Dear Friends,

All year long, your support helps thousands of Austin children and young people develop the social and emotional skills they will need to succeed in and beyond the classroom.

The 2012 - 2013 school year brought more opportunities to work with youth and educators in Central Texas. As our programs expand, our vision for youth remains focused - all young people deserve access to a creative learning environment.

At Creative Action, we do much more than develop our students' artistic skills. We know that through our creative learning programs students discover their own voice, gain confidence in sharing their perspectives, wrestle with big ideas, and deeply engage in the world around them.

No other arts organization in Central Texas reaches more youth. And we couldn't do it without you. Thank you!

Karen LaShelle
Executive Director
Every year at least 1 in 4 students experience bullying in schools. Because of bullying, about 160,000 students missed a day of school, and 20 percent of high school students say they have seriously considered suicide.

Creative Action’s multi-day program targeting 4th-5th graders, “The Courage to Stand,” is an interactive play that inspires youth to stand up for each other. The lessons are symbolized with a friendship bracelet each child wears to remind them of loyalty and courage. So far, more than 20,000 youth have participated in the program.
Changing Lives is unlike any other youth theatre program in Austin. Students ages 14-20 audition for the ensemble and are paid for a full-year commitment to create a performance about issues that affect teens. The project is a unique collaboration between Creative Action and SafePlace.

Throughout the year, the ensemble tours schools, conferences and community events across Central Texas to spark dialogue about teen relationships and encourage students to take a stand against dating violence, sexual harassment and bullying. In 2012, Changing Lives was invited to perform at the National Conference on Health and Domestic Violence in San Francisco. In May, everyone is invited to the final performance of the year.
Every day, children face large and small conflicts, some of which can be overwhelming. With The Heroes/Los Héroes program, Teaching Artists lead K-2nd grade students on a four-day musical and bilingual journey. Using puppets and characters, they tell stories that help students learn how to identify conflicts and teach them the tools to deal with them.

Says Anna Pedroza, principal at Ortega Elementary School. “Now they have the tools to deal with this crazy emotional stuff we all deal with.”
What We Do

Creative Action programs are available to children and youth throughout the year. With the support of our donors, we have the ability to support additional underserved communities free of charge.

IN THE CLASSROOM
Thoughtfully designed curricula is presented in a multi-day, in-school model that offers a mix of performance, role play and interactive problem solving. These programs include The Courage to Stand, The Heroes, Journey Into the Story, and Courage in Action.

Our In the Classroom Programs:
- build confidence and character;
- reinforce literacy;
- and develop critical thinking skills that help children learn to be effective problem solvers, courageous bystanders and make positive change in the world.

AFTER SCHOOL
As the largest provider of arts-based after school care in Central Texas, Creative Action brings creative learning to children during hours when many would be under-supervised. This program is available at over 50 Title 1 schools free of charge and at 6 schools for a fee.

Our After School Programs:
- engage students in hands-on activities that deepen connections to lessons learned in the classroom;
- include activities such as visual art, filmmaking, music, puppetry, creative writing, acting;
- and boost self-esteem, academic performance, and leadership.

TEEN PROGRAMS
Four current programs for teens tap into the power of students’ own creativity and explore issues of identity and self-worth. In partnership with Safeplace, Creative Action’s Changing Lives Youth Theatre Ensemble employs young adults in the creation of original works drawn from their own experiences. New Stages, offered in partnership with Gardner Betts Juvenile Detention Center and Travis County Juvenile Probation Department, fosters access to arts learning for youth at-risk for gang involvement. Color Squad is a collective of young artists working under the guidance of professional artists to research, design, and install murals, sculptures, and installations aimed at transforming public spaces. Creative Action’s Outside the Lines youth ensemble receives training as young leaders in the community and creates original plays to directly address social issues facing LGBTQ youth growing up in Austin.

Our Teen Programs:
- employ youth as artist-activists to create powerful art for the community;
- explore issues such as sexual and dating violence, bullying, domestic strife, the environment and making healthy choices;
- and teach coping strategies to teens across Central Texas and beyond.

CAMPS
Available to every child in Austin at competitive rates, our Spring Break and Summer Camps take place in locations across the city. We also offer a free Summer Camp for students from underserved elementary schools.

Our Creative Action Camps:
- explore different themes such as acting, dancing, filmmaking and music;
- provide a safe creative learning environment;
- and offer financial aid for families who need it.

Dear Courage in Action,
Thank you so much for showing me what my brain can do! You taught me that a courageous leader is someone who takes responsibility, who is thoughtful, and who is trustworthy. I am very proud of myself for graduating and becoming Agent 93! I hope that schools from the future will get lessons on becoming a leader and I will be one of the famous leaders they are talking about. I hope you liked our school and enjoyed us. Creative Action Rocks!!
Sincerely,
Eva
Our Families

Creative Action focuses its work on children and young people, but in the end, the entire family benefits. That’s because when children are healthy and happy, they are better equipped to handle the challenges of life in and outside their homes.

“Creative Action creates a safe environment to learn how their experiences shape their lives,” says Debbie Solcher, a high school vice principal and mother of Leslie Solcher, a member of Changing Lives.
Across Central Texas, students in our After School programs showcase their work at the end-of-program “Final Sharings.” These are opportunities to invite friends and family to participate as the audience and gives students the chance to perform or display the culmination of a semester’s worth of creativity.

Parents like Lee Gardner-Warrenfells love Final Sharings: “The fairy tale production in early May was fantastic! So much creativity was showcased, and everyone shined.”
Sometimes we all need a new beginning. Creative Action offers young people ways to break away from the pack and find their true voice.

The New Stages Youth Theatre Ensemble includes students 14-20 years old who have been released from the juvenile detention system. The ensemble creates original plays about their experiences and perform for more than 2,000 Austin area youth at schools and churches annually.

Says Patrick Torres, program director, “These youth will not only develop their creativity, but use it to push themselves forward, to change their community, and to challenge the way audiences see them. Their potential is limitless.”
Growing Up Safe

Walter has an interesting combination of traits. He has a great sense of humor and he loves to goof around and perform. But at the same time he has this stutter. But that’s not our primary concern.

Because of his epilepsy, he’s had seizures at school, not the kind where he falls to the ground. These are similar to zoning out, rocking back and forth. It looks more like strange behavior.

When he was in third grade and had brain surgery, he came back to school with his head wrapped, and he was very self conscious about that, but he just kept going. The remarkable thing is that the other kids have never teased him. In fact, the other kids will speak up if anyone is being picked on.

Maplewood Elementary was a Title 1 school up until this year, but still about half of the students are considered low income. It’s a blended school with kids from a lot of different backgrounds, so there is ample opportunity for a bully to single out someone for their differences. But no one does; in fact, they all treat each other very well.

Creative Action has made the school a safe environment. It’s made a big difference for Walter because it’s given him a platform of self-confidence he’ll need for his whole life.

By Amy Averett, Walter’s mother and Creative Action board member

Over 16,000 Austin kids and young people served during the 2011-2012 school year

500+ hours of arts education each week

85% of our programming reaches Title 1 and low income schools

100% of students defined themselves as Creative Artists

98% of students said they learned to respect others as much as themselves

100% of students identified themselves as leaders
February 2014

Our Volunteers

Creative Action is grateful to have hundreds of volunteers every year — and we need each and every one.

Caitlan Shannon joined Creative Action as a volunteer this year and has helped with our annual fundraiser and After School programs.

“Maybe it’s because I imagine myself at their age, with all the possibilities ahead and a desire to find a way to express my ideas but not knowing how to do so,” says Shannon. “It’s awe-inspiring to see their creativity come to life.”
Big Hair Country Fair, our annual fundraiser, brings together a community of friends to learn more about Creative Action, support our programs – and have a lot of fun!

While carnival games and delicious food and drink keep things lively, the Changing Lives ensemble performance in the middle of it all is a show-stopper. “It’s that moment when you realize why we’re all there,” says JJ Langston, Director of Development. “It truly is a celebration of our students’ brilliant work.”
Understanding the “Four Cs”

Creative Action’s mission is to spark and support the academic, social and emotional development of young people. Through interactive classroom performances, after school arts residencies and community-based programs, Creative Action’s team of professional Teaching Artists inspire youth to be creative artists, courageous allies, critical thinkers, and confident leaders in their community.

Our programs equip young people to address and overcome critical social problems such as low self-esteem, bullying, conflict resolution, dating violence, diversity, access to the arts, and literacy. We offer opportunities for young people to creatively think about how they can be a part of solutions to these problems. We teach healthy communication, encourage an appreciation for diversity, and inspire people to have compassion for others.

Creative Action is part of the solution in Central Texas. With your help we can continue to expand our services to make sure our children and youth feel safer and have a say about their future. Thank you.

All Creative Action programs for young people are designed to shape:

Creative Artists  
Confident Leaders  
Critical Thinkers  
Courageous Allies

2012 Financials

Year Ended August 31, 2012

REVENUES
Programs $855,699
Grants $417,598
Capital Campaign $261,528
Donations $77,390
Special Events $66,185
Total Revenues $1,678,400

EXPENSES
Programming $1,010,467
Fundraising $189,462
Management and General $63,154
Total Expenses $1,263,083

NET ASSETS
Beginning of Year $370,417
End of Year $785,734

2012 Funding Sources

51% Contracts & Fees
25% Grants
19% Fundraising
5% Donations

2012 Grant Funding Sources

56% Foundations
35% Government
19% Fundraising

During the 2012 fiscal year, Creative Action spent 80% on programming that includes providing free and low-cost creative learning to children across the greater Austin area. A total of 15% was spent on fundraising expenses and administrative costs were at 5%. At Creative Action, we work diligently to make certain your donation goes far to ensure all children have access to arts education in our community.
Some of our youngest students take part in New World Kids, a program in partnership with The Foundry. This curriculum is designed to hone creative and critical thinking skills. Students use a “sensory alphabet,” including line, shape, texture, movement and other elements, that leads them to observe and explore the world around them.

“At 4 or 5 years old, kids are looking for new ways to express themselves,” says Karen LaShelle, Executive Director of Creative Action. “This program gives them new tools for sharing their ideas.”
Youth Arts Festival

The Youth Arts Festival is a culmination of a year’s creative study. This event showcases theatre, music, film and visual art created by local middle and high school students. Not your usual student art show - students address issues like identity, peer pressure and where they fit in.

Their art gives voice to their innermost thoughts, revealing a creative spirit they may not have known they had. The event is free and open to the public, and will resonate most with families with like-aged students.
It may sound like an exaggeration, but the fifteen-minute parade that is Summer Pageant in the Park is the most moving parade you’ll ever see. It is the culmination of a free summer program to underserved children that focuses on nutrition, ecology and health, and it takes place at the SFC Farmers’ Market downtown.

Students learn “How Our Food Grows” by meeting local farmers, trying new organic produce and experiencing a farmers’ market, for many a first-time visit. They come to understand the positive social and environmental impact of sustainable farming and healthy eating.
Our teaching artists bring out the creative best in their students every day, and that is what makes the difference for Marcelo Teson. He teaches film to students from diverse backgrounds, from Del Valle to West Austin, and helps them discover what they want to say in their films.

As a sound engineer in Hollywood, Teson found professional and financial fulfillment, but it was not until he joined Creative Action that he found personal fulfillment. “We want to make something that is meaningful so they have a voice,” says Teson. “And that’s the thing that Creative Action is so good at.”
Our Donors

FRIENDS ($250-999)
Anonymous
Dan Ahearn
Julie and Buddy Ballard
Bridgeport Consulting
Rebecca Brown
Chrisy and Dave Butler
Christy Claxton
Eco Clean
Elizabeth and Murray Collins
Buffington Companies
Convio
Terrie and Chris Van Dohlen
Cindy and Bryan Finnegan
Quen Garza
Natalie Goodnow
Richard Hartgrove
Lindsay and Kevin Hunter
Rachel Jackson
Tommie Jackson
Kristen and Dave Jaros
Yann Joffredo
Shirleiene and David Justice
Carolina Kenny
Barbara and Bart Knaggs
Hillary MacDonald
Kim and John Mansour
Frank Marshall
Jackie Goings and Kalyse McElveen
Jennifer and Mark Mourišen
Kelly and Russ Norwood
Mike Trevino and Michael O’Malley
Karla Palma
Dawn and Dan Patterson
Fischer Foundation
Matching Gifts Program*
Reagan Reaud
Edward Reilly
Rebecca Reilly
Georjean and Michael Renquist
MaryAnn Robalino
Brenda Saxon
Debbie Solcher
Sandra and Andrew Springer
Kelly and Michael Stouse
Frances Thompson*
Divit Tripathi*
Dusty and Tony Trungale
Mary Veselka
Evelyn and Wyeth Wiedeman
Marc Winkelman
Eva and Martin Womack
Rebecca Yerly
Zeynep and James Young
Raye Zeigler

SPARKLERS ($1,000-4,999)
Janet and Wilson Allen
Alliance Tech
Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Clary and Mark Auler
Amy Averett
Kristy Battani**
Keith Beers and Helen Laughlin Beers Foundation
Dru Brown
Sabrina and Jay Brown
Carly and Clayton Christopher
Monica Gill and Chris Churchill
David Clifton
Michelle Cline
Suzanne and Colby Denison
ECG Foundation*
Leslie and Tommy Erwin*
Bruce Ezell
Debra and Wade Gillham
Melissa and Monte Goertz
Karen and Tom Hale
Tamara and Kevin Hurwitz
Ann Graham and Arlen Johnson**
Tamsa and Mark Jones
Gary Knight
Kaye Knox
Mary and Chico Korth
Gar and Jeff Kodosky
JJ Langston
Clayton and Andrew Maebius
Robyn and Craig Malloy
Carrie and Jeff McDowell
Merrill Lynch Wealth Management, Bank of America Corporation
JoAnn McKenzie and Jerry Pritchard*
Kinder Morgan Foundation
The Muki Foundation
Cathy and Rodney Nairn
Wendy and Bruce Nakfoor
Anna and Jason Near
Kendall and Charles Pace
Sharon and Tim Peddecock
Lamonica and Gregory Perrin**
Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation
Elizabeth and Rob Rogers
RSF Seed Fund
Richard Salwen*
Gretchen and Daniel Scardino
Judith and Stewart Sullivan*
SXSW Community Fund*
Danielle and Kevin Sweeney
Shanel and Dean Vandergriff
Le Villers
Jackson Walker
Heather and Ben Williams
Dana Williams

HEROES ($5,000-9,999)
3M
Anonymous*
Anonymous*
Anonymous*
Austin Community Foundation*
Sonnet Blanton and Alex Wettreich*
Karen and Ray Brimble*
Laura and Eric Buehler**
Chesnut Fund*
City of Austin, Department of Health and Human Services
Kendall and Charlie Pace*
Pacey Family Foundation
Samsung
Shield-Aires Foundation
Richard and Susan Marcus**
Susan KIr and Rusty Martin**
Texas Women for the Arts
Elisabeth and Alex Tyner
The Wright Family Foundation
United Way Capital Area
Will Jones

BUILDERS ($10,000-24,999)
Applied Materials
Benge-Hury Family Foundation
Carron and Loverous
Whittaker**
Catto Charitable Foundation*
Sara Esquenazi
Junior League of Austin
Heather Beckel and Alan Luecke**
Nollin Family Foundation*
Kendall and Charlie Pace*
Pacey Family Foundation
Samsung
Shield-Aires Foundation
Richard and Susan Marcus**
Susan KIr and Rusty Martin**
Texas Women for the Arts
Elisabeth and Alex Tyner
The Wright Family Foundation
United Way Capital Area
Will Jones

SUSTAINERS ($50,000-99,999)
Anonymous*
Anonymous*
Fredericka and David Middleton**
HEB Tournament of Champions Charitable Trust*
Hoel-Schumaker Foundation*
Lola Wright Foundation*
Nollin Family Foundation*
Rich and Anne Smalling**

DREAM MAKERS ($100,000+)
City of Austin, Cultural Arts Funding Program
Impact Austin
Meining Family Foundation*
Meredith Family Interests*
Rich and Ann Smalls**

Donors from September 2011 - June 2013
*Capital Campaign Donor
**Sustaining Donor
Crossing the Line was created for middle school students to address the evolving needs of our tech-savvy youth such as gender-based bullying, sexual harassment and cyberbullying. It brings these issues to light in a way that is engaging and grounded in the realities our youth face from day to day.

This In the Classroom project is an effort to explore the nuances of bullying as youth transition into adulthood. The reality is that behaviors like bullying evolve into higher-risk behaviors like assault and sexual assault that have consequences far greater than a trip to the principal’s office.
In just 10 years, Creative Action has grown from a budget of $40,000 and one full-time employee to $1.5 million and 20 full-time employees. In that time, we grew to serve more than 16,000 kids in Central Texas, all from just 1,500 square feet of space.

In 2011, Creative Action was chosen through a competitive RFP process by Meredith Family Interests for a donation of land. In fall of 2014, we’ll open our doors to our new neighbors and to all of Central Texas to serve as the home of our expanding menu of programming and as a communal space for creative expression.
Journey Into the Story is a program for 2nd-3rd grade students that uses innovative art, theatre and project-based curriculum in the classroom to teach literacy.

Journey Into the Story increases students’ interest in the texts, enhances reading and retention skills, improves comprehension capabilities, ensures academic success, and makes the experience of reading relevant and fun.
It was fun when we got wet from the dolphin's jumps. I like the fun games that we all did so much. I wish it wouldn't be the last day so much. Thank you, love Adriana.
Youth Arts Lab

The Youth Arts Lab is an opportunity for middle and high school students to work directly with local, professional artists. For one day, students attend free workshops on theatre, dance, painting, and filmmaking. During the course of the workshops, teens will learn new techniques to create their own works of art. Their original works may go on to exhibit in the Youth Arts Festival in May. They also have the advantage of learning about Creative Action’s teen programs including Changing Lives and Color Squad.
Now is the time. Austin’s fastest growing population includes children and youth, most of them struggling with who they are and how they’ll find their place in the world.

Creative Action can transform these youth into Creative Artists, Courageous Allies, Critical Thinkers and Confident Leaders. This really forms the basis for all other learning – and for future leadership. Your donation means we can share our proven teaching strategies with more Central Texas children, youth and soon adults.

It’s time to take Creative Action. Donate today!