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IMPACT REPORT 2019-2020
Change & Resilience

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STAFF
Narcissa Campion, Program Manager: Freelance Players
Kippy Dewey, Founding Director
Emily Duggan, Marketing & Development Associate
Francie Karlen, Former Executive Director
Lisa McColgan, Office Administrator
Kristen Sherman, Managing Director
Jamie Ullrich, Senior Program Manager: Urban Improv
Elena Velasco, Executive & Artistic Director

ACTOR-EDUCATORS
Tory Bullock, Associate Artistic Director
Cooper Evello
Jadira Figueroa
Jeffrey Gimball
Merle Perkins
Anna Richardson
Holly Tarnower, Associate Education Director
Veronica Wells

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Our Programs

Our dynamic programs embody the following Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Key Measures: Creative Self-Expression, Empathy, Conflict Resolution, Relationship Building/Community, and Diversity & Inclusion.

Urban Improv: Our flagship program serves 4-8th graders in five Boston Public School partners each year in multi-year partnerships. Actor-educators create realistic scenes about such topics as bullying, peer pressure, racism, and bystander issues. Then, at a pivotal moment, the facilitator calls “FREEZE!” Students are invited to jump into the scene, using their minds, bodies and creativity to resolve a conflict, experiencing the consequences of their choices firsthand. Following school closures in spring 2020, we innovated “Classroom Care Packages” that translated our Urban Improv model to video to reach our remote learners. Our BPS partner schools are Nathan Hale in Roxbury; the Murphy in Dorchester, BTU Pilot School and Mission Hill Grammar in Jamaica Plain, and Haley Pilot School in Roslindale.

- 635 students served through March 2020
- 9 Boston neighborhoods represented
- 24+ topics explored
- 272 live performances
- 10 Classroom Care Package videos produced
- (BRN views & counting!)
- 50+ submissions to our first-ever GROUP SCENE FESTIVAL, featuring original, student-written scenes

Freelance Players: Our afterschool, tuition-based musical theater program fosters imagination, self-expression, empathy, and community across socioeconomic boundaries.

Players: The Dreammakers & Mystery at the Hopeless Hotel
Driscoll / Brookline: Tortoise vs. Hare & Buzz On Jamaica Plain: Mything Links & America’s Next Top Monster
Charles River / Dover: Shakespeare’s Daughters & Clam’s Casino
Jamaica Plain: Great Expectations & Shakespeare’s Daughters
Newton: X Marks the Spot & Mything Links

- 6 troupes in 5 towns
- 305 student-actors
- 21 in-person performances
- 6 video/streaming productions
- 1 live-streamed performance

Youth Unscripted: Our afterschool program for Boston teens builds self-efficacy through creative exploration of themselves, their community, and social change.

- 15 student leaders
- 5 scenes explored
- 15 sessions before March 2020
- 22.5 hours of creative collaboration & conversation
- 100+ Fruit Snacks consumed

Re:Action Assemblies: Interactive assemblies jumpstart healthy dialogue on challenging topics at schools and community groups in New England and beyond.

- 1,670 students served
- 10 topics addressed
- 2 additional out-of-school-hours trainings (coming back for more!)
- 8 towns visited: Boston, North Reading, Cambridge, Groton, Falmouth, Scituate, Brockline, New Bedford

Financials

Thank you to the many individuals, organizations, and institutions that have contributed to Rehearsal for Life in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. We had a smaller budget than previous years and a goal for a modest surplus to replenish reserves. We are appreciative of the generosity of many that helped us reach our financial goals in a very difficult fiscal year.

Our People

Our community is our strength and foundation. Here, we make a special introduction to some of the people who have helped us this year (and some for many, many years); among them, Murphy School teacher Diane Ly-Leahy: our first donor and former board member Amo Houghton, Youth Unscripted alumna Kayla J/Kyah Williams (below); Freelance Players parent Lisa Ahn; Birch Meadow School principal Julia Hendrix; Freelance Players alumna Howard Chaffey; new members of our Board of Directors Skye Morrison Kramer and Faith Soloraya; Urban Improv alumna Jesenia Cortes. And Banned in Boston all-star Jimmy Tingle. Meet the whole cast at rehearsalforlife.org/impactreport2020.

Kayla J/Kyah Williams
“Hi, my name is Kayla J/Kyah Williams. In the fall I will be attending UMass Dartmouth. After school, I want to be a gynecologist. My favorite color is yellow, and I love all animals, especially dolphins and dogs. My family describes me as an outgoing, caring, silly, sarcastic, adventurous, and lovable eighteen-year-old.

Youth Unscripted made me feel like I belong. It is a place where anyone can be their best self and not have to deal with judgment. I believe that everyone deserves this. When I first got to Youth Unscripted, it was like I was coming home to a family. Everyone was so open-minded, and I liked the encouraging vibe and the way everyone was there for each other. Improv made me be a part of a safe space where I could talk to people about things I had never admitted to out loud before, open up, and have a weight lifted off my shoulders that I didn’t even know I was carrying. It helped me become outgoing and confident with who I am.

Youth Unscripted made me more open-minded, and it has also shown me how to stop and assess issues rather than reacting, which usually leads to trouble. I also learned to be okay with the unknown – to try something even if I don’t know if it will work out. You won’t have any growth if you don’t do anything new or try to see things from a different perspective. You can’t go through life close-minded.”

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Youth Programs: $972,861
Fundraising: $205,741
General & Admin: $102,793
FY20: $1,281,395

Revenues
Philanthropy: $589,247
Grants/Government: $469,686
Earned Revenue: $264,393
Donated Goods & Services: $16,365
FY20: $1,339,691

Expenses

Banned in Boston
While we were heartbroken not to be able to present Banned in Boston onstage at the House of Blues due to the pandemic, we rallied to focus on Urban Improv. And we did it! Our socially-distanced community “came together” to raise $632,852 for our young people!

A HUGE thank you to Jim Braude and Margery Eagan for their introduction to "Virtually Banned," and to Jimmy Tingle for his impassioned appeal to our audiences and his good humor throughout a tumultuous time. Heart and humor win again!
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Virtually Banned in Boston

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For our 2020 financial highlights:

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