

4408 DELRIDGE WAY SW # 110
SEATTLE, WA 98106



2025 YEAR END REPORT

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 1351

25 Years of

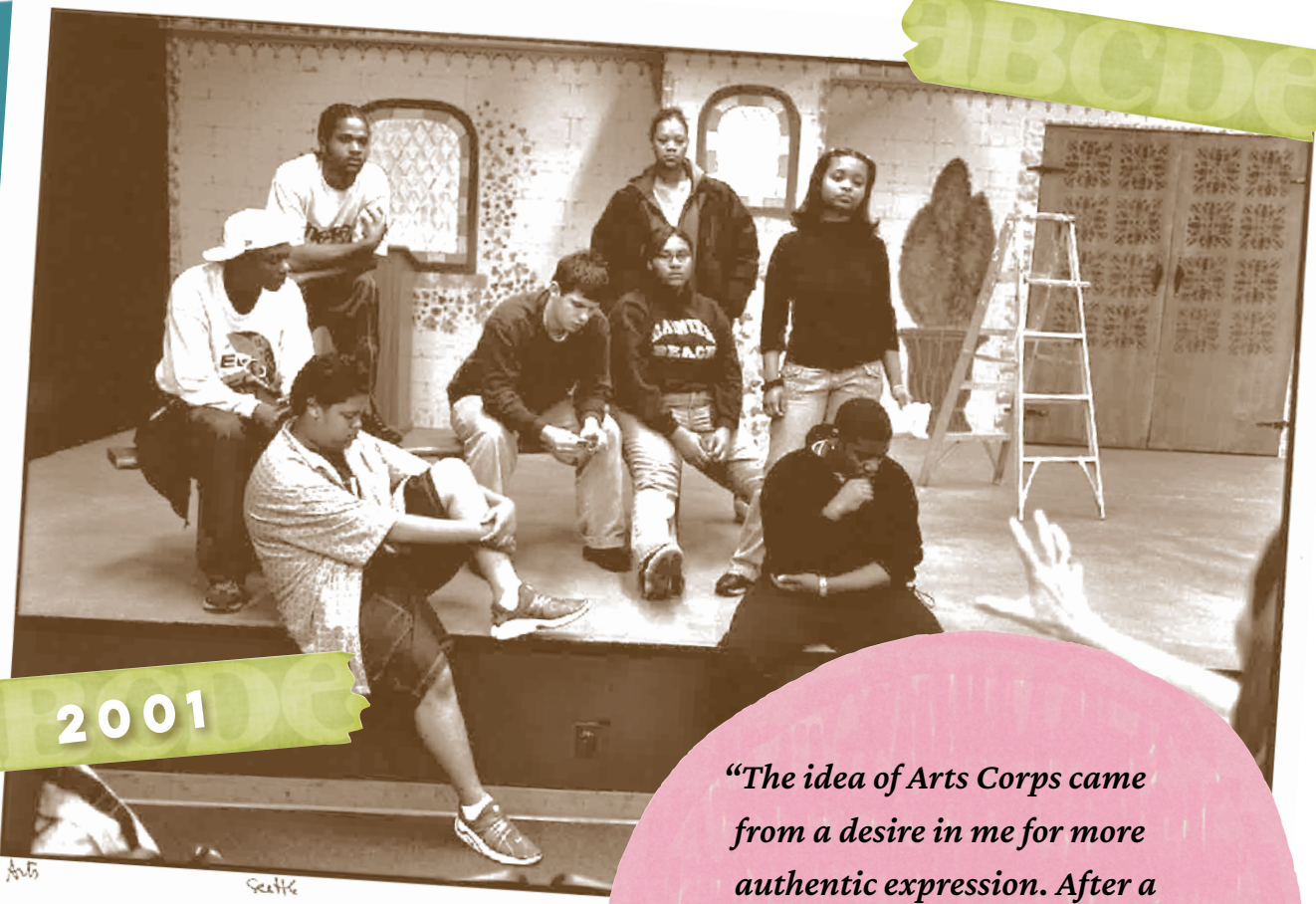
**arts
CORPS**



Arts Corps:
A phenomenal success story



2001



"The idea of Arts Corps came from a desire in me for more authentic expression. After a difficult passage through breast cancer in 1999, I discovered a deep longing to know my own creativity and live alongside others doing the same. Our creativity is our stablest source of personal truth because it doesn't come from the outside...and no one can take it from you. Arts Corps today carries that same thread and is bringing it into life in new ways for a new time."

—LISA FITZHUGH
ARTS CORPS FOUNDER

2017



2009



Cover: Photo by Susie Fitzhugh; *Arts Corps: A Phenomenal Success Story*, Real Change, story by Susan Platt, photos by Susie Fitzhugh; *Frontlines*, Vol. 1 No.1 This page, top to bottom, Contact Sheet by Susie Fitzhugh; Photo by Susie Fitzhugh.

2018



Photo by Amy Piñon.

2025



Photo by Grecia Leal Pardo.

As we reflect on the past 25 years of Arts Corps, we are reminded of the many beautiful students that have come through our programs from the moment we opened our doors to now. The students who have immersed themselves in the creation of the mural with their classmates; the students who pushed themselves through the dance movement even when they felt tired; the students who found that place of oneness in the music; and the students who placed themselves in the back at the beginning of the quarter and are now front and center in the class share. And through the immersive art experiences and the explorative, brave and uplifting spaces our teaching artists create, the students discover parts of themselves that are unrecognizable, that they never knew existed - confidence, focus, creativity, a sense of belonging, and the ability to embed these skills and qualities into their lives over and over again.

The work that Arts Corps has provided for the past 25 years has supported students in having a well-rounded education. And Arts Corps' work has supported schools in providing a well-rounded education to their students. We are honored to be able to do this work because we know at our deepest level that the arts play a vital role in a student receiving a complete education.

The past 25 years brought us many beautiful surprises, celebrations, and challenges that have supported us as individuals and as an organization to grow to be who we are today. We are grateful for this growth and our ability to continue to move forward in honor of the students and the impact the arts have on their lives.

We are grateful to our current staff, board, and teaching artists for their phenomenal work. We are grateful to the directors, managers, staff, board, and teaching artists that came before us and contributed their insight, wisdom and knowledge, and who carved the way for those that followed. We want to thank our donors, funders, and community partners who have been right beside us over the past 25 years, we could not have done this work without you.

As we continue this magnificent journey forward into the next 25 years, we do so with the deep knowing of the importance that the arts play in our youth unfolding to be the very best versions of themselves they can be.

With gratitude, Shawn Roberts, Executive Director



BY GRECIA LEAL PARDO

Bridging technology, art, & tradition

If you attended our end-of-school celebration, Art & Sol, you likely saw a demonstration from our elementary Capoeira class. Capoeira is a martial art that hails from Brazil and includes music with dance-like sparring. Led by Teaching Artist Caxambu, our students showed us their warm-ups, engaged some youth audience members in sparring, and played a couple of songs with traditional instruments. Near the end of the demonstration, Caxambu passed the mic to one of the students, Langston. In front of everyone, Langston confidently held up an agogô, the Yoruba double bell used in Capoeira music. Typically, the agogô is made of iron or castanhas-do-Pará (Brazil nut shells). However, this one was made of something entirely differently. “I 3D printed this”, Langston shared with the audience.

I remembered Langston from the few times I had visited Caxambu’s class. He was one of the students that was always eager to participate. Through the year, I had watched his movements get stronger, his playing get better, and now I was watching him take something from the class and make it entirely his own. I was so impressed, I asked to talk with him more about his project.

“I used a program called Tinkercad where you drag and drop shapes. I designed it in only about 15 minutes!” He told me.

That felt very fast to me. Langston shared that he’s been 3D printing for about a year, after his family got a printer for Christmas, and has been mostly self-taught. He has printed over 100 pieces, which include brick buddies and Mario mushrooms, some of which he sells in his very own

lemonade and 3D printing stand. He even has a logo for his stand that is a 3D printed lemon!

Like with every learning process, Langston has faced trial and error with 3D printing. His first print was a lucky cat that took 4 hours to print, and since then he’s learned to measure carefully, size them so they fit in the print bed, and not hollow out his print because it can make the print messy.

Although Langston sells some of his prints, many times he makes them as gifts. Once, he printed his neighbor’s name so he could personalize a bike bell for his birthday. He was inspired to make the agogô because of its unique shape and because he noticed the Capoeira class didn’t have many for an upcoming performance at his school’s festival, La Kermes. “I came up with the idea the day before the festival, and I was like, I have to do this ASAP if I want to get it done in time.”

After Art & Sol, Langston gifted Caxambu his agogô so that all future Capoeira students can use it.

When I asked about his experience with Capoeira, Langston told me that early on, he had had an accident in class when another student fell on him.

“I was a little worried that maybe he wouldn’t want to keep at it anymore.” His mom shared, “Our experience up to that point was that if one thing kind of went bad, we were over it. But it was really nice, he took a 10-minute break and then he got back in. And when I asked if he was going to go next week and keep going, he just said, of course!”

“I just did it to do something that I liked.” Langston added, “If there’s a little roadblock, I find a way to get right through that roadblock. If you got hurt once, that doesn’t mean you’re going to get hurt all the rest. And that was the last time that I got hurt.”

It was amazing to hear and see Langston’s generosity, confidence, and resilience at play. It made me excited to think of what he’ll continue to do, and happy to know that Arts Corps has been a part of his journey.

Near the end of our conversation, Langston’s mom asked him if Capoeira returned to his school, would he sign up again?

Langston looked at her and laughed, “You know I am!”

**Thanks so much to Langston
and family for sharing your
time and experience with us!**

2024-2025

By the numbers

8,456 Hours of Student and Teaching Artist Interaction

24 Partner Sites

75 Quarter-Long Classes

23 Artist Residencies

26 Paid Internships

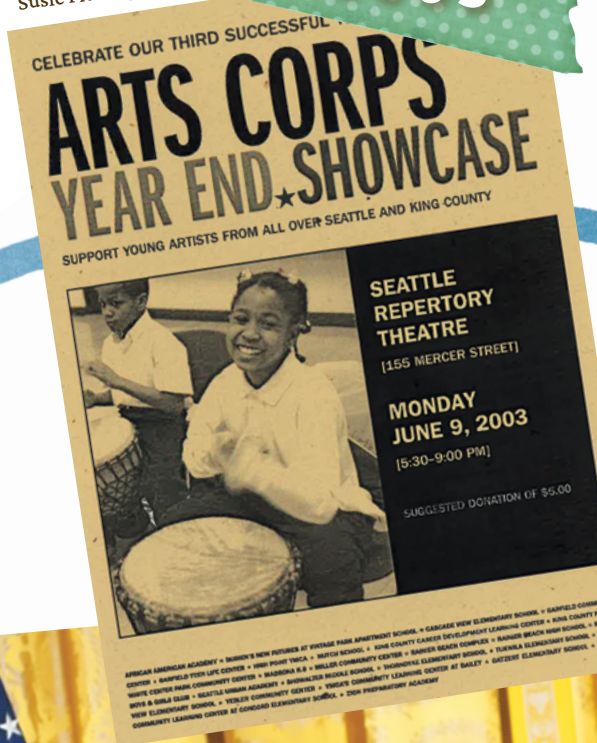
4 Students turned Teaching Artists and Assistants

1,728 Students

85% Students of Color
73% Participated in Free or Reduced Lunch Program

Arts Corps Year End Showcase, photo by Susie Fitzhugh.

2003



2012



Arts Corps wins the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, the highest distinction for arts education in the country.

2019



Photo by Amy Piñon.

"Simply and directly connecting young people with encouraging and open-minded teaching artists is at the heart of what I love about Arts Corps. In recognizing and acknowledging a young artist's gifts, Arts Corps' teaching artists empower students to activate reservoirs of self-esteem, courage, and perseverance as they discover their own voice and style. I still remember the teachers in my life that encouraged me and those singular moments continue to inform and inspire."

— STONE GOSSARD
GUITARIST FOR PEARL JAM AND
LONGTIME ARTS CORPS SUPPORTER

Photo by Adam Collet



AN INTERVIEW WITH ANA MARÍA

CREATING SAFETY equity & dignity FOR ALL

2024

Let's start easy, when did you join Arts Corps?

What classes have you taught so far?

I joined Arts Corps fall 2023, but I've known of Arts Corps since I was an intern at the Seattle Rep in 2010 and I've always wanted to work here.

I'm fluent in Spanish, and there was a need for a Spanish-speaking teaching artist at Alcove, for our New Futures program. Since then, I've taught at a bunch of other New Futures' sites, Interagency Recovery Campus, and I did an arts-integrated residency with elementary school teachers this past fall.

What made you want to work for Arts Corps?

I came to Seattle as a Seattle Rep Intern. Andrea Allen, who was the Education Director, was a big practitioner of weaving communities together. She wanted everyone to get together and share with each other what we were each teaching, so we could better know what communities we were not in.

I remember my first meeting with all these large arts organizations and then Arts Corps. My first impression of Arts Corps' teaching artists was just, like, they were down. They were down, and they were deeply committed—to artistic process, to youth voice, and to social justice. And they were unafraid to have difficult conversations. It's not that they were completely fearless of having those conversations, but it's that they were willing to practice that bravery, and there was always intense care and listening. And I really appreciated it.

Epecially with everything that's happening now, what keeps you going as a teaching artist? Why do you do this work?

Joy is a right for young people. Creative learning is a right for young people.

I really believe in intergenerational creative growth and healing. A lot of the programs that I get to teach are the after-school programs, so there are windows of opportunity to invite older siblings, younger siblings, parents, and holding that space for them.

Children are often the least represented and have the least amount of rights, and so if I can teach them to develop their voices and teach them to think about how they can make themselves heard, I will.

We know that creative joy provides spaces for healing and resilience building. Also, a space to practice culture and connect with ancestry, and ancestral strength, and ancestral wisdom.

Whether you are going to be sharing something really heavy from your family history, or if what you're revealing to me is that you're a secret goth kid, and you really want to talk about vampires and blood and werewolves but no one at home really wants to, well, you get to with me. I'm gonna support it.

So you're going through and hearing these students who are sometimes very silly, and also sometimes have very heavy stories. How do you keep yourself afloat and balanced and okay?

I have a lot of houseplants, and I have a garden where I am able to grow plants from seed. You learn a lot from watching nature. At Arts Corps we're encouraged to share what's going on in the classroom. That helps a lot. It feels like I'm honestly participating in a real community.

There's a lot of things that are demanding a lot of perfection from us, or a lot of hard grit and hard work. But you know what's not demanding me hard grit and hard work? It's creative exploration with my students. This is where I can mess up, this is where I can be human, this is where I can learn to laugh at myself, so then I can gather some strength from that, and go face the harder things in the world.

I have learned through the years of doing mutual aid in the farm working community that the thing that always sticks with people is the art we did. Hearing that is like, okay, this is so important. If this is what's getting people through all this, we need this.

When you start thinking about it even more, we need creativity and spaces for creative learning, because how can we say that bodily autonomy is important, but creative process and individual creative exploration is not? For us to understand the importance of autonomy of our own bodies, we need to understand the autonomy of what we want.

Young people really deserve that opportunity to formulate their own opinions and thoughts and just understand who they are.

As we work towards our vision of a world where barriers to arts educations no longer exist, what are values and practices that you think Arts Corps and the teaching artistry field should hold close to our heart?

Everyone is worthy and deserving of safety, equity, and dignity.

Art provides the space for us to practice that in our personhood. Not only just figuring that out for ourselves, but how do we give that to others? How do we hold that space for others? How do we fight for that on behalf of others? How do we build that and create that?

To be able to build a better world and create that better world, we have to imagine it, and we have to break our imaginations out of what is possible. And that takes a lot—it takes healing, it takes acknowledging big conceptual systemic things, it takes taking care of the little you.

Allowing for creative space inherently allows mistakes and silliness and rage and everything that is the box of emotions and experiences that is being human. It allows us to continue imagining and creating a space where everyone could have safety, equity, and dignity.

Unlabeled
photographs
indicate we
need your help.
If you know the
photographer,
please email
communications
@artscorps.org!

**MAKE
ART
ANYWAY.**

2023

Photo by Erist Eaton



2014

Photo by Keelin E



2015



2016

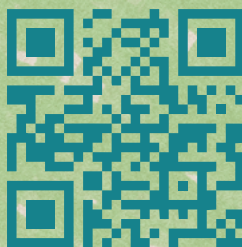


**Jéhan Òsanyìn (right)
is now our Director
of Arts Education!
Here they are in their
Teaching Artist days.**

2009



2013



**SUPPORT
ARTS CORPS'
FUTURE**

[ARTSCORPS.ORG/DONATE](https://artscorps.org/donate)