This is what Community feels like

Neutral Zone Annual Report 2020-21

Dear Friends,

Another challenging year has turned our commitment to fulfill our mission into a constant dance - a step forward, a sideways slide and then a half step back. Our community has patiently prioritized safety in order to outwit the wicked smart covid. And, we have! During the past year, we successfully restored community to our youth so that they can feel, know and experience being a part of one.

This summer we took our programming to parks and parking lots, hired artists, and bought a lot of pizza and popsicles. Our reward? We got to hear comments from teens like, "So *this* is what community feels like."

During the school year, we transformed our parking lot into an after-school space to meet up with friends, enjoy free snacks and participate in 14 free, skill-based artistic and leadership programs such as songwriting, audio engineering or activism.

We have supported youth to participate in affinity groups to create an inclusive and supportive spaces for LGBTQIA+, Black and young women.

We have continued our Future Corps program to explore future academic and career goals in high school and a program to support their transition to adulthood through school, employment, mentorship and coaching.

And finally we continue to share our youth-driven and restorative practice with organizations and schools across the state and beyond.

Our work is purposeful because we are committed to being here for many more tomorrows.

This year, NZ is engaging in a year-long strategic planning process. Our committed Board of Directors, staff, and youth have worked together to identify core values, create a vision statement and identify critical goals and objectives for the next five years. This process is amplified by the many unrestricted gifts in our community, especially an outstanding \$2 million gift from Mackenzie Scott. We look forward to sharing our strategic vision and plan with all of you in the coming year.

Even more forward thinking, in **October 2023, Neutral Zone will celebrate its 25th anniversary.** There have been so many amazing leaders, community members, and teens who have contributed to who we are today. We hope you will join us in 2022 for a series of opportunities to share, listen and help us piece together the many poignant moments that have created our unique story; stay tuned for more to come.

I am incredibly grateful to all of you, our community, for creating a space that youth rely on to show up, belong and engage in opportunities that matter to them. At a time when the day-to-day is so uncertain, we get to purposefully heal, engage, and guide youth to see the possibilities ahead.

Thank you for believing in us,

Xoii

Lori Roddy

Executive Director



Snapshots

# of youth involved in summer '21 programs	82 including 10 youth intern leaders
# of youth who participated in virtual programs, '20-21 year	154
# of youth involved so far in current programs, '20-21 year	176
# of youth involved in Future Corps (support for academic, career and	26

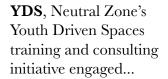


of visiting/guest
artists engaged with

youth

23 artists, writers, and musicians

of families and youth with ongoing food support and crisis intervention 32



165 adult educators and youth workers, and

70 youth in youth-driven leadership and restorative practice training in Michigan



Thank you to all our community partners!

Community Partnerships

Spinning Dot Theatre
Ozone House
Corner Health
Educate Youth
Elevation Youth Corps
Washtenaw County Juvenile Trial Court
Washtenaw County Youth Commission
Washtenaw Alliance for Children and Youth
WonderFool Productions
Food Gatherers
Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health
Michigan Works!
Washtenaw Community College
City of Ann Arbor
AATA, Ann Arbor Transit Authority, The Ride

Ann Arbor Summer Festival Music Youth Development Alliance

Special programs and projects 2021-'22 school year

Artists-in-Residence; community artists join us for a 2-4 month residency to engage youth, connect with schools and community partners, and develop artistic skills via a collaborative project with a capstone event.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Activism Council works together to uplift and center voices often marginalized by society through discussion, workshops, and activities.

Future Corps, Young Adult Transition Program gives young adults aged 18-24 transformational opportunities through employment, technical training/associates degree, mentoring and ongoing coaching to transition to adulthood.



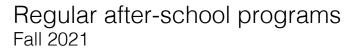


Summer Programs; 2 days/week of free workshops at Neutral Zone, plus weekly workshops in Ypsilanti at Recreation Park.

Washtenaw County Youth Commission;

connects youth across nine county districts to learn about county government, explore issues of equity across the county, and lead community-based projects.

YDS (**Youth-Driven Spaces**); a national program of workshops and training for youth and youth-serving organizations to develop strong youth-adult partnerships, develop youth councils and engage in restorative practice.



We host a daily drop-in program, and the following programs weekly:

Activism through Art

Audio Techniques

DJ & Turntableism

Future Corps High School supports college and career readiness

Loop Nation electronic music

Music Industry

Music Production

Riot Youth for LGBTQIA+ teens

Songwriting

Spinning Dot Theatre Project

Writing & Illustration

Young Men of Color

Young Women of Color



Program approach update

Reflect, learn and improve. That's the model we aim to follow.

Through a series of conversations NZ has reflected on our programming and challenges. We reached out nationwide to other youth centers similar to the NZ to seek their advice for changes.

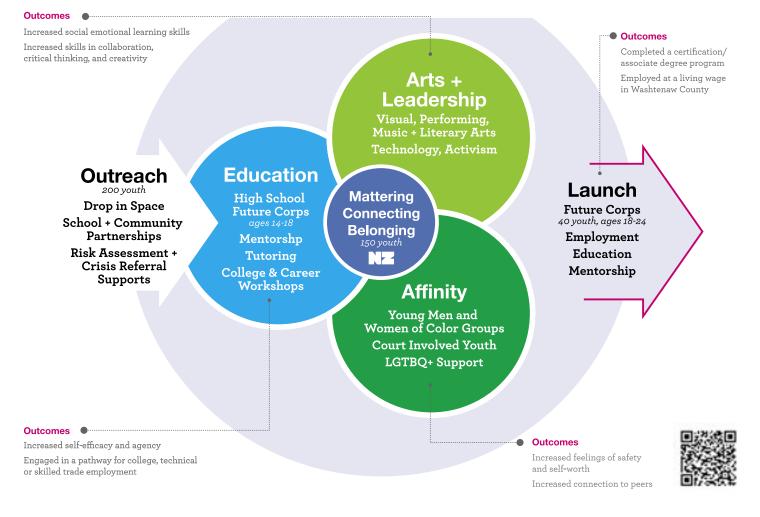
Once we had evaluated all the inputs we gathered, we revised our program approach to center on values of belonging, mattering and educational opportunities. That's the improvement.

Some **key highlights** of our program redesign:

- Provide a separate space for affinity groups to support LGBTQ, Black Young Men and Black Young Women
- Build inclusive programming across staffing structure, use of physical space, and timing of programming. Our 14 afterschool programs are all interdisciplinary with a focus on arts, activism, and skill building
- Support community artists engaging with youth through a robust artist-in-residence series throughout the program year
- Extend our work to support transformational opportunities to transition youth to adulthood, including ongoing education, employment, mentorship and coaching for youth aged 18-24

Neutral Zone's Youth Driven Program Model

Core approaches: youth + adult partnerships, equity, and restorative



Neutral Zone Financial Health, 6/30/2021



* total revenue does not include a \$2,000,000 gift from Mackenzie Scott, or a \$162,718 Payroll Protection Program loan (forgiven)



* total expenses include \$100,318 of building depreciation, a non-cash expense

Assets

Neutral Zone has \$5,708,778 total in real assets.

Our Operating Reserve has a balance of \$297,932, and the value of our endowment is \$267,755.

The book value of our building is \$2,547,505.

Earned Revenue: \$2,185

Contributions & Grants: \$385,498

(does not include a \$2,000,000 gift from Mackenzie Scott or \$162,718 Payroll Protection Program loan)

Coaching & Consulting: \$56,249

Fundraising Events: \$6,659

Released Restricted Revenue:

\$432,266 This is money given to us, usually a grant, that is earmarked for a future purpose. We report it as income when we "release" it in order to cover expenses funded by the grant.

Special Income

Neutral Zone received a one-time gift of \$2 million from Mackenzie Scott. This gift will allow us to undertake long-deferred infrastructure projects, in the interest of long-term sustainability.

The funds will be allocated based on the initiatives identified in the multi-year strategic plan. While these funds will not be used for general operating expenses, some funds will be used for program specific expenses.

Administration/General: \$133,613

Development: \$113,390

Programs: \$708,392



Dear Donors,

Neutral Zone teens count on you and your support. Your generous donations help NZ run special programs, pay for new initiatives, and keep the lights and heat on in our building.

Because of you, NZ never has to turn a teen away because of financial issues. Your donations help build the kind of citizens you'll be proud of when they're running the world of the future. Thank you very much!

These lists represent donations made January 1 - December 31, 2021. We have recently changed our donor database. If there is an error in your name, we are very sorry. Please help us out by contacting Amy@neutral-zone.org.

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