CREATING BRIGHT FUTURES TODAY
DEAR FRIENDS,

This annual report features three key concepts that I hope will give you insight to ArtsConnection’s work in the 2017 program year. Stories and images share the vibrancy of our programming, both in classrooms and through connecting teens to the arts of NYC during the after-school hours. Our work in 126 public schools across the five boroughs and in Teen Programs gave 45,000 students the joy and delight of learning in and through the arts last year.

In turbulent times young people need to feel safe. In uncertain times, they need constancy in their lives. ArtsConnection programs help provide a safe and nurturing environment for students, who are confident that our teaching artists will be present throughout the year to introduce and guide their learning in music, theater, dance, visual arts and media.

I want to thank all of you who make this work possible. You have helped provide the children and young people in our city with the well-being and achievement that comes with good arts instruction.

Best always,

Steven Tennen
Executive Director

By acquiring new skills in literacy, communication, and critical thinking, students gain confidence and empathy. Ownership of the learning process creates enthusiasm. Such engagement also supports students in maintaining and developing abilities outside the classroom.

Digital DELLTA (Developing English Language Literacy Through the Arts) demonstrates how ArtsConnection programs help students discover and develop a wide range of abilities.

ABILITY

Middle school English language learners are immersed in the performing arts where they acquire the language skills necessary to communicate and perform in either dance or theater. Working in small groups, participants design choreography or create and perform a theatrical scene, based on personal experience. Students use tablets to film their ensemble work as it develops.

The program teaches students to identify their artistic choices and criteria. The ensembles view their videos, share feedback, and revise their work. Throughout the process, students consider the original inspiration and the evolution of their work to create a digital portfolio presented at the program’s conclusion.

Digital DELLTA helps children build reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills as they use the English language in a context they care about.

DELLTA students at PS 185q work on their digital dance portfolio
A strong sense of identity serves students both personally and academically as they discover their unique contributions as individuals and as a part of a group. This heightened sense of self boosts confidence, independence, and interpersonal skills.

The Steel Pan Orchestra Program shows one of the many ways that ArtsConnection helps students uncover their unique identities.

The program affirms the musical heritage of many students in New York City’s ethnically diverse schools. The experience also offers all students a hands-on introduction to the vibrant Caribbean culture. Using chromatically pitched steel pans fabricated in Trinidad, participants study both musical technique and theory, while learning to work together and to listen to one another. Students become aware of their individual strengths and how they function as a group.

“My students are more interactive with their classmates. They know how to collaborate and be supportive of each other now, thanks to the program’s structured small group work.” —Classroom Teacher

Because the pans respond to varied skill levels, every child experiences accomplishment and authentic musical expression. Each child gains confidence and a positive sense of self as a vital member of a steel pan ensemble—valuable, talented, and capable.

Financials
Operating Budget Fiscal Year 2017*

*Preliminary and unaudited. Complete financial statement may be obtained by contacting us: info@artsconnection.org
Exposure to multiple viewpoints helps students cultivate a well-rounded perspective that prepares them for success in and out of the classroom. Experiencing different cultures, varied art forms, and diverse environments encourages young people to learn to adapt to new challenges.

Art2Art offers one example of how ArtsConnection programs help students create a broad, balanced perspective.

High school students participate in visual arts and theater workshops led by ArtsConnection teaching artists and cast members of a professional theater production. Students attend the show and meet with cast and crew. Then, the teens explore themes from the production and create original artwork, which is exhibited at the theater and online.

“Meeting the cast helped me understand the actors’ perspectives, which helped shape my artwork.” —Student

The Art2Art journey—from workshops through exhibition—challenges teens to contemplate the story, its themes, and their emotional responses. Students express their own perspectives through art, and peer discussions help them appreciate other viewpoints.

This 2017 program featured the Tony award-winning musical Dear Evan Hansen.

“I really connected to Dear Evan Hansen...it made us more emotional and enabled us to communicate about important subjects, like family matters.” —Student
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