



Annual Report for 2015



Elementz Hip Hop Dancers with the Cincinnati Ballet

The Mission of Elementz

Our mission is to be a **catalyst of transformation** for children in the urban core, enabling them to **learn** to give back, **engage** in the community, find their **artistic** voice, and **define** a path for a successful future.

Background and History

Founded in 2002 by a group of OTR residents determined to create a positive environment for the local community, Elementz is an organization **dedicated to working with inner-city youth** through innovate hip hop arts programs, leadership development and community building.

Elementz draws teens and young adults into its center at 1100 Race Street (Central Parkway and Race) with a diverse offering of culturally-relevant art forms in the areas of music, dance



and poetry. Elementz also employs arts instructors who have both **credibility in their art form within the arts community, and street credibility with the youth**. This means that Elementz has been able to attract a large group of this target population who find the center relevant and supportive, particularly as they go through their teen years.

What Happens in the Center

Once in the center, youth are challenged to find an art form that allows them to be creative, learn to work as a team, and to set and achieve personal goals. They learn to appreciate the art style they have selected, and eventually to write, compose or choreograph their own personal works. Elementz places high value on having the youth perform their work in public, as this gives them **a connection with the wider community and breaks down some of the barriers** that exist for those who are isolated in low-income neighborhoods.



Evolution of the Program

Since its founding, Elementz has been focused on teaching community engagement and leadership skills to inner-city teens. For the first four years Elementz provided class and activities that helped teens develop leadership skills and to accept civic responsibility. During this time the organization leaders continued to poll the youth to develop programming most relevant to them.

In 2006, At the request of the youth, Elementz began to strengthen its focus on the arts. Since then Elementz has worked with **more than 1,591 teens and young adults** and in 2015, worked with **257 local youth who participated regularly** in its programs. We see from **30-45 youth in our center each evening** we are open, 60% of whom attend once a week or more.

In 2011, Elementz began a program to identify how inner-city teens connected to supportive adults and how Elementz could affect an improvement. The average teen comes to our center reporting 2-3 adults in their supportive circle and annual measurements since show that the number of supportive adults **doubles every year** in our program on the average.



In 2013, Elementz added a focus on helping teens build the social skills that will help them succeed in school. National studies show that for inner-city teens who can improve their social and emotional skills through arts programming, they will **improve school achievement scores by 11-17%**. In 2013, Elementz began measuring progress on social skills for each member monthly.

Also in 2014, we established a new program, “Creative Futures” in collaboration with the University of Cincinnati. This program introduced the opportunity for inner-city teens to apply their creativity to various types of visual arts that were not previously available at Elementz and to be introduced to careers that are available for creative youth.

Outcomes for At-Risk Teens

Most of our teens, like teens everywhere, don’t go on to become professional artists, but the skills they learn through the arts, (working as a team, setting personal goals, developing their creative side), help them improve school achievement and put many on a track to college. When Elementz opened its doors in 2002, the majority of teens in the center were high school dropouts, and of the group of dropouts that were part of Elementz in those first five years, 50% went on to get their GED. Since those early years, new teens who came to Elementz have been encouraged to stay in school and by 2012, high school graduation rate was above 90% and 25% of those went on to enroll in college.

Community Impact:

Many of our youth come from neighborhoods that have few positive resources for teens in the out-of-school hours, and attend under-resourced schools. While we can’t match the resources available to teens from well-off families or those who attend well-resourced schools, we have made a difference to the teens who have come to Elementz over the years and many





1100 Race Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202

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513.721.5800

www.elementz.org

have come back as adults to explain how critical their time at Elementz was during their turbulent teen years.

In 2015, we worked hard to put our teens in public places and introduce them to a variety of audiences and platforms. The integration of inner-city youth into the community in a positive way is probably the most important work we do every year.

Outsiders View our Program

CityBeat called our 2015 collaboration with Concert:nova "The Best Classical Music performance of 2015" and "The best arts collaboration outdoing New York of 2015".

Our Programs

We present a wide range of opportunities for teens to realize and develop their creative skills and we use art forms that the urban youth find relevant. This includes hip hop (family-friendly only), R&B and some contemporary music styles. Our specific programs in 2015 were:

Voices of Freedom: Poetry and Spoken Word

Louder Than A Bomb: City-wide Poetry Competition for High School students

Studio Kre8v: Hip Hop and Street Dance Competitive Dance Teams

Beats & Rhymes: Beats, Digital Music, Song-writing, Emceeing, Recording

Learn to Reign: DJ Training and Music History

Creative Futures: Introduction to various visual art and design projects

STARS: Advanced training for serious musicians and singers in R&B style

Staff and Volunteers:

In 2015 we had two full-time employees: Tom Kent, who is our Executive Director, Abdullah Powell, who is our Creative Director. Tom is a retired business executive and before coming to Elementz sat on funding committees at ArtsWave, GCF's Weathering the Economic Storm and Christ Church Cathedral's Grants Committee. Abdullah is a graduate of UC's College Conservatory of Music with a major in electronic media.





We had ten part-time instructors and four teaching volunteers. Our dance program has several parents who help support the program in various capacities including fund-raising and providing chaperones for trips.

Collaborations:

We are a collaborative organization that works with a very diverse set of organizations. Our collaborations increase our capacity to bring experiences to the youth we serve and also help us build exposure across traditional lines of race and class. Our collaborations in 2015 included:

- Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra: Dance Performance at LumenoCity Village in Washington Park
- Taft Museum: Duncanson Artist Series
- Cincinnati Ballet:: Performed in the Nutcracker.
- Concert:Nova: 2 collaborative performances
- Cincinnati Art Museum: Art in the Dark Performance
- Pleasant Ridge Montessori School: After-school program for children
- Taft Research Center, UC: Community-wide poetry competition for teens
- DAAP College of UC: Art Program for inner-city teens
- Temple Shalom: Urban Arts training for children and adults
- The Millennium Robots and ArtsWave: Heroes Rise Street Dance Festival



Quick Facts

Average Number of inner-city Youth Active in Program at any given time: **257**

Change in High School Dropout Rate for Members since 2002: **70% to 0%** (0% achieved in 2012)

Total inner-City Youth Served since 2002: **1,756**

Public attendance at Elementz concerts, events and workshops in 2015: **37,078**

Average Cost per Member for One Year in Program: **\$894** (Average cost per year for incarceration in Ohio \$25,000)



Number of Volunteer Hours Contributed in 2015: **1,182**

Recognition

Award for Community Service 2010:

Celebration of Black Music Event

The Cincinnati Enquirer October 2011:

Creative Director Abdullah Powell named an “Emerging African-American Leader to Watch”

The Cincinnati Enquirer December 2013:

Creative Director Abdullah Powell named one of the ten major influences on the Arts in Cincinnati in 2013



The Cincinnati Enquirer Dance Critic David Lyman, January 2014: “Elementz, the increasing influential urban arts youth center in Over-the-Rhine”

OTR Chamber of Commerce: 2015 Non-profit of the Year

Elementz Board

Peter Block, **Past-President** (Author, Business Consultant)

Diane Jordan Grizzard **President** (Dir. Strategic Talent Management, BHDP Architecture)

Tysonn Betts, **Vice-President** (Assoc. Design Director, P&G)

Tonya C. Warren (VP, USBank)

Tom Lottman, **Secretary**, (Deputy Executive Director, Children Inc.)

Napoleon Maddox, (International Artist)

Joe Lubrecht, **Treasurer** (VP, Fifth Third Bank)

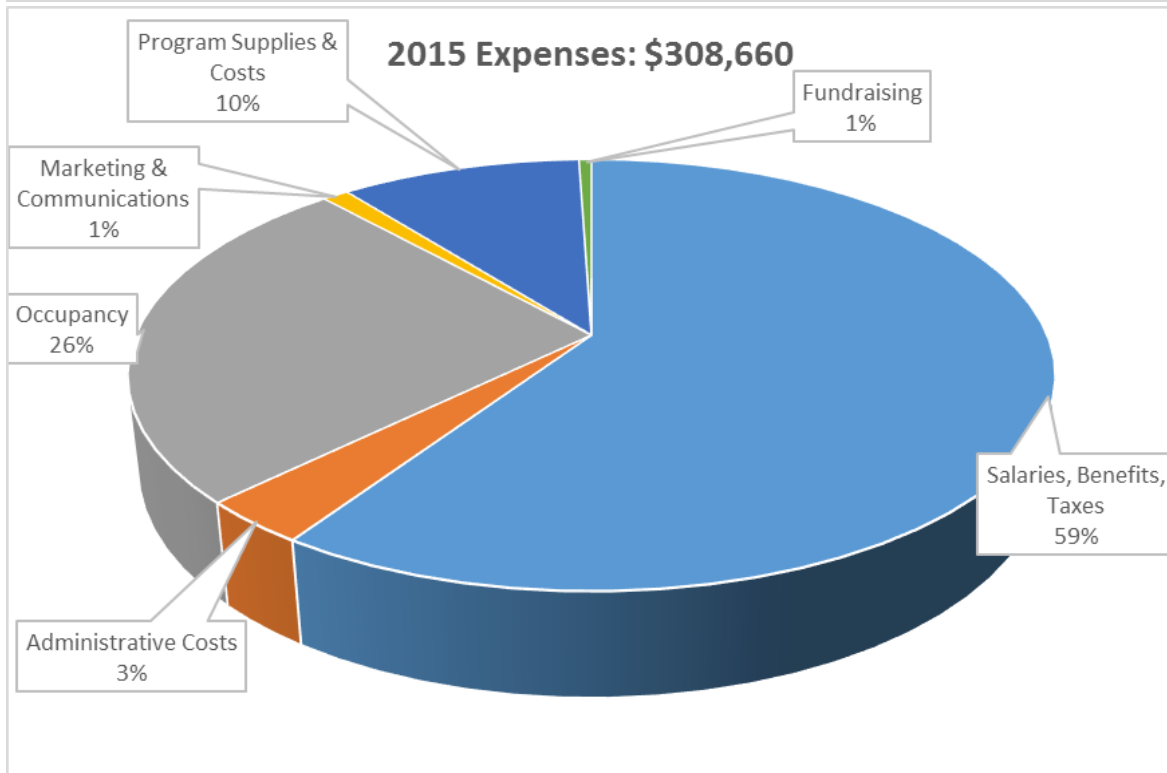
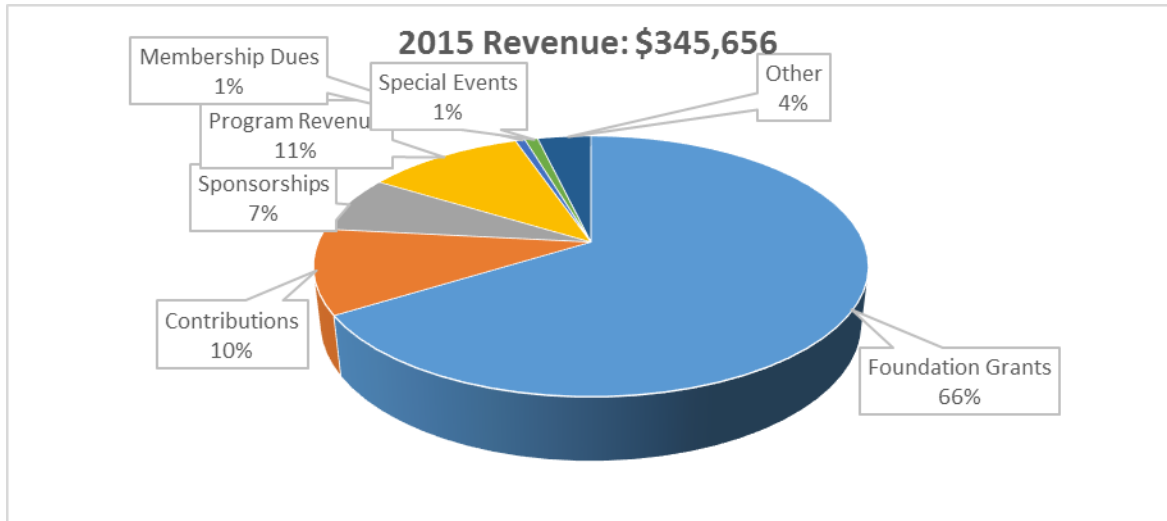
Dominique Brown, Asst Director & Academic Advisor, University of Cincinnati

Abdullah Powell (Creative Director, Elementz)

Tom Kent (Executive Director, Elementz)



2015 Financials:



Summary of Assets 12/31/2015

Total Assets: \$100,334.24

Total Liabilities: \$3,370.75

Total Equity: \$96,963.49



2014 Contributors to Elementz:

Elementz has had wide community support, particularly from public and private community foundations, including the following:

Foundations:

- The Charles H. Dater Foundation
- The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
- George B. Riley Trust Estate
- The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr/US Bank Foundation
- Interact for Health
- Robert A. and Marian K. Kennedy Charitable Trust
- The P&G Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation
- Anonymous

Sponsorships

- LPK (Creative Futures)
- Children’s Hospital of Cincinnati (Educational Initiatives)
- P&G Design (Creative Futures)
- UC MetroLab (Creative Futures)
- Christ Church Cathedral (Louder Than A Bomb Poetry Slam)
- Kaze (Performance)
- Otto M. Budig Family Foundation (Concert:nova Performance)
- Manuel D and Rhoda Mayerson Foundation (Concert:nova Performance)

Donors:

Visionary Level:

- Peter Block
- Philip and Sheila Cohen
- Jim & Carolyn Harmann
- Tom & Jenny Kent
- Tom Lottman
- Joe Lubrecht
- Tonya C. Warren

Supporter Level:

- Wendy Adams
- Doborah Mariner Allsop
- Timothy & Tiffany Brennan
- Domonique Brown
- John & Toni Grate
- Leshia and Samuel Greengus
- Chandra & James Harmon
- Clifford Johnston



Christina Kunkle
Al & Mary Lopez
Napoleon Maddux
Elle & Ed Richardson Morris
Paula Muething
Susan Wade Murphy
Kamie and Greg Papke
Francis G. Pepper
Abdullah Powell
Nick & Melissa Rose
Laura and Glenn Spurrier
Tom & Dee Stegman
Nolan L. Weinberg, MD

Friend Level:

Annette Arenstein
Stacy Baylock
Sheena Bell
Phillip C. & Alejandra Best
Amber Brown
Harold Byers
Ixi Chen and Theodore Nelson
Katherine Christoff
Joe Colon
Evie Cotton
Donial Curry
Jeffrey L. Dey
Teresa A. Dinwiddie-Herrmann
Karen Eagan
Maggie Frye
Kelly Glenn
Mary Goebel
Fanica Haplea
Jeffery & Alicia Heinichen
Robin J Horst

Erin Jackson
Tiffany Jackson
Heather Johnson
Harriet & Ben Kaufman
Phillip & Elena Morris
John Owens
Heather Scotty-Ramsey
Robert & Charlotte Shanklin
Dan Sifferlin
Amy Taylor
Judity B. Titchener
Andreina & Miguel Torres
Patricia Walter
Jai Washington
Velma Washington
Jennifer Wulffen