

# Arts Corps



## Program Evaluation Report

Executive Summary, Year Three, 2002-2003

Prepared by Mary Murray, M.A. / MEM Consultants / September 16, 2003



Since its inception in 2000, Arts Corps has produced an annual report of each year's activities and evaluation findings. This executive summary reflects selections from the third such report and focuses on agency activities between September, 2002 and August, 2003.



# background

**Arts Corps** is a non-profit arts education program located in Seattle and serving King County. Founded in May 2000, Arts Corps provides quality, after-school arts education classes free of charge to youth, particularly in underserved, low-middle income neighborhoods. The program recruits and places experienced teaching artists in a variety of existing after-school, and a select few in-school, programs where they provide structured art instruction for young people in grades K-12.

Arts Corps creates **strategic alliances** with existing after-school programs to provide art classes during fall, winter and spring quarters. During the 2002-2003 year, Arts Corps partnered with 23 sites to provide 108 classes for 1,355 students in neighborhoods where young people live. Neighborhood facilities utilized include community centers, youth organizations, and public schools.

**Art classes** are offered in a wide variety of subjects including dance, drama, music, visual arts and writing. Classes meet two to three hours a week for a total of eight weeks. Class sizes are limited, ranging from 8-30 students depending on the topic, with the median class limit of 15.

**Community exhibitions** are an important component of Arts Corps programming. Arts Corps regularly sponsors or participates in performances and exhibits at a local theatres or galleries. This year, these events brought together over 600 of the students who participated in Arts Corps courses.

**Teaching artists** are the source of Arts Corps' success. Artists with a history of teaching are recruited, selected and provided the training, ongoing professional development, and compensation required to maintain this outstanding resource over time. In 2002-2003, Arts Corps contracted with 27 teaching artists.

Arts Corps **staff** continue to provide excellent organizational and administrative support. Arts Corps is currently run by five part-time employees. Positions include an Executive Director, Program Manager, Faculty & Curriculum Director, Community Development Director, and a Technology Director.

**Support** of 223 volunteers, hundreds of individual donors, three public agencies, and nine foundations provide the resources necessary for Arts Corps to exist and thrive. The following is a list of Major Investors who provided large grants (more than \$19,000) during one or more of the first three years of operation:

Kirlin Foundation  
The Ackerley Group  
Pearl Jam  
The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation  
PONCHO  
The Nesholm Family Foundation  
Satterberg Foundation  
The Paul G. Allen Charitable Foundation  
Seattle Arts Commission  
The Seattle Foundation  
Seattle Weed & Seed



# program goals

Arts Corps set out to accomplish four major goals, as follows:

- Positively Impact the Lives of Young People
- Model a Different Approach to Education
- Energize and Unite Communities
- Bring Recognition and Support to the Value of Art in Life

This evaluation focuses on the first goal, or the ways in which Arts Corps impacts the lives of its students. To this end, Arts Corps sought feedback from students, teaching artists, facility staff, and parents.

I have definitely grown as a person – would say I am more open to things. I am a lot more social, more apt to have a conversation with someone... and not just in hip hop, in general.

—Craig Louie, 10th Grade,  
Garfield Teen Life Center

# surveys & interviews

Students, teaching artists, facility coordinators (the primary contact at each neighborhood facility), and selected parents were provided the opportunity to complete surveys. These surveys assessed the perceived impact of Arts Corps on participants. While each survey generally assessed the same topics, they varied in format and wording depending upon the target group or the age of the student. Topics addressed include:

- interest in learning
- positive social interaction with friends or peers
- language & communication skills
- self confidence & ability to take risks
- ability to work independently
- self esteem
- listening, observation skills and attention span
- interest in the arts
- compassion & respect for others
- positive social interaction with adults and community
- self-discipline & emotional control
- connection between discipline & creativity
- problem solving skills



Selected students, teaching artists, facility coordinators and parents were also interviewed. These interviews were recorded and transcribed.

The results of the surveys and interviews are summarized in the following sections.

# student changes as a result of Arts Corps

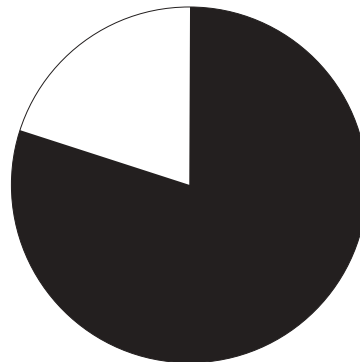
This program opened creative doors for my daughter...Not only has she learned all types of art but she's able to see things in a whole new light.

—Kristen Beckett,  
parent of Kyrsten Scott, 5th Grade,  
Bailey Gatzert Elementary School



The primary goal of Arts Corps is to positively impact the lives of young people. A review of the literature in the fields of education, prevention and youth development reveals extensive empirical evidence documenting the positive difference after-school programs and arts education makes in the lives of young people. Specifically, after-school programs improve academic performance, decrease youth delinquency and other high-risk behaviors, and help young people grow into healthy, successful adults (Miller, 2003; Newman et al., 2000; Pittman et al., 2000). Arts education in particular can have a lasting positive impact on the educational and life outcomes of all youth, including those typically hardest to reach (Fiske, 1999). As Arts Corps programs are similar to the after-school and arts education programs that have demonstrated positive impacts on students, this evaluation set out to determine if Arts Corps produced similar positive changes in the lives of its participants.

**Table 1**  
**Students report that Arts Corps changes them**



Most students (80%) report that Arts Corps changes them. The black represents the following responses to student survey questions:  
"I changed a lot!"  
"I think I've changed"  
"I think I've changed a lot"

Student surveys were used to ask participants to report if they attribute changes in themselves to participation in Arts Corps classes. Seventy-eight percent of younger students indicated they did feel different after taking the classes, with 55% indicating they *changed a lot* and 22% indicating they *changed*. Eighty-five percent of older students reported they *changed as a result of taking this class (e.g. developed new skills, self-confidence, a willingness to take risks, or an improved sense of what's possible)*, with 48% indicating they *changed a lot* and 37% indicating they changed as a result of Arts Corps.

Adults in the lives of Arts Corps participants also indicated positive changes as a result of the program. One hundred percent of facility coordinators responded yes to the survey question *did you notice the AC course having a positive impact on students*. Parents and teaching artists also reported positive changes in Arts Corps participants, detailed in the pages that follow.



Teachers notice differences – friends do, too...and every time she sits by me, I am always drawing something, like today, I was drawing a horse, and we colored it and made it a unicorn. And she said “oh, wow, you can really draw ever since you took Arts Corps.” And I said “Yeah, I know, it is like a self-progression in progress.”

—Alisha Agard, 4th Grade,  
Zion Prep

# changes in student learning

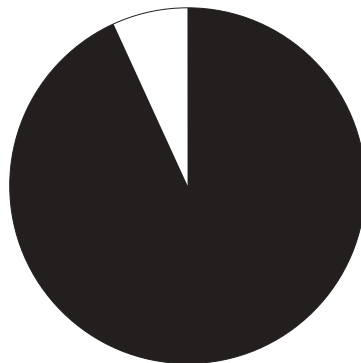
Learning in and through the arts can help “level the playing field” for youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds.

—Champions of Change: The Impact of Art on Learning



Increases in student learning as a result of participation in arts education and after-school programs are well documented. In 1999, The Arts Education Partnership and the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities invited educational researchers to examine the impact of arts education. The resulting paper, *Champions of Change: The Impact of Arts on Learning*, details multiple studies that examine why and how young people are changed through their arts experiences. Simply put, researchers found that engagement in the arts results in higher levels of academic achievement (Fiske, 1999). The Nellie Mae Foundation recently released a review of two decades of research on after-school programs entitled *Critical Hours: Afterschool Programs and Educational Success*. This report concludes that quality after-school programs lead to greater participation in learning and to higher academic performance. Specifically, studies suggest that students who participate in such programs have improved behavior in school, better work habits, and fewer absences; these findings replicated with both high- and low-income populations. Also, studies revealed improved homework completion, improved grades, higher scores on achievement tests, and reductions in retentions (Miller, 2003).

**Table 2**  
**Students report learning in Arts Corps classes**



Most students (93%) report learning as a result of participation in Arts Corps classes. The black represents the following survey responses:  
“I learned a few new things”  
“I learned a lot”  
“I discovered some or many new concepts, skills or ideas in this class”

Surveys designed to evaluate the impact of Arts Corps classes asked a number of questions related to changes in student learning. Ninety-five percent of young students reported that learning resulted from Arts Corps participation with 73% indicating they *learned a lot* and 22% indicating *they learned a few new things*. Eighty-nine percent of older students reported learning with 58% indicating they *learned many new concepts or skills* and 31% indicating they *learned some new concepts or skills* in the class. Additionally, 86% of older students indicated they would like to take more arts classes outside of school, with 59% indicating *definitely* and 27% indicating *likely*.

Parents, facility coordinators, and teaching artists were given the opportunity to rate the degree to which they observed certain changes in the youth. Four of these ratings are particularly relevant to student learning; these ratings and survey responses are detailed in Table 3.

(Arts Corps) is fun because you get to learn new experiences, and you get to learn how to cooperate with others.

—Miranda Craven,  
4th Grade,  
Bailey Gatzert  
Elementary School

**Table 3. Adult ratings of changes in student learning**

Percent respondents indicating Some or Big Change	More interest in learning	Better language & communication skills	Improved ability to work independently	Improved listening, better observation skills and better attention span
Parents (n=17)	94%	93%	87%	94%
Facility Coordinators (n=20)	85%	80%	95%	90%
Teaching Artists (n=57)	98%	100%	98%	100%

# changes in risk and protective factors

The real skills that I have are talents of clay and emotions and drawings. When I mean emotions, I mean I really want to not be mad and cause a lot of trouble, so I try to draw and get them out.

—Spencer Brashears,  
8th Grade, Zion Prep



After-school programs' impacts are not limited to school performance. Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, an anti-crime organization comprised of law enforcement officials, has declared investment in after-school programming a primary method of preventing youth violence and juvenile crime. Their report entitled *America's After-School Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime or Youth Enrichment and Achievement* summarizes numerous studies that reveal decreased rates of delinquency, drug use and teen sex among youth who participate in after-school programming when compared to similar youth who do not (Newman et al., 2000). The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention reported evaluation results of the YouthARTS Development Project, which was funded to study effective arts-based delinquency prevention programs. This research revealed that three distinct programs offering arts opportunities to at-risk youth all recorded positive impacts on risk factors for delinquency, protective factors that decrease the likelihood of delinquency, and/or delinquency itself (Clawson & Coolbaugh, 2001). Thus, after-school and arts education programs are a critical piece of a comprehensive effort to prevent high-risk youth behaviors.

Compassion and respect for others, self-discipline and emotional control, problem solving skills, and positive social interactions are all protective factors that help inoculate young people against delinquency or violence. Parents, facility coordinators, and teaching artists were given the opportunity to rate the degree to which they observed increases in these protective factors among youth. These ratings are detailed in Table 4.

**Table 4. Adult ratings of changes in risk and protective factors**

Percent respondents indicating Some or Big Change	More compassion and respect for others	More self-discipline and emotional control	Better problem solving skills	More positive social interaction with friends or peers
Parents (n=17)	75%	81%	86%	94%
Facility (n=20) Coordinators	90%	90%	100%	95%
Teaching Artists (n=57)	100%	98%	100%	98%



They think I am nicer...because, I used to be mean...when I first came, I said "All you people are ugly!" But now, I care about other people's feelings...because of what the class opened up for me, and how I changed in them.

—Mar'Quichessa Redmond  
8th Grade, Zion Prep

# promotion of youth development

I see myself as more creative, and I am not so “blah.”

—Lainey Clark,  
7th Grade  
Denny Middle School

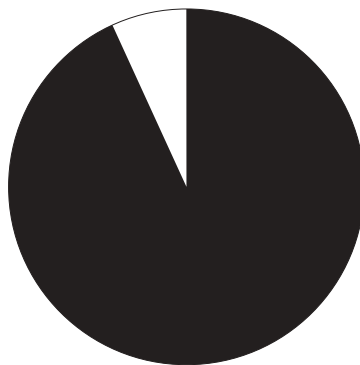
I'm more confident! I can do whatever I set my mind to.

—Patrick Dunn,  
7th Grade, Showalter  
Middle School

Youth development advocates argue that just as the goals that parents have for their children (and young people have for themselves) go beyond educational success and crime prevention, so too should the goals of youth programming be more ambitious. The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine suggest that after-school programs can impact physical development, intellectual development, psychological and emotional health, and social development (Eccles & Gootman, 2002).

Interestingly, after school programs that incorporate the arts often make a difference for young people who are typically not reached by other programs. Shirley Brice Health has closely studied a variety of after-school programs that provide meaningful learning experiences outside of school hours. Surprisingly, she found that among good after-school programs, arts programs stood out as making the biggest difference. Arts programs tended to attract and sustain involvement of the highest risk young people, or those whose schools were the most violent and whose families faced the greatest economic challenges, in part because they provided physical and psychological safety for participants (Brice Health & Roach, 1999).

**Table 5**  
**Students report trying new things and taking risks**



Most students (93%) characterize Arts Corps classes as a space where they want to try new things. The black represents the following survey responses:

- “I want to try a few new things”
- “I was very excited to try new things”
- “The class was a safe/very safe place to be creative, try new things and take risks”

Arts Corps works to provide students with a safe space and opportunities to develop new skills, consistent with programs that promote positive youth development. Overall, students reported that Arts Corps classes represented a safe place to try new things and take risks. Ninety-two percent of younger students characterized Arts Corps classes as a place to try new things, whether they wanted to try *many new things* (66%) or were excited to try a *few new things* (26%). Ninety-seven percent of older students reported Arts Corps classes to be a safe place to try new things and take risks, with 69% characterizing them as *very safe* and 27% characterizing them as *safe*. Older students also reported an expanded sense of the future as a result of participation in Arts Corps classes. Eighty-three percent of older students reported seeing new possibilities in the future because of Arts Corps classes, with 52% reporting *many* and 31% reporting *some* new possibilities. And, over half of the older students (59%) reported that the classes have in fact changed how they see the future overall.

Parents, facility coordinators, and teaching artists were given the opportunity to rate the degree to which they observed certain changes in the youth. Five of these ratings are particularly relevant to positive youth development; these ratings and survey responses are detailed in Table 6.

**Table 6. Adult ratings of positive youth development**

Percent respondents indicating Some or Big Change	More self confidence and ability to take risks	More self-esteem	More interest in the arts	More positive social interaction with adults	Made a connection between discipline & creativity
Parents (n=17)	100%	81%	94%	94%	87%
Facility Coordinators (n=20)	100%	100%	100%	95%	100%
Teaching Artists (n=57)	100%	100%	100%	94%	94%

# student enjoyment of Arts Corps classes

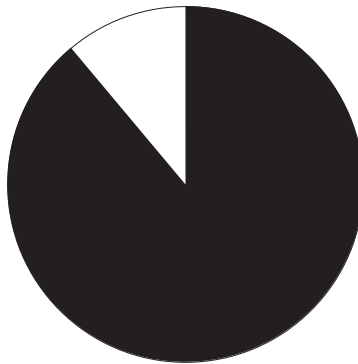
## How does your daughter describe Arts Corps classes to you?

She talks a lot about arts. She likes it a lot. She likes doing things with her hands, and what make it better is Lana (Teaching Artist) makes it so easy for them, because she helps them communicate and everything else. She really loves it.

—Mary Agard, parent of Akilah Henderson, 4th Grade, Zion Prep

While there is ample evaluation evidence that indicates after-school programs make a positive difference and a growing body of research suggesting arts programming is a particularly powerful vehicle towards these ends, it is important to note that not all programs are equal. Program characteristics attenuate the positive impact a program can and does have. For example, effective programs must appeal to students to attract and retain them long enough to influence their development. Young people who attend quality programs the most hours over the most years benefit more than participants who participate less often or over a shorter period of time (Miller, 2003).

## Tables 7 Students enjoyed Arts Corps classes

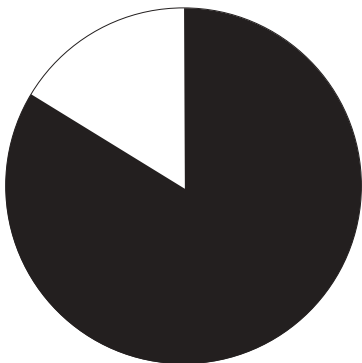


Most students (89%) report positive feelings about Arts Corps classes. The black represents the following survey responses:  
"I liked this class"  
"This class was terrific" or  
"Overall, I liked the class very much"

Evaluation results reveal that the vast majority of participants enjoy Arts Corps classes. Eighty-six percent of the young students surveyed reported positive feelings about the classes, with 65% characterizing the classes as *terrific* and 21% indicating they *liked* the classes. Eighty-three percent of these students indicated they would like to take additional Arts Corps classes, with 65% indicating *surely* and 18% indicating *probably*. Ninety-six percent of the older students survey indicated they liked the classes overall, with 71% indicating they *very much liked* the classes, and 25% indicating they *liked* the classes. Eighty-five percent of these students indicated they were very interested (58%) or interested (28%) in taking more Arts Corps classes.

Facility coordinators also provided insight into how much students enjoyed Arts Corps classes. In fact, 100% of the facility coordinators surveyed indicated that students wanted to take another Arts Corps class. Ninety-five percent indicated it was easy to get students interested in the class.

**Table 8**  
**Students intend to take more Arts Corps classes**



Most students (84%) report a desire to participate in additional Arts Corps classes. The black represents the following responses to student surveys: "I will probably take another class" "I will surely take another class" "interested" or "very interested" in another class

Arts Corps is a lot of fun; it is the most fun thing on the planet.

—Spencer Brashears,  
8th Grade, Zion Prep



# staff practices and student impacts

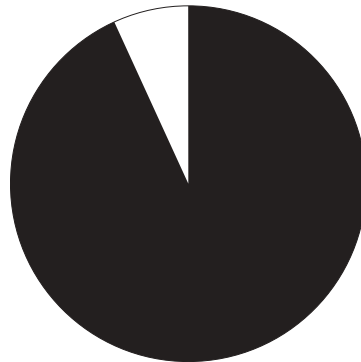
## Features of Positive Developmental Settings:

- Physical & Psychological Safety
- Appropriate Structure
- Supportive Relationships
- Opportunities to Belong
- Positive Social Norms
- Support for Efficacy and Mattering
- Opportunities for Skill Building
- Integration of Family, School and Community Efforts

—National Research Council and Institute of Medicine

Research indicates that staff practices make a difference in youth programs. In the best programs, the staff promotes partnership with youth, creates safe, fair environments, fosters supportive relationships, encourages personalized participation, and creates learning opportunities and intentional skill-building (The Forum for Youth Investment, 2003).

**Table 9**  
**Teaching artists build supportive relationships with students**



Most students (93%) characterize their relationship with the teaching artist as supportive. The black represents the following survey responses:  
"The teacher was supportive"  
"The teacher was supportive in every way"  
"The teaching artist was being supportive or very supportive of me individually"

Evaluation results suggest that Arts Corps teaching artists exhibit many practices related to these areas. First, 75% of teaching artists reported that they made a classroom agreement or contract with the students, an act that treats students as partners in creating a safe, productive environment. Second, 100% of facility coordinators surveyed reported that teaching artists *very much* fostered a safe environment for learning.

Third, students report that teaching artists supported them in their learning and creative expression. Ninety-two percent of younger students characterized their Arts Corps teachers as supportive, with 72% characterizing them as *supportive in every way* and 21% characterizing them as *supportive*. Ninety-four percent of older students characterize their Arts Corps teachers as supportive, with 68% indicating *very supportive* and 25% indicating *supportive*.

Fourth, 95% of facility coordinators report that teaching artists provided opportunities for individual and group work, allowing for personalized participation.

Fifth, teaching artists were intentional about their skill-building learning opportunities. One hundred percent reported that their students learned competency in a particular art form. Eighty-four percent reported structuring the class to have a beginning, middle and end, a conscious effort to provide structure to the learning opportunity.

Finally, learning opportunities were not limited to the Arts Corps classes, as teaching artists promoted youth participating in additional arts education opportunities, including outside classes, exhibitions and internships. Arts Corps teaching artists and staff facilitate internship placement and aid admission into higher education with recommendation letters and critique of student portfolios.

They make me interested in stuff...they made it clearer than other teachers...they would go back to things we didn't understand. They were patient teachers.

—Rachel Rambo,  
7th Grade,  
Madison Middle School



# community impacts

Arts Corps has program goals beyond student impacts. Program records indicate progress towards these goals as well, as summarized below. Specifically, Arts Corps has set out to:

- Model a Different Approach to Education
- Energize and Unite Communities
- Bring Recognition and Support to the Value of Art in Life

## Pioneer a Different Approach to Education

Arts Corps has adopted an *Emergent Curriculum* approach to arts classes. Emergent curriculum is based on the Reggio Emilia approach, an education philosophy which asserts that a deeper learning experience is possible when learning is focused on a child's interest in a topic. In emergent curriculum classrooms, both adults and students take initiative and make decisions, resulting in a negotiated curriculum balancing students' interests and teachers' requirements.

Arts Corps teaching artists worked to establish a teacher-student partnership model of learning in typically small classes, allowing individualized attention and a mentoring relationship between teacher and student. Also, Arts Corps has created a template for a two-phased method of reporting classroom activities to accommodate the emergent curriculum. The template provides space for the

lesson plan itself and space to report how the lesson plan was adapted to a student's needs and interests.

Teaching artists have participated in professional development workshops on evaluation of student learning, as well as the impact of cultural identity in the classroom. Surveys and interviews of students, parents, teaching artists and facility coordinators are currently used to track student learning (as described earlier in this report). These tools will be modified and improved over the next year.

Arts Corps has created community showcases and other special events to demonstrate the benefit of emergent curriculum in arts education. For example, most of the 22 neighborhood sites had at least one performance or kick off event. Additionally, Arts Corps sponsored 11 art shows, two additional showcases, and one fundraising event, with each including student performances and/or displays.

Arts Corps staff work to help key decision-makers and educators understand the role arts must play in education and prevention. For example, Arts Corps representatives participate in community crime prevention committees to voice the importance of arts education as a prevention strategy. Arts Corps also provided a workshop at the Gear Up Summer Institute for Washington State teachers (Gear Up is a national effort to help low-income, disadvantaged students plan

for and succeed in higher education). Finally, evaluation reports are sent to over two hundred and fifty community representatives and decision-makers to foster a better understanding of the critical role art can play in education. These efforts have made an impact and been formally recognized through an award from the Mayor of Seattle for outstanding contribution to the arts.

### **Energize and Unite Communities**

Many of the activities designed to demonstrate the power and benefits of arts education also helped to create a “buzz” about Arts Corps. The 22 kick-off events at neighborhood facilities demonstrate the cooperation of the local facilities. Additionally, four Arts Corps classes in Tukwila combined forces to create a mini-showcase at Foster High School, complete with a gallery and refreshments. In Burien, the Vintage Park Apartment School classes performed Breakdancing and Brazilian Drumming and showcased visual art work from the *Exploration in Art* course for the city's Tenth Anniversary Party.

In order to create more opportunities for young people to participate in arts programs, Arts Corps staff and volunteers were instrumental in co-creating the Youth Resource Directory, in collaboration with over 15 youth service organizations. This directory provides young people with access to community services providing services ranging from free housing and bus tokens to a directory to kid friendly environments and activities.

Finally, the Arts Corps web site and regular email newsletters also keep a growing, diverse community of Arts Corps supporters informed.

### **Bring Recognition and Support to the Value of Art in Life**

Arts Corps places a high value on its paid teaching artists. The teaching artists also receive financial support for professional development, as well as access to free workshops. And, Arts Corps' annual fundraiser focuses on demonstrating the teaching artists' talents. This year's event contained video documentaries on the visual artists and a collaborative performance by the performance artists, resulting in myriad performance and exhibition offers.

Arts Corps has also taken an active role in fostering public recognition for its teaching artists. As detailed above, Arts Corps has directly and indirectly facilitated many showcases, performances and events that bring people together to acknowledge and value art. These showcases have provided space for public recognition for both student-artists and the teaching artists. These efforts have paid off, as Arts Corps' Faculty and Curriculum Director is routinely contacted by prestigious local, state and national, arts and education organizations in order to link teaching artists with residencies, workshops, and other opportunities. For example, the internationally recognized Centrum Arts awarded nine Arts Corps teaching artists residencies to educate middle and high school students. Also, the Seattle Center Academy featured five teaching artists for their prestigious summer program.

# organizational capacity



Historically, non-profit investors have focused on program strength when making funding decisions. However, the strength or capacity of the organization implementing the program is also a critical determinant of the long-term performance or impact of its programs (Connolly & Lukas, 2002). In other words, “great programs need great organizations behind them” (McKinsey & Company, 2001).

Arts Corps completed a Capacity Assessment Tool<sup>1</sup> designed to assess organizational capacity and establish goals for capacity building. This tool defines non-profit capacity in a pyramid of seven essential elements: three higher-level

elements (aspirations, strategy and organizational skills), three foundational elements (human resources, systems and infrastructure, and organizational structure), and a cultural element that connects all the others. The results of this assessment are summarized in Figure 1.

Arts Corps is generally at a moderate level of organizational capacity during its third year of existence, providing a solid foundation for its programming. It is also important to note that no element of capacity was evaluated as substandard, despite the fact that Arts Corps is a relatively young organization.

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<sup>1</sup>The McKinsey Capacity Assessment Grid was created by McKinsey & Company and published in *Effective Capacity Building in Nonprofit Organizations* (2001), produced for Venture Philanthropy Partners ([www.vpppartners.org](http://www.vpppartners.org))

**Figure 1**

<b>Element of Capacity</b>	<b>Arts Corps Level</b>
Aspirations: An organization's mission, vision and overarching goals, which collectively articulate its common sense of purpose and direction.	moderate to high
Strategy: The coherent set of actions and programs aimed at fulfilling the organization's overarching goals.	moderate
Organizational Skills: The sum of the organization's capabilities, including such things as performance measurement, planning, resource management and external relationship building.	moderate
Human Resources: The collective capabilities, experiences, and potential commitment of the organization's board, management team, staff and volunteers.	moderate
Systems and Infrastructure: The organization's planning, decision making, knowledge management and administrative systems, as well as the physical and technological assets that support the organization.	basic
Organizational Structure: The combination of governance, organizational design, inter-functional coordination, and individual job descriptions that shapes the organization's legal and management structure.	basic
Culture: The connective tissue that binds together the organization, including shared values and practices, behavior norms, and most important, the organization's orientation towards performance.	moderate

# conclusions

Evaluation data clearly suggests that Arts Corps positively impacts the lives of the young people it serves. Students, parents, facility coordinators and teaching artists surveyed all reported positive changes in students participating in Arts Corps activities. Specifically, the data indicate that Arts Corps impacted positive change in the areas of student learning, risk and protective factors, and youth development.

Progress towards meeting community level goals (i.e., to pioneer a different approach to education, to energize and unite communities, and to bring recognition and support to the value of art in life) was not formally measured in this evaluation. However, anecdotal evidence and program records imply meaningful progress towards these goals.

In addition to creating a strong arts education program, Arts Corps has developed a strong organizational foundation during its first three years of existence. Assessment of organizational capacity reveals that Arts Corps is generally at a moderate level in seven categories of organizational capacity, i.e. aspirations, strategy, organizational skills, human resources, systems and infrastructure, organizational structure, and culture. For an organization in its start-up phase, this is a noteworthy achievement.



# recommendations

- Arts Corps' investment will show the greatest pay-off if it continues to offer quality programming while working to increase the amount of time students can participate in arts classes through additional class offerings.
- It behooves Arts Corps to continue to place a priority on recruiting, selecting, developing and maintaining the involvement of outstanding teaching artists.
- Future organizational development should focus in the areas of systems, infrastructure and organizational structure.
- Enhancements to the current program evaluation design would allow Arts Corps to draw firmer conclusions about the effectiveness of its programs.
  - Arts Corps should utilize data sources that are more objective than self-reports, such as the academic performance or classroom behavior of participants.
  - The use of a control group is necessary to conclusively determine the impact of Arts Corps programming on participants.
  - A formalized evaluation of progress towards community level goals would allow informed program changes and contribute to a comprehensive program evaluation plan for the organization.



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These classes provide you with something! It is something I can build my life on. It is something I am interested in. The thing that attracts me the most about art is that you can feel the spiritual growth just going on...it is something I could do for the rest of my life.

—Taylor Brown,  
9th Grade,  
Garfield Teen Life Center



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