



Play On Philly

MUSIC EDUCATION TRANSFORMS

2022–2023 IMPACT REPORT

At Play On Philly (POP), we believe in the power of music education to develop and inspire the behaviors and personal skills needed for a successful life. Every year, POP provides underserved children in Philadelphia **over 400 hours** of transformative music education. Students range from pre-Kindergarten to 12th grade and are loaned an orchestral instrument at no cost. Music education makes a quantifiable difference in a child's life, and we have the data to prove it. **POP students earn 10 points higher on standardized tests** than their peers; they score higher on English Language Arts and math tests; they have increased study skills; they demonstrate better executive functioning skills like determination and focus.



2022–2023 HIGHLIGHTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Whether you attended a concert, shared a post, or made a gift to POP, you played an instrumental role in helping our students achieve new heights of musical excellence.

- The **POP Children's Orchestra** expanded thanks to the addition of two new double bass studios at our Independence Charter School West and St. Rose of Lima School Music Centers.
- POP launched the **Composing for Young Orchestras Project** in collaboration with the Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music (GLFCAM). Diverse emerging composers from GLFCAM engaged with students at in-person and virtual visits this year to get a sense of their musical experiences and discussed ideas for the commissioned pieces.
- POP string players had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn from world-class violinists **Noah Bendix-Balgley**, concertmaster of the Berlin Philharmonic, and **Shanshan Yao**, concert violinist and former member of the New York Philharmonic.
- In spring 2023, POP students participated in **Young At Art**, a collaborative performance in partnership with Astral Artists and BalletX that celebrated the dance music of Latin America and Latinx composers.



Students, alumni, and Teaching Artists came together with guest artists **Canadian Brass** for a special performance at our 2023 Evening of Harmony to celebrate our Founder **Stanford Thompson**. Nearly 500 community members and supporters attended.

2022–2023 YEAR IN NUMBERS



5 MUSIC CENTERS

POP partners with schools in West Philadelphia and Center City to provide tuition-free music education: St. Francis de Sales School, Independence Charter School West, St. Rose of Lima School, KenCrest Early Learning Center, and Roman Catholic High School.

478 STUDENTS ENROLLED

in our preparatory and out-of-school time programs across our Music Centers.

163 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN POP'S SUMMER PROGRAM

Students from across Philadelphia honed their musical skills while also building their creativity through movement, art, and writing.

91% OF STUDENTS SERVED are young people of color.

14 ANDERSON ARTISTS

The Marian Anderson Young Artist Program provides support to young classical and jazz musicians committed to pursuing a career in music. We will welcome our first vocalist to the cohort in the 2023–2024 year.

20 GUEST ARTISTS

engaged with our young musicians, including renowned Choral Director Dr. Rollo Dilworth, musicians from “The President’s Own” U.S. Marine Band, and Grammy-nominated chamber ensemble Imani Winds.

30 HOURS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

for Teaching Artists, including pedagogy, classroom management, child development, Cultural Equity and Inclusion, and trauma-informed practices.

32 CONCERTS AND EVENTS

Our young musicians performed across Philadelphia in venues including the Please Touch Museum, Washington Square Park, and Esperanza Art Center.

8 ARTS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

enriched our students’ musical and creative experiences, including ArtWell, Astral Artists, BalletX, GLFCAM, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Philadelphia Young Playwrights, Read to Succeed, and Temple University.

4 MAJOR MEDIA FEATURES

POP was spotlighted in the media, including WHYY’s You Oughta Know, Albie’s Elevator, Fox 29’s The 215, and WRTI’s Young Artist Spotlight.

“When I hear music, I feel calm like the world is in my palm.”

ZETA, CELLIST

MEET VIOLIST JANELL

“[POP rehearsals are the] part of the day where I get to have a relaxing moment, but I’m still learning something, which I really like...[it also] played a role in building my resilience to keep pushing through.”

Janell began studying viola at Temple Music Prep in the eighth grade. She enrolled in the POP Summer Program in ninth grade. She continued to participate in POP’s Children’s Orchestra and chamber ensembles throughout all four years of high school after Music Director Andrés González helped her gain confidence to play in the orchestra. Janell is now entering her first year at Widener University where she will major in Robotics Engineering.

MEET ALUMNA CHRISTINA

“POP has definitely shaped who I’ve become as a person, and music in general has too. I’ve become very eclectic, well rounded, and a musical person that I never thought I could be.”

Christina is majoring in Music at Millersville University. She recently had the opportunity to be on the other side of the classroom as a 2023 POP Summer Intern. She is entering her senior year and looks forward to a career as a music teacher.



The Marian Anderson
**YOUNG
ARTIST**
PROGRAM



THE INAUGURAL YEAR OF THE MARIAN ANDERSON YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM

Your support this year provided a transformative music education experience for young people and helped them build confidence to pursue their dreams. For some of our young people, that dream happens to be pursuing a career in music. This year marked the inaugural year of POP's **Marian Anderson Young Artist Program**, which provides tuition-free support to rising young classical and jazz musicians and vocalists in Philadelphia through private lessons, solo and ensemble performance, and college and career advisement. Musicians are placed in two tracks: the apprentice track is for younger musicians who have shown interest in furthering their musical skills, while the scholar track is for high school musicians who want to pursue a career in music and audition for a music-focused college program.

2022–2023 ANDERSON ARTIST ACTIVITIES

- Our rising musicians honed their performance skills in three “Try It Out” Masterclasses with world-class musicians, including former LA Philharmonic violinist **Mitchell Newman**, Rowan University's **Dr. Joseph Higgins**, and Curtis Institute's **Paul Bryan**.
- Anderson Scholars traveled to Baltimore for a college visit at the **Peabody Institute** of Johns Hopkins University.
- Anderson Artists performed solo repertoire for friends and family at two Honors Recitals at **Temple University**.

2022–2023 ANDERSON ARTIST ACHIEVEMENTS

- **7 Anderson Artists** participated in intensive summer music programs across the country including the LA Philharmonic's YOLA National Festival, National Seminario Ravinia in Chicago, Brevard's Piano Institute in North Carolina, and Berklee School of Music in Massachusetts.
- **Jazz Guitarist Andre** [^] was chosen as the music category winner in the Zeta Iota Iota Philly Chapter's Talent Hunt Competition in March 2023.
- **Clarinetist Zakyya** [^] opened Philadelphia Chamber Music Society's community concert at Alain Locke School for the internationally acclaimed chamber ensemble Imani Winds.
- **Tuba player Keith** [^] was appointed as first tuba of the All City Orchestra and District Band/Orchestra's 2023 spring festivals.
- **Harpist Chloé** ^{*} competed in the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Harp Society in April 2023 and placed 2nd in her division.

KEY: * Apprentice [^] Scholar



2022–2023 ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

- POP alumna and flutist **Sophia Radford** (class of 2019) graduated from Temple University with her Bachelor's in Music Education where she studied flute with Dr. Anna Meyer, POP's Anderson Artist Manager.
- POP alumna **Christina Rooks** (class of 2019) returned as a POP Summer Intern for our 2023 Summer Program.
- POP alum **Zebadiah Coombs** (class of 2014) became the in-school Music Teacher at St. Francis de Sales School in addition to their role as Viola Teaching Artist with POP.
- POP Alumni **Nazir Ebo** (class of 2014) has become a successful jazz musician in Philadelphia and will be debuting his first album later this year. Nazir is also the private teacher of Anderson Scholar and jazz drummer Andrew.



WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS YEAR

NOVEMBER 5, 2023

Hear the jazz Anderson Scholars perform at the Marian Anderson Young Artist Program's first **Jazz Cafe Concert**.

DECEMBER 12, 2023*

Join us at the **2023 POP Winter Concert** for the premieres of Michael-Thomas Foumai's commissioned work for the POP String Ensemble and Jungyoon Wie's commission for the POP Wind Ensemble in partnership with GLFCAM.

MARCH 2, 2024

The **POP Children's Orchestra** will partner with the Swarthmore College Orchestra for a dynamic side-by-side concert.

MAY 19, 2024*

Join us at the **2024 POP Jubilee Concert** for the premiere of Erika Oba's commissioned work for the POP Children's Orchestra in partnership with GLFCAM.

**WRTI is the Lead Sponsor of the Composing for Young Orchestras project.*

Visit playonphilly.org/events for details!