

COMPAS
MAKING CREATORS

Fiscal Year 2024

Impact Report

You turn dreams into reality!

Dear COMPAS friends,

What a milestone year this has been as we celebrate our 50th anniversary!

Thanks to your support, more than 49,000 of your friends, family, and neighbors explored their creative potential in COMPAS programs. Through painting, writing, performing, and more, they gave voice to their ideas and experiences—opportunities to connect, heal, and grow.

This year also reminded us of creativity's power to inspire, adapt, and unite. As part of our anniversary celebration, we launched Creativity Saves the World, a year-long initiative exploring how creativity can address today's challenges. This report highlights this important work. Creativity forges bonds, overcomes division, and shapes a brighter future.

At COMPAS, we see this daily: a child finding their voice in spoken word poetry, a teen building confidence through hip hop, or an elder capturing beauty while painting. Creativity transforms lives.

Your support makes this possible. Together, we're ensuring every Minnesotan has the chance to create, connect, and thrive.

Thank you for believing in creativity and helping build a brighter, more connected future, one story, brushstroke, and note at a time.

With gratitude and excitement,



Dawne Brown White
Executive Director



Liz Sheets
Board President



Young artists whose work was included in the 2024 Emerging Young Artist Juried Art Show and Gallery Exhibition

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.

Building community through creativity

Did you know creativity can bring joy, purpose, and connection to older adults? When they get the chance to create, whether it's through painting, music, dance, or storytelling, it's more than just a fun activity. It's a way to feel valued, to connect with others, and to rediscover the joy of making something meaningful.

Thanks to donors like you, COMPAS teaching artists make these moments happen daily. They show older adults that their stories matter, their voices are powerful, and it's never too late to create something special. That's the impact of your support.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the story of "This Lyngblomsten Stew," a project that celebrates the unique magic that happens when art becomes a bridge between people.

"We started as strangers, but we came out as friends. "

"This simple yet powerful sentiment perfectly captures the heart of "This Lyngblomsten Stew," a song created by 10 residents at Lyngblomsten Apartments, a residence for older adults in St. Paul. Guided by PolkaSol, a trio of Twin Cities musicians and COMPAS teaching artists, the group came together through the COMPAS Artful Aging™ program to share their stories and create something truly special.



Over nine weeks, participants explored songwriting, learned about music, and contributed lyrics that reflected their diverse lives and experiences. What began as strangers gathering to make a song became a celebration of community and connection. As a result, This Lyngblomsten Stew became more than music; it became a reflection of the group itself. As Holly Nelson, Director of Lifelong Learning & the Arts at Lyngblomsten, said, "The title is a wonderful metaphor for our community. Individuals from all walks of life came together, shared their stories, and created something unique."

For many participants, the experience was truly transformative. One person shared, "This made me feel alive again. It reminded me that I still have something to offer." Moments like these highlight just how vital creative experiences are for older adults. Research shows that engaging in the arts boosts mental health, sparks joy, and renews purpose.

Read the rest of the story on the next page.



Thanks to the generosity of donors, older adults are finding new ways to express themselves, connect with others, and celebrate their creativity through COMPAS programs.

"This Lyngblomsten Stew" is just one beautiful example of the harmony that occurs when art and community come together

Young authors whose work was included in the 2022-23 COMPAS Anthology of Student Writing. The photo was taken at the annual anthology reading event at the Minnesota History Center.

Celebrating 50 Years of Creativity

In March, COMPAS launched its 50th-anniversary year along with Creativity Saves the World, a yearlong initiative celebrating creativity's role in shaping a future of equity, justice, and inclusivity. Here are some highlights of Creativity Saves the World (thus far!).

Emerging Young Artists

The 50th anniversary year kicked off on March 7th at COMPAS's 3rd annual Emerging Young Artists Award Show and Gallery Exhibition Launch.

Eighty-two students from the East Metro submitted 571 total art pieces. Forty-eight were selected by the jury for inclusion in the exhibit. Seventeen awards were given to the emerging artists at the award show.



Emerging young artists



Award-winning young artist



Host Frank Sentwali recording an episode with young artists

Creativity on Tap Podcast

We launched a podcast this year called Creativity on Tap. Each episode brings together educators, artists, entrepreneurs, elected officials, parents, and other community leaders to discuss creativity and explore the question: What is creativity, and how can it solve the unique challenges facing today's world?

Find Creativity on Tap on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, YouTube, and its web home at: creativityontap.buzzsprout.com.

My Heart, Like a River

If my heart was a river, it would be spilling over the banks
Sunshine, reflecting light onto all the things that surround it
Like love beaming onto others

A warm current rushing through, as
happiness spreads throughout
Sometimes, this river may be frozen

A hard layer of ice covering,
protecting the flowing water
underneath It takes time to get
through that ice

But underneath you find wonderful things

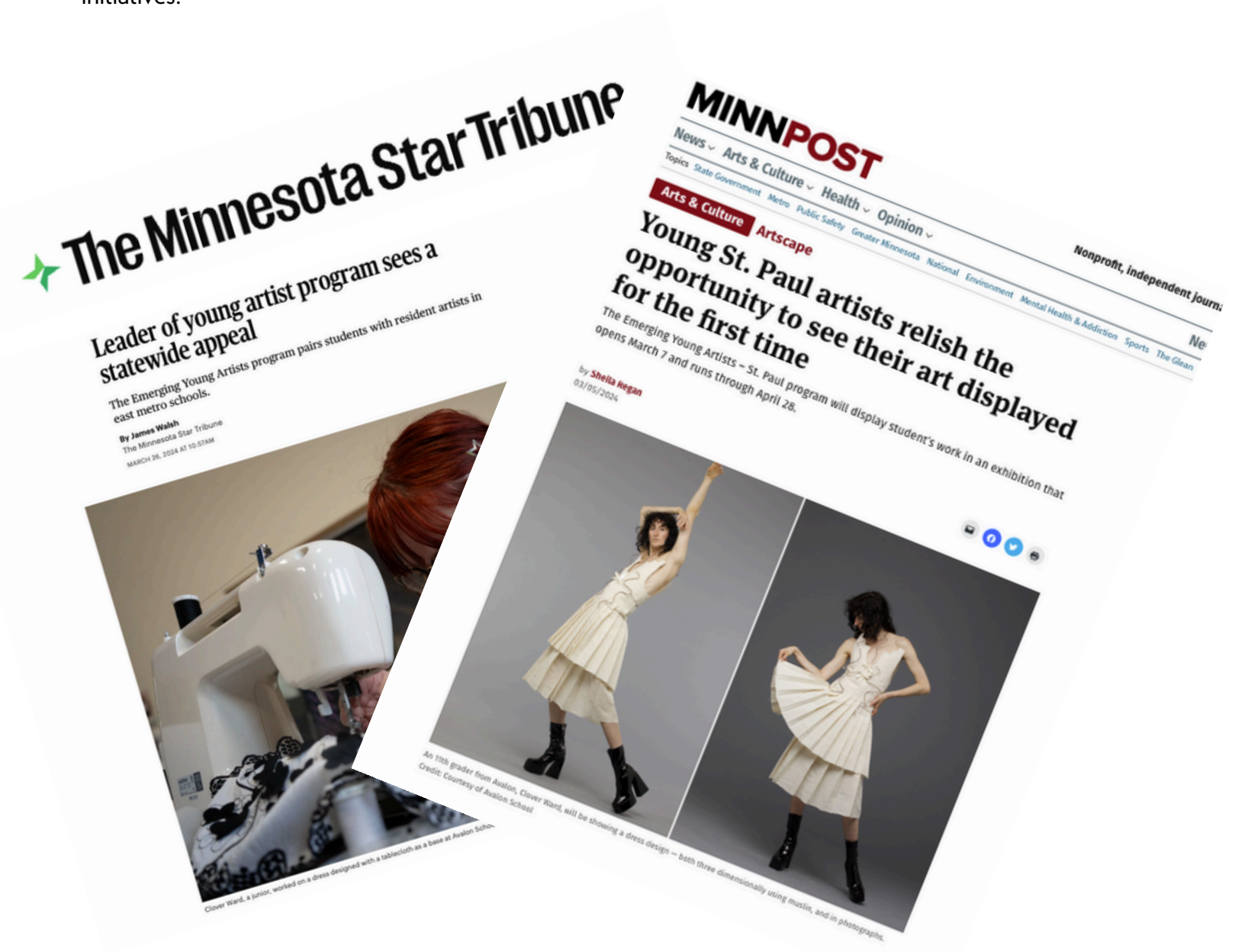
Graceyn Kvsager, Grade 8
Red Lake County Central School, Oklee
Teaching Artist: Desdamona

This year marks the 44th anthology of student writing:
a fire, a river, a window

Celebrating 50 Years of Creativity

COMPAS in the News

This year, our work was highlighted in several media outlets, showcasing the impact of our programs and the creativity we bring to communities, thanks to the support of our donors. These opportunities amplified our mission and introduced our work to new audiences, helping build greater awareness and support for our initiatives.



COMPAS Programs: Creative Community

You inspired thousands of Minnesotans!!

Thanks to you, communities across the state were energized and uplifted through artist-led creative programs in libraries, shelters for those facing homelessness or domestic violence, social service organizations supporting individuals with physical, intellectual, or mental health disabilities, jails, youth organizations, community centers, and more.

2,559

Older adults banished loneliness and were inspired by transformative, creative experiences during programs in residential and day program settings.

13,338

Minnesotans experienced the uplifting power of creativity through programs in community spaces like parks and libraries, youth programs, social service agencies, and more, turning these everyday places into vibrant hubs.

10,285

Minnesotans were energized by Arts in Healthcare programs, which offered outlets for self-expression, reducing stress, improving well-being, and fostering meaningful connections.

COMPAS Programs: Creative Classroom

You ignited learning for students across Minnesota!

Thanks to you, classrooms across the state were transformed into vibrant spaces of discovery and creativity, where K-12 students explored new ideas, expressed themselves through the arts, and found inspiration that will fuel their growth and learning for years to come.

22,925

The number of students that connected with a COMPAS teaching artist at school.

3,685

The number of hours COMPAS teaching artists connected with students, enriching their lives, and inspiring them with creative experiences that foster connection, growth, and self-expression.

49,107

The total number of people of all ages who experienced the power of creativity through COMPAS programs this year. The result was vibrant works of art, unique stories, and the discovery of boundless possibilities through hands-on artistic expression.

We thank our FY 24 donors!

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(1) Includes matching gifts
(2) Denotes gifts in memory of David White

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.





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1. *Includes matching gifts*
2. *In memory of David White*
3. *In memory of Earl Fossom*
4. *In memory of Brian Kopperud*
5. *In honor of Charlie Maguire*
6. *In honor of Mimi Stake*
7. *In honor of Dawne Brown White*
8. *In honor of Joan Linck*

Creative Legacy Circle

Emily Anne Tuttle

Jean West

Anonymous 2

In memory... Jean West

This year, COMPAS received a transformative gift from the estate of Jean West. Jean had a deep bond with COMPAS. She served on our board from 1997-1984. She was the vice president from 1981-82 and president from 1982-1983.

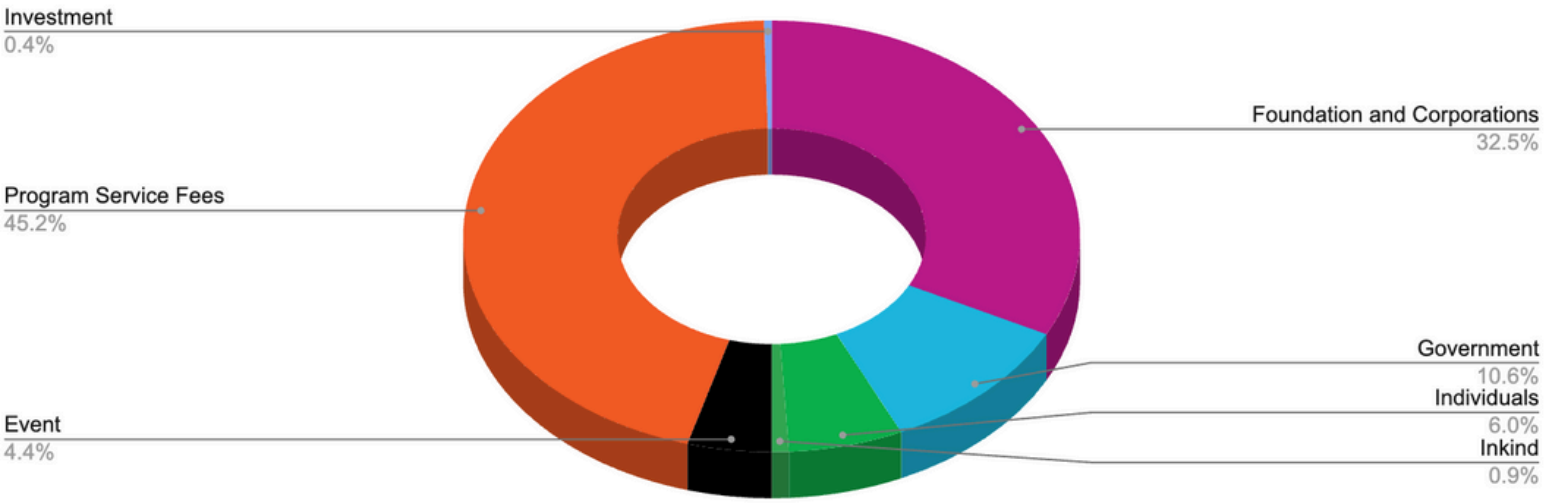
Her final gift will enable people across Minnesota to experience the joy of creativity. We are deeply grateful.

Financials

Fiscal Year 2024 Revenue

$1,729,614

- **Foundation and Corporate Support = $561,951**
- **Program Service Fees = $781,092**
- **Government Grants = $182,982**
- **Individual Donations = $104,366**
- **Special Events = $76,034**
- **In-kind Contributions = $15,466**
- **Miscellaneous Revenue = $793**
- **Investment = $6,930**



Financials

Fiscal Year 2024 Expenses

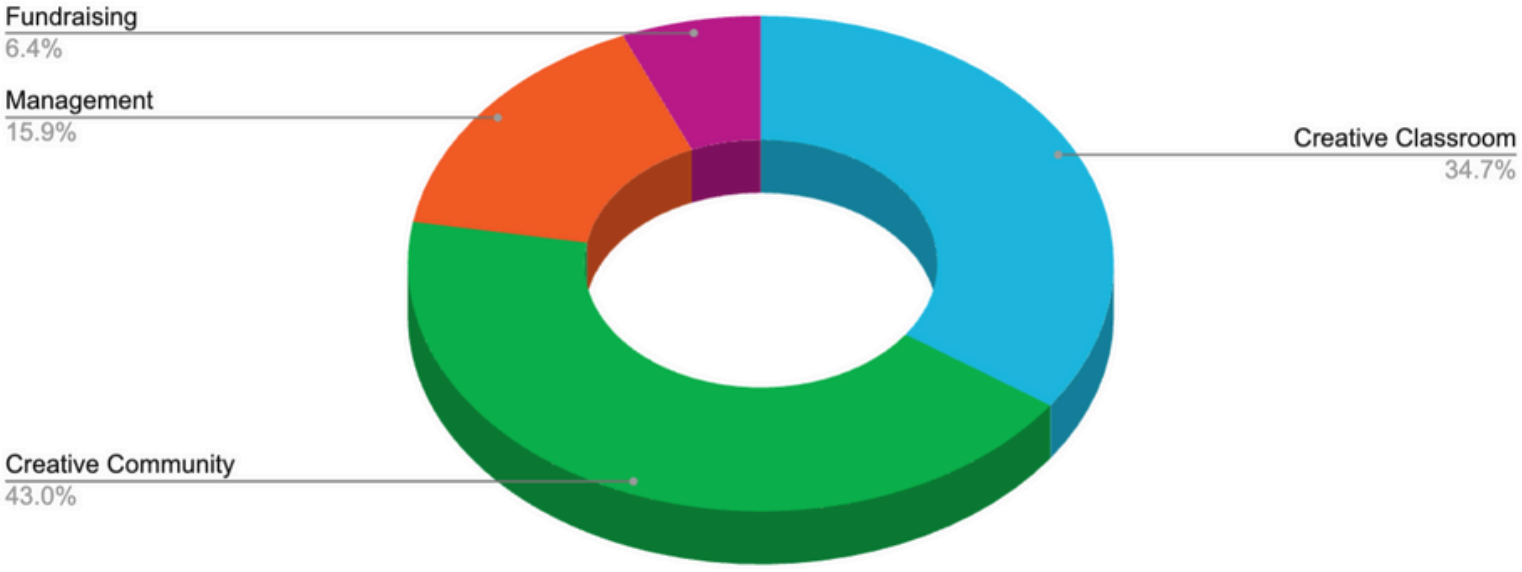
$1,585,887

Direct Service

- Creative Classroom = $550, 484
- Creative Community = $681,653

Core Mission Support

- Management & Governance = $251,841
- Fundraising = $101,909



Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Liz Sheets, *President*
Tunheim

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L2R: Board members Sonya Smith Šustáček, Ryan Kopperud, Liz Sheets, and Brittany Keefe at the EYA award show

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