

ChoZen Inc

Arts Programming Overview + Teaching Artist(s) Bio

WORKSHOPS

Project S.H.I.N.E (January- June)

Ages 8-16 years old. A youth-led performing arts program that emerged amid the pandemic to evaluate the social emotional learning of young people living in the inner city of Louisville Kentucky. This program serves youth ages 8-16 year old. We serve up to 20 students in this program that operates both during school hours and after school.

Writing My Way Out Tutoring (October- December) (March- May)

A seasonal program that provides supportive tutoring services during the fall, spring and summer for low to moderate income families. This tutoring program provides support in the following subjects; reading, writing, language arts for grades K12. This program operates after school serving up to 10 students per semester. Releve Homeschool is a Homeschool Co-op is a year round child development program for youth ages 3-9 yrs. Our curriculum includes the following learning objectives; social emotional learning, academic enrichment, music therapy and expressive art lessons and activities for low to moderate income families in the inner city of Louisville KY.

Poetry Jam Camp 2023 (Summer July or August) grades 1st-8th

Annual summer arts camp that collaborates with local artists and community agencies to expose inner city youth grades 1-12 to multiple art mediums in a day camp. This program serves anywhere from 15-25 youth during the summer break.

Write On Wednesday (Fall & Spring) Ages 25 yrs-70 yrs old

Literature and publication program collaborates with Reedmywords Inc, a creative and professional writing agency to provide creative and formal writing services for youth and adults. The objective of our programs and activities is to develop formal and creative writing skills, share stories of BIPOC, and develop writers for publication. This program serves up to 5 individuals every semester both online and in person. Our programs and activities follow the 12 month calendar year. We serve 50-75 individuals annually. Below is our current 23-22 calendar of activities;

Fall (October- December) - Writing My Way Out Tutoring, Treblon Writing Workshop Series (Write On , Malaysia Makes Fruits & Veggies (Harvest Season)

Winter/Spring/Summer (January- June) - Project S.H.I.N.E Spring (Mar- May)- Writing My Way Out Tutoring, Treblon Writing Workshop Series (Write On Wednesday), Malaysia Makes Fruits & Veggies (Seeding Season)

Summer (July- August)- Poetry Jam Camp, Malaysia Makes Fruits & Veggies (Harvest Season)

Artist Bio

A member/chairwoman of The Buttafly Center since 2013, Jasemine "Jazzy J" Reed began her career in arts and entertainment first as a performer in Louisville Kentucky's spoken word poetry scene beginning in 2015. She self published her first chapbook of poetry in 2016 "Atonement...Thoughts & Reflections of A Poet," and began a career as a teaching artist for public and private school Co-Op's. Mrs. Reed is a 2019 MFA graduate of Spalding University School of Creative & Professional Writing. Mrs. Reed is the founder of Reedmywords Inc, a formal and creative writing agency that provides creative and formal writing services to youth and adults. In 2020 Mrs. Reed co wrote and directed her first stage play/poetic short film Stray, a community advocacy project against gun violence in urban communities. She is the owner of I Aint Your Aunt Jemima Podcast and the executive director of ChoZen Inc whose mission is to cultivate confidence and emotional intelligence by sharing the lost stories of BIPOC and advocating traditional healing practices of members of a subculture.

ChoZen Inc leverages its resources via partnerships. We pride ourselves on creating economic and portfolio building opportunities to youth, young adults and local teaching artist. Many if not all of our programs and activities involve the collaboration with contracted artists or individuals whose practice include any one of the following art mediums; visual/mixed media artist, creative writers, performing arts, theater, dance, drumming, poetry and spoken word.

Below are examples of teaching artist with whom we have collaborated with;

Ashley Screetch is a self taught artist beginning at the tender age of 12. Ms. Screetch's art mediums include mixed media, abstract and urban art. In 2017 Ms. Screetch founded The Paint Club a non profit organization that coordinates and hosts sip and paint events, art assembled kits and visual art workshops for community agencies and academic institutions. Her most notable projects include, "Melanated Motherhood" of 2019, a mural project she completed inside of The Buttafly Center, a non profit organization that focuses on the empowerment of women. Ms. Screetch is currently the lead art instructor at West End School and The Buttafly School, a homeschool Co-op program.

Artistic Content of Programming

The artist content of our programming falls under our first initiative named P.A.A.E (Performing Arts & Academic Enrichment)- P.A.A.E provides fundamental elements and training needed for literacy and performance development. Our programs and activities are created to improve the educational and artistic skill development of youth ages 4-24 years old. We achieve this mission via mentorship, spoken word, theater, dance, music, visual arts, drumming and tutoring. Our workshops include the participation of local teaching artists both youth and adults who want to build their artistic resume and practice via paid internships and artist stipend. As a part of their participation teaching artists receive a complimentary artist bio, recommendation or letter of support that they can use to apply for capacity building.

- Project S.H.I.N.E (securing Hope In A New Earth)
- Writing My Way Out Tutoring
- Releve Homeschool

We measure the effectiveness of our program via the following ways;

- Post program survey
- Registration
- Participants turn around
- Self Assessment
- Event sign in sheet
- Monetary support raised
- Number of resources distributed (basic needs, academic tools, holiday/back to school givebacks)

Educational Content of Programming

The educational content of our programming is a part of our second initiative, Literature & Publication w/Reedmywords Inc- Our literature and publication collaborates with Reedmywords Inc, a creative and professional writing agency to provide creative and formal writing services for youth and adults. The objective of our programs and activities is to develop formal and creative writing skills, share stories and writing coach for writers seeking publication. This program also advocates emotional wellness, incorporating the use of essential oils and storytelling/writing as a coping mechanism and form of talk therapy for participants experiencing mental and emotional distress.

- Treblon Writing Workshop Series
- The Folxlore Project
- The Douglas Collective

Additionally, we incorporate emotional intelligence via our wellness initiative- Our wellness initiative relies on community partnerships with local holistic health practitioners, naturopathy, community resources and health practices including meditation/wellness, food desserts and medicinal plant-based medicine.

- Malaysia's Fruit & Veggie Garden (advocating food security through activities with urban agriculturalist)
- Holistic Health care kit from TIF (Referral based partnership with Tip If Forward Inc) (advocating holistic health approach)

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Process for hiring, training, and evaluating performance/effectiveness.

As teaching artists we evaluate the effectiveness of our strategies via participant turn around. We can measure using the number of students that register for more than one program or the number of student graduates who come back to help with our programs and activities. Following every program is a post program survey given to participants as well as parents and guardians who report on the outcome of the topics discussed as well as a feedback section for suggestions for improvement. In addition to these surveys we are a part of a network of other youth programs in the Metro who receive resources on staff training and staff/program evaluations twice a year. These external assessments involve direct observation of our programming after which the results are shared with us that details what the observation reports according to a social emotional learning and academic strategy rubric.

How are participants of all backgrounds and abilities included in programming?

We ensure the inclusion of participants of all backgrounds and abilities via our non discrimination policy with all registered households. This Policy states the following; ChoZen Inc is committed in policy, principle and practice to maintaining an environment which prohibits discriminatory behaviors and provides equal opportunity for all persons. ChoZen Inc affirms its commitment to provide a welcoming and respectful work and educational environment in which all individuals within the urban community and beyond may benefit from each other's experiences and foster mutual respect and appreciation of divergent views.

ChoZen Inc prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical disability, political belief or affiliation, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression, genetic information and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under state or federal law in any aspect of the access to, admission or treatment of students in the programs and activities, or in employment and application for employment. Furthermore, ChoZen Inc policy includes prohibitions of harassment of students and employees, i.e. racial harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation for filing complaints of discrimination.

How do we engage teachers and community center staff before, during, and after programming?

We engage teachers and community center staff prior to the programming by hosting a pre program orientation/or informational session. Whether in person or virtual ChoZen Inc shares the program initiatives and welcomes creative solutions/suggestions from teachers and community center staff for achieving these initiatives. ChoZen Inc prides itself on building positive rapport with all participants and offering a peaceful and bully free learning environment. During programming we engage teachers and community members via delegated tasks and duties. We prioritize collective work therefore everyone has a chance to contribute to the execution of activities that are in line with program expectations and flexible to the teacher and or community center staff skill level. Following the completion of the program all teachers and community staff receive a thank you note and post program survey to report their satisfaction and or take aways from the program.

How do we engage participants in the creative and learning process?

As a part of Chozen's Inc initiative, we engage participants in the creative and learning process using culturally relevant strategies for improving the quality of life for all inner-city, suburban and rural residents. The mindset and skill set of our youth is deathly dependent on the number of healthy and safe spaces young people have access to with missions rooted in self improvement and productivity. Our biggest priority is to combat the impact of negative and counterproductive media influence. We aim to give youth and young adults basic foundational skills that improve self confidence, self identity and therefore a world that they can see themselves in with the mentorship from individuals with similar backgrounds.