

BalletRox Summary Report for FY2017

Achieving Our Goals

Our major goals for FY2017 were: 1) to continue to provide in-school dance programming to elementary school students in the Curley K-8, Hennigan K-8 and Mather Elementary Boston Public Schools, and to extend our reach into PACE Autism classes at the Curley School; 2) to provide more extensive dance training to students in our community dance program at BalletRox Dance! at Spontaneous Celebrations; 3) to expand the performance opportunities for students in both programs; 4) to bring more students and their families to professional dance performances; and 5) to increase the involvement of the Youth Council in all aspects of BalletRox Dance! In all program areas, our mission was to expose Boston youth to dance and opportunities for mastery and performance to which they would not otherwise have access, giving them discipline and a supportive community to succeed in life.

These goals were achieved, and more. Over the course of the year, we were able to expand our programming in several ways, thanks to generous funding from foundations, government grants, institutional and individual donors, and to the enthusiastic support of our staff, students, family members, school leadership, Board and volunteers.

- 1) In our Boston School Programs, we taught four days a week at the Hennigan, Curley, and Mather Schools. We expanded our curriculum to include more classes geared toward 6th, 7th and 8th graders, focusing on identity and diversity through dance, and incorporating Latin dance into the curriculum. Through our public school classes we reached over 600 students, including Sheltered English Immersion students, Social and Academic Remediation students, and PACE Autism students.
- 2) 75 students enrolled in BalletRox Dance!, our community dance program. We increased our program hours by 20% and added new levels of ballet, tap, and hip hop to meet the growing needs of our students.
- 3) We expanded our BalletRox Dance! Performance Program to include a November performance at the Providence Bruins, an *Around the World* January performance, *Tropical Fiesta* in March, *Wake Up the Earth Festival* in May, *Dance for World Community Performance* in June, and the final recital, *Coppelia* in May. 500 Boston Public School students participated in five mid-year and year-end school recitals.
- 4) Through our field trip program we provided free tickets to over 175 students and their families to see the *Dorrance Dance Tap Company*, *Billy Elliot*, *Swan Lake*, and the spring performance of *Alvin Ailey Dance Theater*.
- 5) The Youth Council wrote scripts, choreographed dances, and performed publicly in community festivals. They continued to act as teaching assistants and mentors to younger students in the BalletRox Dance! Program.

Successes and Challenges

Our programs have grown and deepened rapidly over the last several years, and we have had many successes, including those listed above. At the same time, we are mindful of the dual need to maintain high quality programming while increasing our capacity to serve. One of our biggest challenges is securing adequate, reliable funding. We have recently expanded and diversified our Board and are focusing on fundraising as the top Board priority for the coming year, along with doubling the amount of staff time devoted to development. Another major challenge is finding room to expand our class schedule

in our tight, shared quarters at Spontaneous Celebrations. We are adding two new classes on Saturday mornings in FY2018, and we have lengthened some of the class times to ensure a better learning experience. A major challenge in our school programs this past year was the unexpectedly large number of English Language Learners in the middle school dance classes. To address this we hired a bilingual dance teacher and incorporated more culturally relevant dance instruction into the curriculum.

Our Impact

In each of our programs we measured four arts related outcomes: confidence, focus, collaboration and accountability. We conducted student surveys and teacher assessments of all students in third grade and above on each of these measures. With the assistance of the Black Ministerial Alliance Capacity Institute, we revamped our evaluation process in Spring 2017, and in Fall 2017 we are instituting a portfolio process for assessing our middle school and high school age students.

Through our programs we reached over 700 Boston youth and their families. They came primarily from the Dorchester, Mattapan, Roxbury, Mission Hill, Jamaica Plain and Hyde Square neighborhoods of Boston, and were reflective of those neighborhoods in terms of ethnicity and income. Approximately 40% of the students were Hispanic; 40% African American; 15% Asian and 5% Other. 90% of the students in our programs came from families whose incomes were at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Over 50% were from families who had recently immigrated to the United States, and were English Language Learners.

Between the Boston Public School programs and BalletRox Dance! we reached an audience of approximately 10,000 people. In the BPS programs, families and the school communities were invited to attend multiple recitals, resulting in a total audience of approximately 1,200. At the Wake Up the Earth Festival, where our BalletRox Dance! and school-based programs performed in the opening ceremonies and on the stage, approximately 8,000 people attended. At each of the BalletRox Dance! mid-year and year-end recitals, approximately 350 family and community members attended. These events were publicized through school websites and newsletters, local newspapers, flyers distributed throughout the neighborhoods, word-of-mouth, mailings and email lists.

For More Information About BalletRox:

BalletRox Website: www.balletrox.info

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If you would like a copy of our most current independently reviewed Financial Statement, or a copy of our recital video, please email us at: info@balletrox.info