



# 2019 IMPACT REPORT

Inspiring social change through creative programs





Dear Friends,

It is with immense gratitude to our community of friends and supporters that we share our 2019 impact report. Since 2013, New Era Creative Space (NECS) has aimed to infuse our community with rich and dynamic educational and character-building opportunities. We offer an average of ten programs a year that run anywhere from four weeks to nine months each year, and six to nine weeks of camps each summer.

When designing curriculum, we always return to our slogan: “inspiring social change through creative programs.” Our programs are made accessible through the many scholarships we offer that make it possible for children from low-income families to gain exposure to STEAM education and vocational extracurricular opportunities. Equally vital to our mission is empowering young people to explore their innate capabilities and engage in social action.

This year, we have been deeply fortunate to partner with organizations and institutions that have shared in our vision, making 2019 our most impactful year yet.

With this year’s impact report, we invite you to take a closer look at the programs we have offered and that you have helped build with your donations and support. From our award-winning Children’s Theater program to our pioneer programs like the Nature Connection Camp, NECS has remained driven by the philosophy that children are the most precious treasure a community can possess and that each child has the potential to be a force for positive change in the world.

Thank you for investing in our programs and in the creative potential of the next generation of social agents. We believe that we have only scratched the surface of what we can achieve. We thank you for continued support and for grounding our vision in actionable reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ridvan", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ridvan Foxhall  
Executive Director



## A YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2019, NECS extended its reach by partnering with organizations in the community, expanded its institutional and individual donor base, and increased its scholarship opportunities. We did all this while developing our existing programs and pioneering new ones. We have worked alongside governing bodies, local farms, activists, scientists, artists, and more. Here are some of our numbers:

# 180

**Children and youth served: 13 programs and workshops**

# \$57,000

**In scholarships awarded to 173 students**

# 264

**Institutions and individual donors invested in NECS**

# 98%

**Of all students received some form of need-based scholarship**

- ◆ 8 teachers and 4 parents learned positive discipline strategies
- ◆ 96 adults engaged in our programs
- ◆ Over 50 local middle and high school youth mentored

*“New Era Creative Space goes above and beyond to have diversity and inclusion as part of their core DNA. This isn't something they put on a wall. This is a part of what they do every day. Integrated into the tiny daily actions and into every conversation. It's beautiful to watch.”*



## Program Highlights

### Children's Theatre Company

NECS produced two heart warming musicals:

The ***Ugly Duckling***, a story that looks at the dangers of judging others based on outward appearance, and of self acceptance.

***Show Way***, based on a book by Jacqueline Woodson and written by award winning playwright Melody Cooper, is a story that takes us back in time to learn about slaves who secretly sewed quilts to SHOW the WAY to freedom. It teaches a lesson that we all have the strength of our ancestors and friends to draw upon to get us through difficult times.

The production's participants were ages 8 to 17 and after four and a half months of rehearsals, opened to approximately 500 audience members who came out to see the performances.

Both shows opened in February to a full audience and CTC cast members gave a stellar performance!

***"I absolutely loved the show tonight! I was so impressed with all the children and I was touched by the message in the play."***

***"Outstanding production and extraordinary performances!"***

***"Happy Black History Month!!! Two amazing plays. Creativity full of social consciousness! Thank you NECS!"***







## Program Highlights



### Nature Connection

This summer, from July 1 to August 9, 9AM to 3 PM, NECS took to the woods with our pilot Nature Connection Camp. Partnering with a dynamic team of environmental scientists, food system educators, artists, teachers, Hudson River conservation specialists and more, we produced a curriculum of activities that included art & science projects, stories, journaling, games, farming, gardening, hiking, swimming, paddle boarding, theatre, yoga and community service. Each day, we led the students in a daily reflection on their core values and a meditation process to promote mindfulness. The program was designed to foster students' care for the well-being of each other and the environment, and to encourage an understanding and respect for the interconnectedness of all living things. 25 middle school students and 7 High school counselors participated in the program.



### Digital Animation at Westchester Community College

We partnered with WCC Peekskill extension to provide 13 Middle School Students 8 weeks of digital animation. Students developed and designed animated shorts. They engaged in all aspects of production from initial sketches on paper to developing and exporting the final output to create their own original 2D animated stories.







# Youth Leadership & Empowerment

## Youth Apprenticeship

NECS successfully piloted a 5 week apprenticeship program with 4 high school students during the summer. The aim is to create a vocational pathway for future employment by including local high school students with local professionals on real-world projects, centered in the STEAM disciplines. In 2020 we plan to further develop and expand this program.



## My Brother's Keeper

NECS partnered with the school district to provide yearlong leadership and empowerment workshops at the middle and high school. The program is designed to help youth form a strong moral identity and empower them to contribute to the well-being of themselves, their communities and the world at large. We had special visitors including actor/activist Russell Jones and Mayor Andre Rainey. In 2020 NECS is collaborating with **A Call to Men** to pilot the **LiveRespect** curriculum in Peekskill.



## Girls Leadership Club

NECS successfully completed six years providing leadership and empowerment workshops to middle school girls. In an effort to build capacity, we trained four high school and one college student, who now facilitate the sessions. In 2020 we plan to collaborate with Too Young to Wed and Starfish International a school in the Gambia to begin a cultural exchange program in order to create awareness and activism around the issue of girls.







## Partnerships

We have had the honor of partnering with numerous local organizations and institutions worth mentioning: Furnace Woods PTA, Longhaul Farm, Hudson Valley H2O, Peekskill Agencies Together (P.A.T, a coalition that seeks to strengthen community bonds and increase community collaborations), Peekskill City School District, Peekskill Library, Peekskill NAACP (together we are working on forming a youth committee dedicated to creating a vision of race unity through activism and social action), Peekskill Youth Bureau and Westchester Community College.

2019 has been a year of learning, reflecting and growth. We are grateful for all of our donors who provide the resources for us to keep going, our partners, supporters, teachers, volunteers, families and most importantly the children and youth we serve. We are looking forward to another year of inspiring social change through creative programs.





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