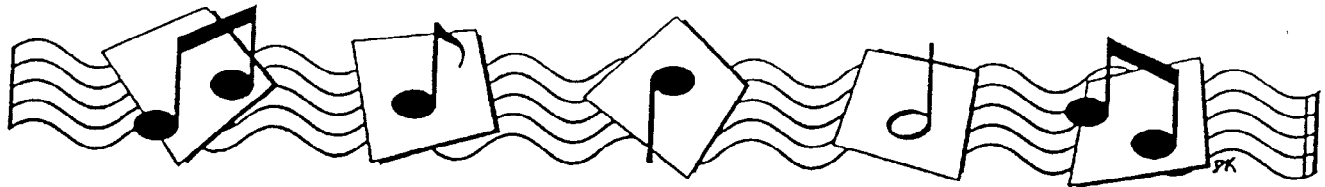


CitySongs

Celebration of Diversity



CITYSONGS

STRENGTHENING YOUTH AND COMMUNITY THROUGH MUSIC

ANNUAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, 2004-2005 PROGRAM YEAR

CitySongs

School of Social Work, University of Minnesota
105 Peters Hall
1404 Gortner Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55108
612/626-1241

<http://citysongs.umn.edu>
citysongs@che.umn.edu

Executive Staff

Executive Director, *on sabbatical*: Helen Kivnick

Acting Executive Director & SWE Director: Sarah Overly Johansen

Music Director: Margaret LaFleur

Operations Manger: Catherine Buggy

CITYSONGS PROGRAM

*At CitySongs we celebrate the fire that burns within each child. This little light of mine...
I'm gonna let it shine!*

CitySongs sponsors after-school singing and performing by inner-city youth to build confidence and competence in our next generation, in ways that promote positive community involvement.

The program has three overlapping goals:

- 1) Healthy Youth Development;
- 2) Artistic Achievement;
- 3) Community Impact (Multiculturalism)

Music is integral to the lives of young people. We capitalize on this passion as a path to personal growth, learning, strength, confidence, and responsibility. Rehearsing twice weekly, CitySongs Kids exercise consistency and commitment. Performing regularly, they are recognized for their accomplishment.

I think I can sing anywhere or anyhow and I don't have to have a special ability to be who I am.

I learned that together everyone achieves more and that we should all play a role in our community to make it better.

I've learned that there is a time for performing and there is a time for having fun.

Young people from diverse racial, cultural, and emotional backgrounds "play on the same team," at a level of equality and camaraderie they rarely experience elsewhere. Performing publicly, CitySongs Kids present messages of pride, aspiration, respect, and achievement, and they challenge audience members to join them on their journey.

It helped my child see a place different from her own and feel accepted.

I have learned to always sing and no matter how I look or sound it doesn't matter on the outside, it matters what's on the inside.

I think just the appearances and the audiences and being part of a team made my daughter very proud.

We charge no registration fees. We require no auditions, having learned that any child who wants to sing and is willing to work hard can improve enough to contribute positively to the group performance effort. Since 1992, roughly 85 young people per year have sung with CitySongs, from the whole metro area – primarily St. Paul. Family members have attended concerts, chaperoned performances, served on the Board, and provided support in rehearsals and behind the scenes. We have reached tens of thousands of audience members through over 260 live performances, three studio-recorded products, and print and audiovisual media.

I like that CitySongs is empowering. There is something about singing, voice, and community and it all comes together in the notion that kids have a voice. It's important.

Healthy Youth Development

Drawing on the disciplines of psychology, social work, and human ecology, CitySongs has articulated a set of 6 action principles, representing adaptive processes that young people must develop, and the environmental supports they need to do so. To promote adaptation and strength, CitySongs provides necessary environmental supports by implementing all activities (e.g., teaching, singing, performance, coaching, discussion) to be consistent with at least one principle, and in conflict with none.

My child has become so confident and so respectful of herself.

I learned that if you work harder you can get better at it.

I've learned to be a good singer, how to dance, to be happy, and to enjoy yourself.

[Staff] helps me be brave and be strong in a concert.

Artistic Achievement

CitySongs participated in two major concert collaborations this year: the *Stand-Up and Sing* concert with the Twin Cities Women's Choir and the FAIR school and a collaborative concert at Orchestra Hall with the Metropolitan Boys Choir and Choralaires. The group continued to explore diverse repertoire, the students originally wrote and performed 13 spoken word pieces (7 in French, Burmese, Hebrew, and ASL), and this year featured a multicultural dance medley including Japanese, Salsa, Sub-Saharan, and Hip-hop dance.

I've always liked singing but CitySongs gave me stage experience.

[Staff] said I could try solos and that I did a really good job when I did!

I have learned that singing takes time and patience and it needs practice no matter how good you think you are.

Community Impact (Multiculturalism)

Program objectives include: Gather diverse youth and provide opportunities for them and their families to learn from each other; Disseminate unique sound in underserved neighborhoods, as a source of pride and inspiration; Disseminate messages of respect for diversity and aspiration to the metro-area community; Increase learning and cooperating skills; Increase awareness of individual behavior as contributing (positively or negatively) to the community as a whole; Increase skills and competencies of productive community participation.

I've learned that everybody can make a difference somehow.

Today there are many ways and reasons to wish for peace.

We must work together to make each and every one of our wishes come true!

2004-2005 MILESTONES

Participants: 39 youth sang with CitySongs: African/African American (50%); Mixed Race (11%); Asian /Pacific Islander (8%); Latino (8%); Caucasian (5%). Participants attended 15 different schools.

Rehearsals & Power Hour: 62 rehearsals (2 hr @; average attendance 25). 62 pre-rehearsal Power Hours, (1 hr @; average attendance 20). Power hour and Rehearsal time included: Homework supervision; One-on-one time with Social Work / Education (SWE) staff; Individual coaching on singing and public speaking; Leadership opportunities; Music exploration; Quiet socializing time.

Performances: 22 public performances, including: Full-length CitySongs Concerts, (free; open to the public); Grassroots venues and events; Mainstream events celebrating diversity, social justice, and child welfare; University-based and education-related events; Other corporate and community settings. Audiences numbered roughly 4,859.

Repertoire: Repertoire included 31 songs (in 7 languages), 4 dances, 2 poems and 13 student-written spoken word pieces; 31 song introductions; 2 raps/chants. 4 parents and audience members participated in the performance through spoken word pieces.

Solos: All children were encouraged to consider performing solos, and every interested child received individual coaching and publicly performed some kind of solo.

Guest Artists: Jelanna LaFleur; Emily Potter; Reinaldo Cortes; Linda Hashimoto VanDeiswert; Shira Schwartz; Aja Pridgen; Christine Asp; Joe Kester; Aaron Glade; Earl Ross; and Andrew Martin.

Volunteers : 14 (young) adults volunteered as group mentors or helped with special events.

Amazing Music For Amazing Kids: The CitySongs Board organized and implemented the first annual CitySongs Fundraiser. Internationally known Cuban jazz artist Nachito Herrera and his daughter performed for a successful evening event.

Recording: CitySongs Kids recorded 4 songs at McNally Smith College of Music Studios, for the next CD.

Technology Project, Year #6: (Best Buy) CitySongs integrated the support of a volunteer technology supervisor- allowing CitySongs participants to learn about sound production and assume leadership roles as the group tech support. Condre Technologies donated a multiple disk changer, aiding in the production of multiple practice CDs.

Talmud Torah, Year #7: We completed our 7th annual musical / diversity collaborative project with the choir from St. Paul Talmud Torah Hebrew Day School

Neighborhood Tour: In spring 2005, CitySongs students conducted a neighborhood tour in connection with the theme "Celebrating our Vibrant Community." The tour included performances at a local senior center, a youth program for mainly immigrant families, and a local school, along with educational activities around neighborhood exploration, community understanding, and building bridges with others across age, language, culture, and family background.

Website Development: In fall 2004 CitySongs launched a new and updated website- <http://citysongs.umn.edu>. The site contains improved information fields as well as new opportunities to connect with community members, supporters, and CitySongs participants.

CORE CITYSONGS ACTIVITIES

Rehearsals / Performances / Repertoire. See above.

Social Work / Education. Ongoing SWE activities included the Children's Fire, Weekly Task, Feedback Backpack, and 1:1 student support. Staff facilitated small-group activities around issues of leadership, diversity, respect / responsibility, goal-setting, community building, racism, gender issues, making peace, family issues, and more. These activities included 51 group values-and-emotional-learning-based activities and discussions, during rehearsals and the pre-rehearsal Power Hour.

MAJOR DONORS, FISCAL YEAR 2004-2005

McKnight Fdn (\$40,000); St. Paul Travelers (\$30,000); Pohlad Family Foundation (\$15,000); Best Buy Children's Fdn (\$12,500); 3M Corporation (\$10,000); American Express Financial Advisors (\$8500); American Express Global Volunteer Action Fund (\$1500); Thrivent Financial (\$5,000); Piper Jaffray (\$5000); COMPAS (\$3000); City of St. Paul/NPPCP (\$3000); Target Stores (\$3000); Elliott & Eloise Kaplan (\$5000); Helen Kivnick & Gary Gardner (\$1000); Bruce Kohn (\$1000); and numerous individual contributions / earned income (\$13,218).

IN-KIND SUPPORTERS

Advanced Duplicating Services; American Composers Forum; Angel Beach Studio; ArtHouse Graphics & T-shirts; Best Buy Corporation; Bolger Concept to Print; Bruegger's Bagels, Raymond Ave.; Byerly's Roseville; College of St. Catherine: Prof. Sharon Stoffel; Condre Technologies; Davanni's Pizza, Riverside; Adam Frederick; F.S. Productions- Rich Leone; H. Brooks and Company Produce; Joan Jemison; Katherine Tane; Hallie Q. Brown - Martin Luther King Center; Helen Kivnick & Gary Gardner; Litho Express; Larry Long; Matt Luny; Marriott Catering Services; McNally Smith College of Music ; Mimi's African Art Gallery & Boutique; Michael McKern; Nachito Herrera; Ordway Theatre; NNIC.com; Papa John's Pizza, Downtown Mpls; People's Company Bakery; Pro Ex Color; Resurrecting Faith World Ministries; Robert Samuelson; Rondo Education Center; Sony Sound Center; Schmidt Music; Lucy Schultz; University of St. Thomas: Sister Sharon Howell; JD Steele; Fred Steele; University of Minnesota Foundation; University of Minnesota School of Social Work; University of Minnesota College of Human Ecology; Victors 1959 Café; and Wuollet Bakery.