

Local students impacting future generations through art education

Evelyn Lespinasse, a member of the Treasure Coast community. This story is neither endorsed by nor affiliated with this site.

Originally published 02:16 p.m., March 27, 2013

Updated 02:17 p.m., March 27, 2013

STUART — If you walk into the Costella Williams Learning Center in New Monrovia Park in Stuart on a Thursday afternoon, you will see many happy children running about, singing, laughing and taking part in a variety of after-school activities.

Even more inspiring, is the ability to see first-hand how one generation of students is working to positively influence a younger generation.

Once a week, students from The Pine School's Artists for a Cause (A4AC) Club go to the center to share their talents and passion for the arts with younger students in the Residents Empowering All Children's Hope (R.E.A.C.H) after-school program.

The A4AC Club is a student-chapter of the local nonprofit organization, Artists for a Cause, which aims to improve communities through various artistic endeavors. By having a club at The Pine School, the organization is able to broaden its reach and assist students in using their artistic abilities to better their community.

The A4AC Club is made up of students from The Pine School's Upper School and is led by teacher sponsor Adison Lax. The club is divided into two focuses, the "Share the Arts" program and the "Art as Therapy" program. These programs allow A4AC Club students to gain leadership skills, showcase their talents and teach others how artistic expression can improve mental and physical health.

"Our students love working with the younger students in the R.E.A.C.H program and each week they arrive ready for us to teach them something new. It brings out the best in everyone." says teacher sponsor Adison Lax. Upon their arrival, the young students can be found tugging at the shirts of A4AC club members asking: "Can you help me write a song?" or collectively chanting "We want a song!" in hopes that A4AC Club president, Kevin Paul will bring out his guitar and play for them.

"It's great to see the students so eager to learn more about the arts. Whether it's through drawing, dancing, singing or writing, we want to be able to teach them that through the arts they can creatively and safely express themselves," said Paul.

Artists for a Cause founder Terry Barber is amazed at the progress the A4AC Club program has made in just two years.

“This program is being spearheaded by some of our most talented and responsible student leaders,” Barber explained. “The students’ commitment, combined with guidance and direction from their teacher sponsors is why this program has been such a success. It’s our goal to continue providing students with arts-education opportunities and delve deeper into the therapeutic benefits of the arts.”

If your school is interested in starting an A4AC student club, call 772-419-8778 or email info@a4ac.org for more information.

About Artists for a Cause

Artists for a Cause is a Stuart-based, national, nonprofit organization that improves communities using art as a catalyst to achieve incredible results. Some programs help artists and charities get the most out of their collaboration, while others produce results directly, by feeding the poor, healing the sick, or solving other problems through unique artistic solutions.

Current programs include Dance for Food, Therapeutic Arts, Donated Instrument Closet, Classical for Schools, A4AC Scholarships, A4AC High School Clubs, Homeless Musical Ensemble, Artist Auction Packages and Benefit Concerts – all of which improve communities through artistic endeavors.

Among the organizations receiving support from Artists for a Cause Inc. are the Boys and Girls Club of Martin County, Helping People Succeed, Treasure Coast Food Bank, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, House of Hope, Sailfish Point Foundation, Arc Broward, Farmworker Coordinating Council of Palm Beach and more, as well as hundreds of artists in every genre.

To learn more about A4AC, please visit www.a4ac.org, call 772-419-8778 or email info@a4ac.org. There is free registration for artists, charities, and volunteers on the website.

This story is contributed by a member of the community and is neither endorsed nor affiliated with TCPalm.

This story is contributed by a member of the Treasure Coast community and is neither endorsed by nor affiliated with this site.

