



**COMPAS**  
MAKING CREATORS

**Your COMPAS  
Impact Report  
Fiscal Year 2022**







Teaching Artist Stefon  
"Bionik" Taylor teaching  
original song made with  
youth at the City of  
Eden Prairie

# COMPAS Mission & Vision

## Mission

COMPAS delivers creative experiences that unleash the potential within all of us.

## Vision

Minnesota thrives when all of us have access to creative opportunities that enrich lives and communities.

# *2022 Reflections – You made the magic possible*

Dear COMPAS friends,

What an amazing year this has been! We have a lot of exciting news to share with you, and all of it is a direct result of your support.

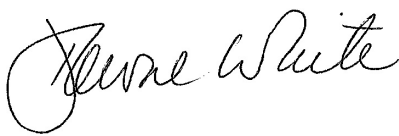
Thanks to you, **57,000** Minnesotans - people across the state who represented at least three different generations - experienced the joy of creativity this year. They painted, produced original music, explored spoken word poetry, made 3D dioramas, danced, wrote poems, and much more. Each one of them turned their thoughts, feelings, and experiences into works of art that expressed their unique creative vision.

The COMPAS manifesto, which is, essentially, the organization's belief system (it can be found on our website at [compas.org](http://compas.org)) states that *creativity is precious, essential, elemental, and life-giving*. It's also healing, which is particularly needed right now as the world enters the third year of the COVID pandemic. This era is, of course, made even more difficult by additional challenges like climate change, rising inequalities, social injustice, and the struggle to find health and balance in our lives. Fortunately, research has shown time and again that the arts and engaging in acts of creativity are healing, particularly during times of crisis, confusion, and unrest. Being creative helps us understand and process challenges that feel overwhelming or insurmountable. It reminds us that we're not alone and that we're sharing a universal human experience.

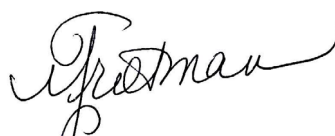
We don't think it's a coincidence that this year, during this challenging time, site programming increased significantly in almost all COMPAS program areas, some by as much as **126 percent!** Clearly, there was a widespread desire for the healing power of creativity. And because of your support, we were able to meet that pressing need.

We warmly encourage you to read all of this report, because we know you'll be inspired. On each page, you'll see evidence of how you are fueling artistry that heals and connects. You are bringing to life a vision for a renewed, refreshed, and reinvigorated world. And you're providing sorely needed comfort for children, teens, and adults across Minnesota.

*This work has never been more important. Thank YOU for making it possible!*



**Dawne Brown White**  
Executive Director  
[dawne@compas.org](mailto:dawne@compas.org)



**Yvette Trotman**  
Board President



**Elizabeth Sheets**  
President-Elect



# Creative experiences improve mental health for the most vulnerable: children and adolescents

You've probably heard that mental health crises among children and adolescents are on the rise. The pandemic, school closures, financial hardships, and social isolation have unleashed a cascade of negative emotions in many students — from fear and anxiety to stress and depression that have pushed many young people's mental health emergency to the breaking point. Health experts have actually called this a national emergency.

But here's some good news: Research shows that participation in the arts and other creative experiences improves young people's well-being. In fact, as one researcher from Rutgers University's Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab recently stated, "Arts educators are a secret weapon in fostering positive mental health for kids."

Enter COMPAS teaching artists who, thanks to our generous donors, are exactly the type of 'secret weapon' he's talking about. Because of you, they are improving the well-being of children and teens right in their own classrooms. The power of this work is significant and best illustrated with a story about the impact of a COMPAS Teaching Artist and a creative experience on one student and her classmates.

*Akira\* is a fifth grader. With the stresses of the pandemic and a couple of moves in recent years, she had struggled in school. When her family made another move, Akira joined Regina Skoy's classroom at Highland Elementary in Columbia Heights.*

*Ms. Skoy shared that Akira was very quiet, and after a few weeks at her new school, she still hadn't found a friend group. But things turned around for Akira when COMPAS Teaching Artist Alanna Morris came into her classroom to infuse learning with creativity.*

*"Miss Alanna" got the kids moving and grooving during a week-long Social Dance residency. Alanna explained that lots of kids connect with Social Dance because it comes from the street instead of an institution. Plus, it gets the kids talking to each other, laughing, and getting creative as they learn dance and vocal patterns, then make up new steps.*

*Akira was hooked. Ms. Skoy said, "Dancing was something Akira was really good at, and having that creative outlet enabled her to make friends and become a leader in the classroom. During Miss Alanna's residency, Akira began opening up and sharing more about her life outside of school. It was wonderful to see her blossom!"*

*Alanna explained, "We did a lot together, not just movement. There was a fair amount of singing and rhythm-making and music-making with our bodies. It's hard not to feel good when..."*



you're singing at the top of your lungs and stomping, clapping, and moving."

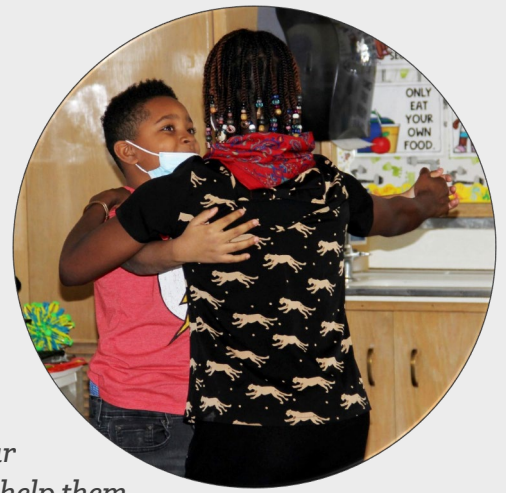
Again, research backs this up. It shows that taking part in creative experiences helps kids channel the big emotions that come up during turbulent times. It also helps kids form meaningful bonds with others. This has been especially challenging during the pandemic for all kids, not just Akira. There are many students like Akira... students who attend schools where almost 75% of kids qualify for free or reduced-price lunch... students whose well-being is suffering...students who *NEED* creative outlets more than ever.

You are what it takes for students to have the same experience as Akira. Your support has ensured that more students have had creative experiences that help them channel those big emotions, connect with others, and discover their talents.

Fifth graders might not always find the right words to express themselves. But their actions tell us when support makes a difference in their lives. As Ms. Skoy told us, "On the last day (after requesting permission), one of the students ran to the front of the room and gave Miss Alanna a hug. Other students joined in until there was a 'hug pile' around Miss Alanna."

Thank you, donors! We hope you feel that 'hug pile' around you, too. Your financial support is vital, and it is so appreciated! You are changing lives!

\*Akira is a pseudonym



2021-2022 Selected Works from the COMPAS Creative Classroom Program

## Believer

Finding your way when you're down  
When you're broken into pieces  
You hurt and you heal  
Come on just feel

What you believe, you can achieve  
Get out of your way you can do it

I believe there is hope even when I think hope is gone  
I believe the divine is real  
I believe I'm brave  
I believe in myself  
I believe in trying something new  
I'm a believer

Success is not your enemy  
Hold on to your bravery  
Be bold and real  
Strong as steel

This year marks our 43<sup>rd</sup> Anthology of student writing, *We Are Birds Collecting Sticks...*

**Ms. Gupton's Classroom**, Grade 3  
Park Elementary, Le Sueur  
Teaching Artist: Kashimana Ahua



# COMPAS Programs: Creative Community

**You inspired** people in communities throughout the state with artist-led creative experiences in libraries, shelters for people experiencing homelessness or domestic violence; social service organizations that serve adults living with physical, intellectual or mental health disabilities; jails; youth organizations; community centers; and beyond.

34,441\*  
people

Creative Community reached people of all ages!

2,017  
people

Artful Aging™ programs inspired older adults in residential and community facilities with creative experiences that banish social isolation and build new skills.

1,462  
people

Access Arts empowered people of all abilities through creating and connecting with each other through the arts.

9,685  
people

Arts in Healthcare made a triumphant return to Children's Hospital after a two-year break and reached thousands through their Star Studio broadcasts.

\*Creative Community participants include Artful Aging™, Access Arts & Arts in Healthcare





# COMPAS Programs: Creative Classroom

**You believe** in quality education for all children and your support of COMPAS' Creative Classroom program makes a significant contribution to improving their experience.



Teaching Artist Christian Adeti teaching West African drumming at Lowell Elementary in Duluth

22,680

People who connected with a COMPAS Teaching Artist at K-12 schools

3,175

Hours students spent igniting their creativity through a residency, workshop or performance.

57,121

Total number of people in all COMPAS programs you inspired with creativity this year.

## You've made the difference!

"One participant who self-proclaimed himself as "not" an artist ended up realizing that he had a wonderfully unique perspective on the world around him."  
– Classroom teacher

"One student is a quiet boy who had a hard time adjusting to being back in school after distance learning. He had been almost lethargic. I did not anticipate that he would be interested in creative movement, but he loved it. He laughed and seemed to come out of his shell, especially when we did the dragonfly life cycle dance. He was so energetic and had so much fun. I really feel like he got a chance to explore a new aspect of his personality and his interests."  
– Classroom teacher



# COMPAS Teaching Artists

You've brought more than 120 Minnesota-based COMPAS Teaching Artists into classrooms, libraries, community centers, older adult residential centers, and hospitals!



COMPAS Teaching Artists Aimee K. Bryant, Chiaki O'Brien, Emmett Ramstad and Karla Nweje at Creative Chops event

22

Teaching artists broadcast their program in a healthcare facility

6,316 hours spent providing creative experiences

185 performances at schools, libraries, older adult residential centers & parks

79 schools hosted a program

326 weeks of residency programs

60 older adult residencies

40 school districts served



# Financials

## FY 2022 REVENUE:

\$1,624,133

- Foundation & Corporate Support: \$532,286
- Program Service Fees: \$798,223
- Government Grants: \$174,620
- Individual Donations: \$93,022
- Special Events: \$23,329
- In-kind Contribution: \$6,860
- Misc. Revenue: \$761

## FY 2022 EXPENSES:

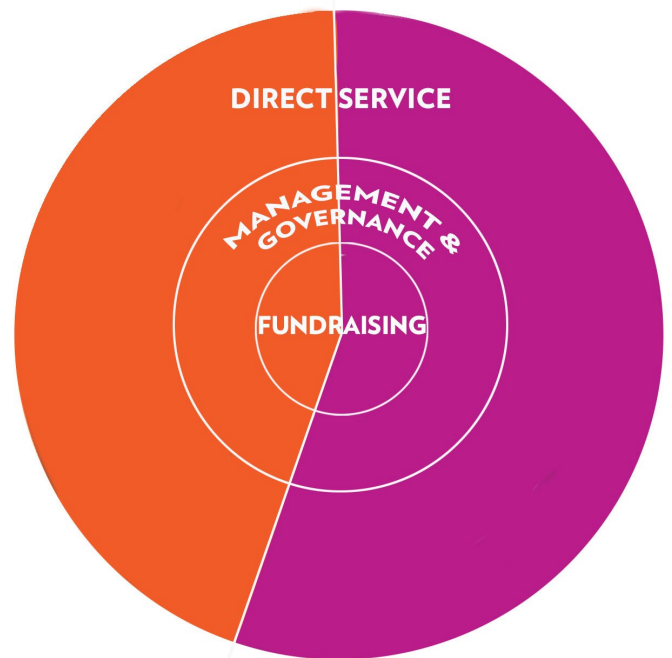
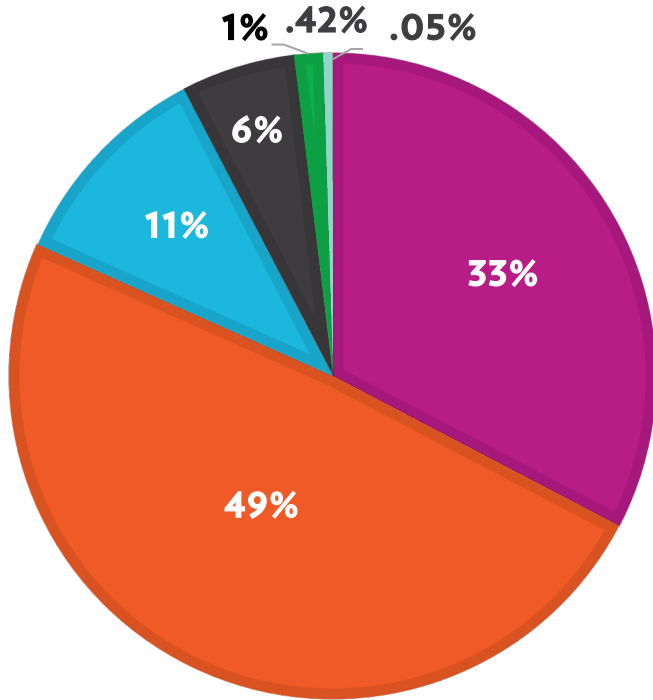
\$1,492,300

### Direct Service:

- Creative Community \$705,499
- Creative Classroom \$515,740

### Core Mission Support:

- Management & Governance \$182,783
- Fundraising \$88,278



Students at Bruce Vento Elementary working with Teaching Artist Djenane Saint Juste



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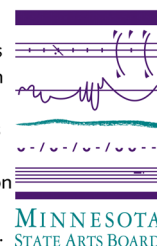
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\* Includes matching gifts  
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# Government



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



A special thank you to the Saint Paul Jaycee's Foundation for selecting COMPAS to continue the tradition of their Les Farrington Best 100 exhibit. We are honored to create opportunities for talented East Metro middle and high school students to showcase their visual art in the renamed Emerging Young Artists juried exhibit and to win awards.



Students in the inaugural Emerging Young Artists program



# Individuals

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*Thank you!*



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(2) Gift given in memory of Donald A. Bajus

(3) Gift given in memory of Elizabeth Winship

(4) Gift given in honor of Dawne Brown White

*Thank you!*



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\*FY22 staff



Painting done with participants  
at Cleveland Hi-Rise led by  
Teaching Artist Katrina Knutson