

Why WAAY UP Matters:

Founded by Baltimore native Marlyn Johnson, a dedicated singer, actress, youth advocate, educator, and loving mother, WAAY UP is born from a deep commitment to uplift underserved youth. Marlyn's personal journey and the tragic loss of her only son D're "Drizzy Dredelaine " in 2022, who was a talented musician, producer, singer, songwriter, and beautiful human being. This tragedy has driven her to create a transformative organization. She has spent the past 15 years tirelessly working to make a lasting impact on the lives of underserved youth.

Our Impact:

We firmly believe that an arts and mentoring program can keep students on the right track, preventing them from engaging in negative behaviors, giving them exposure, and guiding them toward productive futures. By participating in our program, students are more likely to complete their education and pursue college degrees, apprenticeships and certifications in various arts-related fields, enriching their lives and contributing to the broader creative community.

Mission Statement:

We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to rekindling the creative spark within at-risk youth by offering a comprehensive Performing Arts Program uniquely designed to broaden the exposure and skillset of the creative.

Vision Statement:

Our vision is to empower youth with the means to transform their dreams into reality by immersing them in the realms of fashion, music, the performing arts and more.

The Problem We Address:

Statistics reveal a glaring disparity in access to arts education, particularly in underprivileged and underserved communities. Many students with untapped artistic potential are left without opportunities to explore their talents due to the lack of arts programs in their schools. WAAY UP seeks to bridge this gap and give every child the chance to discover their creative passions.

The State of Emergency:

In many urban areas, a generation of at-risk youth faces a critical situation. With the closure of recreation centers and the elimination of public school music programs, these vulnerable young individuals are left with few positive alternatives. Too often, they turn to negative behaviors or take to the streets, and become Violent . WAAY UP aims to provide access to a performing arts summer camp and after-school program to fill this void, providing an invaluable source of inspiration and growth for the youth in our communities.

Program Overview:

Our 6-week Performing Arts Program is designed to inspire and mentor middle school and high school students by providing them with a unique platform to explore their creative talents. Through this program, students will gain exposure to various art forms, including music, videography, photography, music, and media production, behind-the-scenes roles, and creative direction. They will be placed in groups based on their interests and evaluated to provide foundational skills training.

Hands-on Training:

Upon completing the initial phase, students will progress to a hands-on training phase. This involves collaboration with their peers in different fields of the arts, preparing them for an end-of-season production. This practical experience is designed to empower students and equip them with essential skills for a potential career in the arts.

Enrichment Activities:

To provide a well-rounded experience, our program includes field trips to cultural and artistic destinations. Additionally, we actively engage parents through participation opportunities and offer workshops featuring industry professionals who can guide and inspire the students.

The Operational Plan:

6-Week Operational Plan for the Performing Arts Program

Week 1: Introduction to the Arts

- Days 1-3: Orientation and Ice-breaking activities to build a sense of community among students.
- Days 4-5: Explore Different Art Forms - Workshops and interactive sessions introducing students to music, videography, photography, production, behind-the-scenes roles, and creative direction.
- Day 6: Group Formation - Students select their areas of interest and are grouped accordingly.

Week 2: Foundational Skill Development

- Days 1-3: In-depth Workshops - Students dive deeper into their chosen areas, acquiring foundational skills and techniques.
- Days 4-5: Team Building - Group projects and collaborative exercises to foster teamwork and creativity.
- Day 6: Assessment - Students present what they've learned and accomplished so far.

Week 3: Hands-on Training

- Days 1-3: Field Trips - Visits to local studios, theaters, or galleries where students can observe professionals at work.
- Days 4-5: Practical Application - Students engage in hands-on activities related to their chosen fields, guided by experienced mentors.
- Day 6: Reflection - Students discuss their field trip experiences and hands-on learning in small groups.

Week 4: Mentorship and Skill Enhancement

- Days 1-3: Mentorship Sessions - Students are paired with industry professionals who serve as mentors, providing guidance, advice, and real-world insights.
- Days 4-5: Skill Enhancement Workshops - Guest artists and experts lead specialized workshops to further develop students' skills.
- Day 6: Mentorship Check-in - Students share their progress with their mentors and discuss any challenges they are facing.

Week 5: Creative Collaboration

- Days 1-3: Cross-discipline Projects - Students from different fields collaborate on a creative project, such as producing a short film, music video, or fashion show.
- Days 4-5: Rehearsals and Preparations - Groups refine their collaborative projects with guidance from mentors and instructors.

- Day 6: Panel Discussion - Invited industry professionals share their experiences and offer insights into the world of arts and creativity.

Week 6: Final Production and Graduation

- Days 1-3: Final Rehearsals - Groups put finishing touches on their projects in preparation for the end-of-season production.
- Day 4: Dress Rehearsal - Students present their projects to mentors and instructors for feedback and refinement.
- Day 5: End-of-Season Production - A grand showcase of students' collaborative projects, attended by parents, friends, and the community.
- Day 6: Graduation Ceremony - Students receive certificates of completion, celebrate their achievements, and share their experiences with family and friends.

Throughout the Program:

- Continuous Support - Regular check-ins with students to address any personal or academic challenges they may face.
- Parent Engagement - Student Program progress reports and activities to involve parents in their children's artistic journey and gather their feedback.
- Guest Speakers - Throughout the 6 weeks, we invite guest speakers from various creative fields to inspire and motivate students.
- Individual Guidance - Instructors and mentors provide one-on-one guidance and mentorship to address specific needs and goals of students.

This comprehensive 6-week program aims to empower young individuals with a strong foundation in the arts, hands-on experience, mentorship, and exposure to various creative disciplines, ultimately preparing them for a future in the performing arts and beyond.

In Conclusion:

Our Performing Arts Program is more than just a summer camp and afterschool program; it's a lifeline for underserved youth who yearn to express themselves and explore their creative potential. By supporting WAAY UP, you are helping us pave the way for a brighter, more artistic future for our youth, and ultimately, our communities as a whole. Together, we can bring the magic of the arts to those who need it most.