



Songs for Justice, Amplifying Youth Voices

Alex Colon

WHO

Who was involved?

The Mix: Provided the space and studio for us to utilize with the students within their facility.

Creative Hope Studios: Installed recording studios in after-school facilities and juvenile detention centers to provide a safe space for our youth.

Music For Everyone: Provided the Songs for Justice platform.

Sir Dominique Jordan: Offered his consulting services and knowledge of social issues within school facilities and the fight for better education. Dominique has been a mentor and teacher within SDOL for over 10 years and I trusted he would help bring this vision to life.

Elume: Melisa and Sarah of Elume LLC helped us bring light to the sustainability of this program, not only within the 4 walls of The Mix but how to take it to other facilities and install the program.

F&M: Offered funding for this

Our community and youth

Who was the target audience / participants of your work?

Youth, 4th grade to 8th grade

WHAT

What were the goals?

The goal of this project is to amplify the voices of our youth. We sit and wonder why education is no longer being received the way it was 10-15 years ago, but never ask the actual students. The Ripple Creators Program teamed up with The Mix and Music For Everyone to create the next volume of Songs for Justice, but this time from the kid's perspective. At the end of our project, which will continue being worked on for the next year, will consist of a series of 45" vinyl's that will be pressed and distributed to The Mix, our chosen non-profit. SIDE A will consist of a song that our students fully produced, recorded, and wrote while SIDE B will consist of a poem or

historical speech. Included inside of the vinyl cover will be artwork done by our youth relating to the subject matter spoken about.

What were the key activities completed?

Our youth has immersed themselves in the creative writing process, given prompts and working through personal experiences to help the listener relate.

The students have successfully produced, recorded, and wrote 1 (3:00) song.

As a collective, mentors and students, we worked together to curate an experience for the community where every student was able to showcase their art and hard work.

How was the grant money instrumental to your work?

The grant money given to me by F&M not only allowed me to bring this project to life but taught me valuable business lessons such as budgeting and fund allocation. This money opened a whole new world of possibilities for the students and showed them that dreams really can become a reality, with hard work and continuous effort. Thanks to this grant, we were able to put on "The Mix Kidz Music Festival", where parents were able to see their kids in a different light and the work they have been putting in these past few months. The festival also opened its doors to the community and offered a free meal, activities, and haircuts. I can say confidently that this money was redistributed into our very own community.



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ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

What were the main outcomes from the project?

The song the students came up with.

A safe space for kids to tell their story.

Amplification of the program's workings and success.

A tighter working bond between The Mix, Music for Everyone, and The Ripple Effect.

Insight on the needed work to be done within education and mental health.

What were the top ways the community was impacted?

Amplification of Youth Voices: The project aimed to amplify the voices of youth by providing them with a platform to express themselves through music and poetry. By involving students in the creation of the Songs for Justice album, the project encouraged their active participation and allowed their perspectives to be heard.

Engaging Students in Education: The project recognized the importance of understanding the changing dynamics of education. By involving students in the process and allowing them to contribute their ideas, the project sought to bridge the gap between educators and students, fostering a more inclusive and student-centric approach to education.

Collaboration with Non-Profit Organizations: The Ripple Creators Program collaborated with The Mix and Music for Everyone to create the next Songs for Justice volume. This collaboration not only provided opportunities for students to work alongside professionals in the music industry but also strengthened ties between the project and these non-profit organizations, creating a network of support for future endeavors.

Cultural and Artistic Expression: The vinyl covers of the album included artwork created by the youth, reflecting the subject matter explored in the songs and poems. This aspect of the project allowed students to express themselves artistically and showcase their creativity, further empowering them and encouraging their artistic growth.

Community Involvement and Outreach: The grant money received from F&M facilitated the realization of the project and enabled the organization of "The Mix Kidz Music Festival." This event not only provided a platform for students to showcase their work but also opened its doors to the community. The festival offered free meals, activities, and haircuts, demonstrating the project's commitment to giving back to the community and fostering a sense of unity and support.

Looking toward the future, what is the main goal?

Who can be involved?

As we continue to chip away at this project, we would like to get more creatives, mentors, and teachers involved. The future vision of this project and program is to implement and install it in other facilities around Lancaster and the Central PA region. The Ripple Creators Program has successfully landed inside of the Boys & Girls Club Lancaster, IU13, and Manos House. As we garner more funding and support for the Songs for Justice project, we can expand it to those facilities as well. Overall, the goal of this program is to expand across the nation to provide community safe spaces within the arts. Music educates and heals.