k	\$15k	\$10k	\$5k	\$1k
Complimentary Tickets	8	6	4	2	
Name & logo on website sponsorship area	★	★	★	★	★
Company name featured in TAEP publications including annual newsletter and programming brochure	★	★	★	★	★
Social Media thank you posts featuring the company name and logo on all TAEP social media platforms	★	★	★	★	★
Verbal acknowledgment at the event	★	★	★	★	★
Individualized thank you post on TAEP social media platforms	★	★	★	★	
Opportunities with TAEP programs	★	★	★	★	
Logo on the event donation page	★	★	★	★	
Company name is listed on the auction website	★	★	★	★	
Complimentary tickets to annual fundraising event	★	★	★	★	
Ongoing staff volunteer opportunities	★	★	★		
Class scholarship named after the organization	★	★	★		
One-minute company overview video posted on all social media channels	★	★			
The naming of art class	★	★			
HeArt packs sponsored branding	★	★			
Listed as Lead Sponsor in the press release and all media communications	★				
Opportunity to be included in event name	★				
Event signage	★				

In-Kind items such as auction items and services are welcomed. Contact: Natalie@theartsempowermentproject.org for more information

Interested In Sponsoring?



CLICK [HERE](#)
OR SCAN THE QR CODE
TO CONFIRM YOUR SPONSORSHIP.

Once we receive your completed sponsorship form, TAEP staff will contact you to discuss event arrangement, sponsorship benefits, and recognition.

**IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE EMAIL:
NATALIE@THEARTSEMPowerMENTPROJECT.ORG**

All materials will be sent for your approval before going to print. TAEP is a 501(c)(3) organization and all donations to TAEP are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.”

www.theartsempowermentproject.org

CULTUREBLOCKS



a community partnership with



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FOUNDATION FOR
THE CAROLINAS



North
Carolina
Arts
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*Fifty years
of leadership*

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