

Steam Exchange Community Arts Center

Arts Programming Overview + Teaching Artist(s) Bio

PROGRAMMING

Steam Exchange (StEx) offers free Tues-Fri afterschool Art/STEAM Classes and 6 weeks of summer programs for youth ages 6-21 in Smoketown. With small classes, we provide the mentoring needed to help youth improve social-emotional skills. Current weekly classes include: Social Justice Fashion- middle and high school youth use fashion to convey a message; STEAM Adventures- a partnership with Jefferson Memorial Forest with field trips to JMF for STEAM programming; StEx Scouts- elementary boys earn badges in art and STEAM; Girl Scouts- elementary girls earn badges in art and STEAM; and Music Mixing collaborative class with local Deejay group, Rhythm Science Sound. Our internship program provides youth 14-21 with paid internships and the opportunity to gain responsibility and leadership experience. StEx also hosts a weekly Open Studio for young adults to create screen printed products. We also teach regular workshops with partner organizations including 3 different Family and Children's Place sites, Boys and Girls Club, and Louisville Montessori School. We have participated as enrichment providers for JCPS's Backpack League summer program for the past 2 summers. Through the Backpack League, we taught at over 20 additional locations last summer. Our classes with partner organizations serve preschool through high school students. Each year, we serve around 30 youth on a weekly basis through our free Smoketown classes and several hundred youth through classes with partner organizations throughout the year

Since 2014, StEx has taught classes in STEAM, screen printing, bookbinding, mural painting, drawing, textiles, jewelry, sculpture, stop motion, computer programming, outdoor art and more. We facilitate camps and host SummerWorks internships each summer. StEx youth have designed/painted 3 public murals, completed 2 collaborative screen printed books with out of state youth, designed/built a canoe, and organized 3 feminist fashion shows. Classes change yearly based on youth interests and needs.

Teaching Artist(s) Bios(s)

Caitlin Kannapell is a multi-media artist living and working in Louisville, KY. She is Co-founder and CoDirector of Steam Exchange. Caitlin has a BA in mathematics from Earlham College in Richmond, IN. She has been teaching young adults and adults various academic subjects in non-traditional learning environments for the past 15 years. Caitlin also has experience leading summer and after school programs focusing on community service, urban agriculture and arts for middle and high school aged youth in the California and Smoketown neighborhoods.

Rachel Mauser is a multimedia artist living and working in Louisville, Kentucky. She is Co-Founder and Co-Director of Steam Exchange. Rachel holds a BFA in painting and art education from Murray State University. She has taught art workshops and participated in art exhibitions nationally and internationally. Rachel completed the 2-year Core Fellowship at Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina in 2014 and was a recipient of the Center for Craft Creativity and Design's Windgate Fellowship in 2011 and the Windgate Project Grant in 2016.

Lindsay Severance is a teacher and an art enthusiast living and working in Louisville, Kentucky. She was born and raised in Gainesville, Florida, and moved to Louisville in 2017. Lindsay is a first-generation college graduate who has a BA in biology from The University of Florida with a focus on secondary education. Lindsay has been working with youth for over 10 years, including working in after-school programs at low-income elementary schools, substitute teaching in middle schools, coaching girls lacrosse in high schools, and working many summers as a counselor. Lindsay loves to incorporate art in her teaching, especially when it relates to science. Lindsay has been teaching with Steam Exchange since 2019.

Artistic Content of Programming

Steam Exchange is practiced at teaching a variety of artistic skills and media. Our content varies based on student interests. We collaborate with youth and partner organizations to design high engagement, high interest projects. We have taught workshops in the following specific art media: air dry clay, sculpey clay, sculpture, screen printing, graphic design, collaborative design, drawing, painting, mural painting, stop motion animation, digital and pinhole photography, fashion design, quilt making, weaving, bookbinding, paper marbling, paper mache, plaster masks, outdoor art and jewelry. When teaching our regular StEx programming we measure the following outcomes:

Outcome 1: Participating Steam Exchange youth will improve social and emotional development in at least one category by the end of the program year. StEx will complete a Staff Rating for Youth Behavior (SRYB) evaluation for each student participating in weekly Steam Exchange programming. A pre and post, observation-based assessment will help the StEx identify youth growth in the following areas: Expresses Emotion Knowledge, Behaviorally Manages Emotions, Displays Social-Role Mastery, and Displays Goal-Striving Mastery

Outcome 2: Participating Steam Exchange Youth will develop competency in at least two art media by the end of the program year. StEx will document and exhibit (digitally and/or physically) the long-term art projects completed by each youth.

When teaching with partner organizations, outcomes are determined by tracking completed student projects. We are in the process of tying our projects to current curriculum standards to be able to evaluate progress that way as well.

Educational Content of Programming

Steam Exchange teaches a variety of programs but most of our programs fall under the category of steAm (STEAM with a big 'A'). We use the arts to help teach STEM skills. We particularly like to collaborate with our partner organizations to create a project that supports or reinforces what the students are already learning in that program. Examples of our more STEAM related projects include: film canister rockets, create a moon lander, giant bubbles, the science of slime, bookbinder's math, water science, catapults, and animal science. These are programs that we teach to StEx students as well as partner organizations.

Other projects that focus on art making skills and processes prompt youth to reflect on themselves, their values, and social justice. Youth improve writing skills through composing reflective writing or artist statements.

The outcomes we use to measure these programs include:

Outcome 1: By the end of the program year, increase the number of youth participating in StEx workshops who do not currently have access to other STEAM programming during or after school.

Outcome 2: Students will gain understanding of the subject matter taught. This is measured with a pre and post assessment, as well as participation in and completion of the project.

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

Steam Exchange has 3 teaching artists who would be the primary teachers for this program. Rachel and Caitlin are the co-founders and co-directors of StEx and have been teaching at StEx since its inception in 2014. Rachel also has a degree in art education and Caitlin taught at Youthbuild Louisville and the JCPS Adult Education for years before co-founding StEx. We have a very strict process for hiring new teaching artists involving interviews and co-teaching with Caitlin and Rachel for many workshop series before solo teaching. Currently the only other lead teaching artist at StEx besides Rachel and Caitlin is Lindsay. Lindsay has worked for StEx for the past 3 years and has been our primary teacher for the Backpack League two summers in a row. Lindsay had extensive teaching experience before working at StEx and is a fabulous teacher! We also have youth and young adult interns who often co-teach with us. Our interns help our classes run smoothly in terms of material distribution and helping students one-on-one who are struggling with the project.

StEx is part of Metro United Way's BLOCS program. Through this program, we have access to regular training that all staff can attend. Trainings cover topics such as youth mental health, diversity, equity, and more. Through BLOCS we also have the opportunity to do an internal evaluation and external evaluation twice a program year as well as a program improvement plan. These evaluations help Steam Exchange evaluate the quality of our program and the quality of our teaching. It also provides us with a framework for improvement every year. StEx has participated in BLOCS since 2017.

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

Historically disinvested, Smoketown has few job opportunities and youth programs. StEx works toward greater equity by amplifying voice, showcasing creativity and leadership, and co-creating collaborative, public art with youth of color & low-income youth. Dialogue with Smoketown residents directly shapes workshop content and community projects. All of the programs at our art center are free for Smoketown youth.

In regards to our classes with partner organizations. We try to customize our lessons to meet the needs of the group we are teaching. Our youth interns help keep an eye on students who may be struggling with the project and give us an extra set of eyes in the classroom. Since all of our teaching artists have experience teaching preschool through young adults, we are well versed in adapting lessons to different age groups and skill levels. Years teaching at StEx and with partner organizations have given us lots of experience working with youth from a variety of backgrounds and abilities. We try to always have things planned for students who work faster, and never leave a student behind when working on a project. We have a lot of practice with patience and helping students work through challenging projects.

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

Before teaching we email and/or call the community center to begin conversations on the logistics of the program. We ask the community centers what they are currently teaching the students, what they want us to teach (We have a variety of 1-2 day projects as well as longer term projects), where the classes are located, what the space is like (sometimes we need access to water), when they want us to come teach, how many students they will have participating, and if there is anything we should know about the students ahead of time to be able to meet their needs.

During the program, we prefer to have at least 1 teacher from the site in the classroom with us, especially if we are coming for just 1 or 2 workshop sessions. The teachers know their students best and will have a better understanding of what their students need. We let the teachers decide what this looks like for them. Sometimes the teachers want to participate in the project! Sometimes they like to walk around and help the students, and sometimes they work on their own thing but intervene as needed. After the project, we ask teachers/community centers for feedback on our lesson.

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

We think students learn best and stay engaged if they are being challenged in multiple ways. We try to provide opportunities for youth to work with their hands, utilize their minds, and exercise their creativity all at the same time. Projects vary from individual work to group work. We also provide programming that is age appropriate and paced accordingly. We encourage students to ask questions of us and their peers. Our staff genuinely enjoy teaching and are passionate about sharing our lessons with

students. I have found that this is the most important key to engagement. When the teacher is excited about what they are teaching, the students catch on to that excitement, and remain engaged.